

TALLINN
winner 2023
EUROPEAN
GREEN CAPITAL
An initiative of the
European Commission

Tallinn
European
Green
Capital 2023

WILDLY CHANGING

Tallinn – European Green Capital 2023

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FOREWORDS

Jevgeni Ossinovski

Mayor of Tallinn

It makes us proud that the idea behind the European Green Capital initiative was originally born in Tallinn, back in 2006. And after our own numerous attempts, we were finally thrilled to receive the title in Lahti. We dedicated the capital year of 2023 to sowing seeds for our city's sustainable future. We can now witness these beginnings flourish.





The title of European Green Capital for the year 2023 provided significant impetus for the city to accelerate the green transition and apply sustainability principles more extensively. The title year had a clear impact on increasing awareness within the city organisation and fostered the understanding that all daily activities and the provision of city services are linked to the green transition, and sustainability goals must be considered every day.

Throughout the year, we initiated tangible transformations – from the adoption of reusable cutlery at major public events, to the establishment of circular economy hubs and repair workshops. The success of our "Green Tracks" project, featuring pop-up parks, planting fruit trees and wildflower meadows, is poised to endure, breathing in new life into urban areas. Collaborating with Utilitas, a local green-thinking utility and energy company, has enabled investing in cutting-edge renewable energy sources like wastewater and seawater heat pumps, alongside biogas utilization, all targeted at reducing fossil fuel reliance.

We remain committed to hosting domestic and international companies to pilot their innovative green technologies, adding to the city's environmentally conscious transition. The ongoing "Test in Tallinn" initiative provides access to diverse live testing environments, spanning from streets to buildings, while connecting businesses with pertinent resources for navigating the testing procedures. By the end of the European Green Capital year, 13 companies had already begun testing their technologies, ranging from AI and urban planning to electrical systems solutions.

Thus, Tallinn has embarked on a transformative journey towards a more sustainable future. We aim to constantly improve the environment with more greenery and bicycle lanes, providing better, accessible public transport. With persistent collaboration and innovation, we intend to cultivate an eco-friendly, resilient city with cleaner air for generations to come.



Krista Kampus

Executive Director
European Green Capital
2023 – Tallinn

This report underscores Tallinn's ongoing commitment to the principles of the European Green Capital, contributing to a greener, more sustainable future for all residents and visitors alike.

As we look back on Tallinn's year as the European Green Capital 2023, it is clear that this was more than just an honour. It sparked real change, helping us move faster towards becoming a more sustainable city.





Several flagship projects were launched. The "Curated Biodiversity" and initiatives like biodiversity action days have made our city both greener and more welcoming. We tried and tested new collaborative formats with businesses, like "Test in Tallinn", and rolled out digital tools such as the "3D Green Twins". These projects show our strong commitment to using technology for improving the environment.

The concept of "Green Tallinn" extends beyond the projects – it embodies the spirit of joint effort and proactive engagement. We opened new prospects for citizen involvement – from the "Open City Hub" to the innovative "Green Capital Citizen Assembly", and the participatory "Let's Do It Together" fund. These initiatives strengthened the fabric of our civic life, fostered discussions and co-creation, ensuring that every voice and action contribute to shaping our urban environment.

The success of these efforts drives on having as many committed, positive and courageous individuals, both within our city organisation and across the wider community, as possible. These people are the tiny but powerful "grassroots" – the hidden force that drives transformative green change.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my entire European Green Capital 2023 team, our dedicated colleagues, invaluable partners, and Green Capital Ambassadors. Your relentless enthusiasm and commitment were instrumental in integrating sustainability into the city's daily life.

It has been said that once a European Green Capital, always a Green Capital. The legacy of 2023 isn't just about what we have achieved, but also about what we keep on striving for.

We are moving forward with a new spirit, ready to keep on working towards making our city a greener, viable place.



PURSUIT OF THE TITLE

The European Green Capital (EGC) concept was originally initiated by Jüri Ratas, former Mayor of Tallinn (2005-2007). In May 2006, representatives from 15 European cities and the President of the European Commission convened in Tallinn, Estonia, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

This agreement established a special award for sustainable urban living recognition, which was officially launched by the European Commission in 2008.



2005

Tallinn launches the "Green Courtyard" subsidy scheme aimed at adding greenery and establishing playgrounds and bike sheds to people's homes

2006

The idea behind the European Green Capital is born

2008

The European Green Capital Award is initiated

2009

Local energy company Utilitas opens its first combined heat and power plant in Tallinn, operating entirely on renewable sources, such as wood waste

2010

Tallinn launches a financing scheme "Fix the facades", which makes apartment buildings more energy efficient through comprehensive renovation

2011

Tallinn adopts an Environmental Strategy and Sustainable Energy Sector Action Plan

2013

Tallinn becomes the first European capital to adopt a free public transportation system, popularising the use of public transportation

2015

Tallinn adopts its first cycling strategy



2016

Tallinn's first-time application for the European Green Capital title

2018

The idea behind a linear city-connecting park "The Pollinator Highway" is born

Tallinn is using 100% green electricity in all municipal buildings and in public transport trams and trolley-busses

2019

Tallinn joins with the OECD Programme "Circular Economy in Cities and Regions"

Utilitas launches Tallinn's first district cooling station pilot project in Fahle Park

Tallinn bans single-use plastic dishes and cutlery

2020

Tallinn's "Strategy 2035" adaptation

80% of Tallinn's district heating heat is produced from renewable energy sources

2021

Development of district cooling to replace natural gas begins in Ülemiste City area

Tallinn Strategic Management Office is established for strengthening city's horizontal strategic planning principles and cross-sectorial policy development

The city adopts its Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan 2030

Tallinn receives the European Green Capital 2023 title during the award ceremony in Lahti

2022

The City of Tallinn and Utilitas form a joint company for development of sustainable central heating systems based on green energy

A new subsidy scheme for helping housing cooperatives to install solar panels is introduced

Rolling out of Guidelines for Environmentally Friendly Events

Waste Management Plan endorsement, including the Action Plan for the Prevention and Reduction of Marine Litter

Tallinn begins transforming existing waste centres into circular economy hubs

2023

January: Tallinn joins the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change

November: Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan 2035 is adopted. Tallinn starts the construction of a new tramline, connecting the airport with the seaport

April: Rules for organizing environmentally friendly public events are put in place

June: Launch of the OECD "The Circular Economy in Tallinn, Estonia" report

June: All public events in Tallinn are allowed to serve food and drinks using only reusable utensils cutlery only

2024

Utilitas opens the biggest solar park in Estonia, naming it "Tallinn – European Green Capital 2023"

The Environmental Protection Plan is updated

The Circular Economy Development Plan 2035 is elaborated

Opening of the Lilleküla Circular Economy Centre

2030

Tallinn's district heating system has reached carbon neutrality

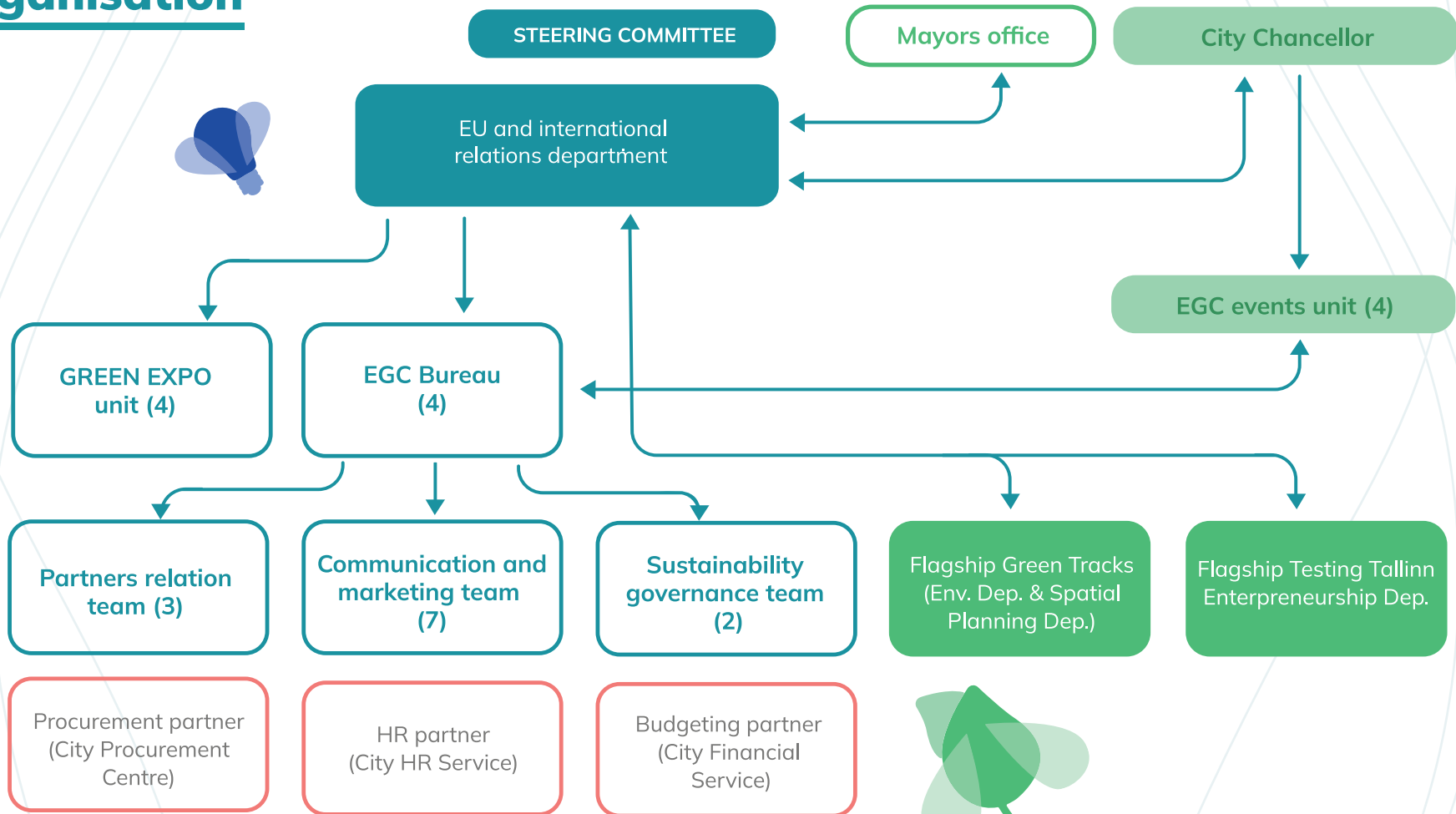
2035

Carbon neutral public transportation



ORCHESTRATING THE YEAR

Organisation



The timeframe for establishing the European Green Capital team, preparing the programme, planning investments, and budget allocation (spanning over 10 months) proved to be quite challenging due to its limited nature. The city administration opted not to create a separate entity or outsource the implementation of the title year to external agencies. Instead, the decision was made to retain the knowledge and experiences gained from the Green Capital initiative within the city administration, leveraging these resources for future green transition and urban development in Tallinn.

To facilitate this, a specialized implementation unit was formed under the EU and International Cooperation Department within the Tallinn Strategic Management Office in January 2022. This unit was structured around three main streams: programme management, international partnership, and communication. Subsequently, when it was decided to include the GreenTech Week NEXPO as the highlight of the EGC programme, an additional team of three individuals was assembled.

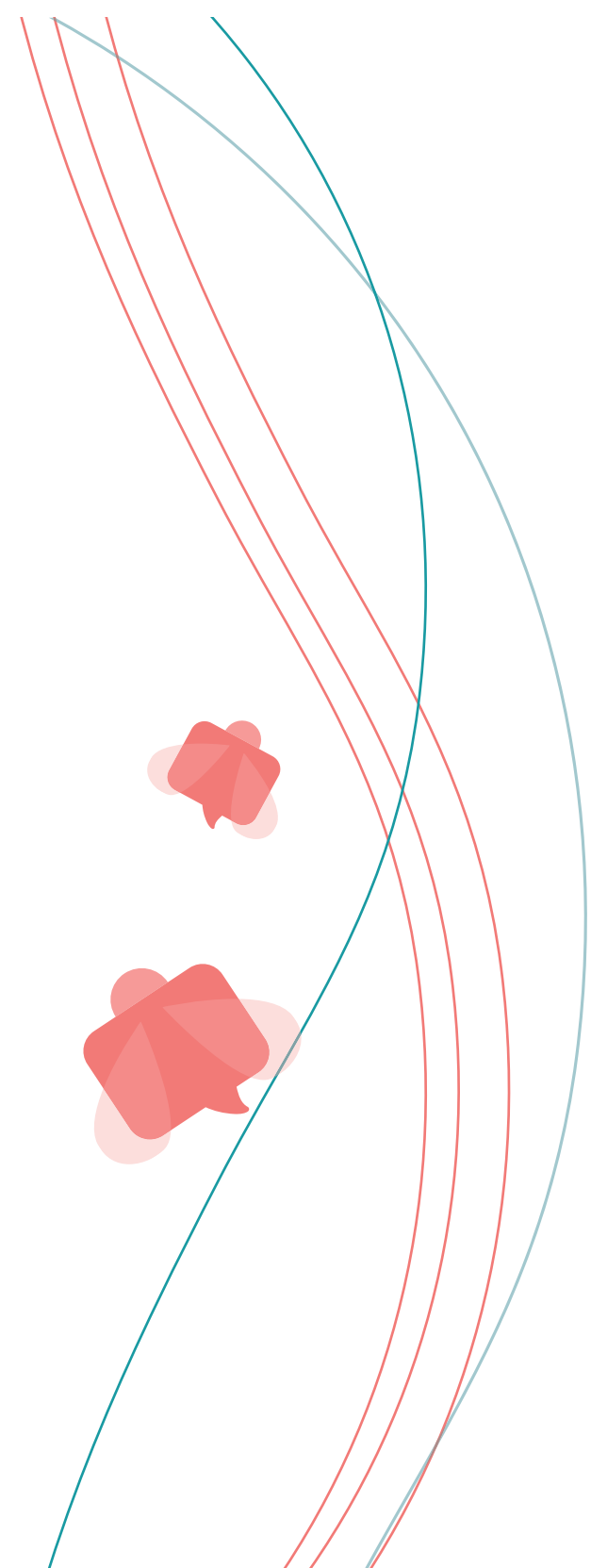
The programme management team, comprised of four members, was tasked with executing the EGC programme. The international partnership team, consisting of three members, focused on representing the city within the EGC Network, collaborating with international stakeholders, and organizing global events. Meanwhile, the communication team, staffed with seven members, handled the marketing and communication aspects. The latter were responsible for managing EGC visual identity, developing campaigns, managing social media, and overseeing overall communication efforts. Additionally, they served as strategic partners for the city's communication department, ensuring that the European Green Capital year received adequate visibility within the broader city communication strategy.



The structure of the European Union and International Relations Department was thus reorganized to establish a separate Green Capital Office, tasked with coordinating the preparation and implementation of Tallinn 2023.

To ensure the involvement and contribution of the entire city organization in the execution of the Green Capital year, and to align the Green Capital action plan with the city's strategic objectives, a Green Capital Steering Committee was formed. This committee was chaired by the mayor and included deputy mayors, responsible for key areas such as environment, mobility, and innovation; as well as heads of respective departments and chairman of the city council. Additionally, the city's finance director, strategic planning director, and communications director were also members. Furthermore, responsible departmental authorities were designated, and separate project managers were hired to implement new initiatives under the Green Capital umbrella (such as the "Green Tracks" by the Environmental and Public Works Department and "Test in Tallinn" by the Business Services Department).

The establishment of these structures aimed to streamline coordination, ensure comprehensive participation, and align the Green Capital initiatives with the broader strategic vision of Tallinn.



FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS

One of the goals for the year was bridging the gap between the citizens and companies, universities, and various non-governmental organisations.

Tallinn partnered up with several government and EU institutions, as well as universities, research institutions, and NGOs, like the European Commission's Representation in Estonia, Embassy of the United States, Embassy of the Republic of France, Embassy of the Republic of Finland, OECD, UNECE, Eurocities, Nordregio, the Estonian Ministry of Climate, Estonian Environment Agency, Environmental Investment Centre, and Visit Estonia. We also teamed up with the city of Tartu – the European Capital of Culture 2024 and collaborated closely with the Estonian Association of Cities and Municipalities.

In order to implement the flagship projects, as well as co-organise international and local events, the city worked closely with several universities, research centres, and innovation Hubs bringing in new knowledge and innovative ideas, such as Technopol, Stockholm Environment Institute, and the Green Twins initiative in cooperation with Tallinn Technical University's Centre of Excellence for Smart Cities.



Since co-creation was one of our core principles, we collaborated closely with numerous non-profit organisations, such as the Domus Dorpatensis Foundation (which helped to organise the Green Capital Citizens Assembly); the Let's Do It World initiative (to organise the Save Our Sea Campaign); the Green Tiger; Tallinn's City Board for Disabled People; the Estonian Union of Co-operative Housing Associations; the Association of Architects and the Song and Dance Celebration Foundation.

Tallinn also partnered with a good deal of private businesses who felt the same passion towards making the city more sustainable – Utilitas, Ülemiste City, Cleantech ForEst, Reet Aus Design, Bikeep, just to name a few.

Throughout the year Tallinn cooperated with many artists. For example, for the opening ceremony, two new songs were created – one by the artist NOEP and the other by the ethnic music band Puuluup. The opening ceremony was a kind of theatre production, including specially created music performances, short films, and surprises. The creative team behind the opening ceremony came from the Tallinn City Theatre. For the European Green Capital Awards, Joosep Matjus and Katri Rannastu created a film called "Greener Tallinn", featuring original music "Seasons" composed by Tauno Aints and performed by the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Tõnu Kaljuste. The world premiere of both took place at the European Green Capital Award ceremony on October 5 in Tallinn.



Green Ambassador

ERKI ANI

Erki Ani is a co-founder and strategic advisor at Cleantech for Baltics, the community coalition of start-ups, scale-ups and investors across the Baltic states that promotes regional collaboration and raises the profile of the cleantech sector at the EU level. In addition, he co-founded Beamline Accelerator, one of the region's first cleantech specialized accelerators, with a vision to help cleantech startups scale and succeed globally.



We work to create a better environment and a more sustainable economy with the help of green technology. Startups have the ability to implement changes quickly, and that is why we invest our time in people who have a vision and will to do things

Several other cultural events contributed to the Green Capital programme by organising special editions, discussions, or side programmes. Such is the example of the international Tallinn Music Week festival, which dedicated its street concerts and discussion rounds on sustainability; the Tallinn's Black Nights Film Festival organised the European Green Capital environmental films special programme; the Impact Day (being the largest sustainability festival in the Baltic region), Robotex, Simple Session, Biotopia and Tallinn Restaurant Week, – all contributing to a full year's itinerary with sustainability at its core.

Different specialised exhibitions and themed events were organised together with local museums and city's most popular attractions – Natural History Museum, Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom, City Museum, the Botanical Gardens and the Zoo.

It is said that it takes a village to raise a child and we strongly believe that it takes an entire city to embark upon the path towards environmental consciousness.

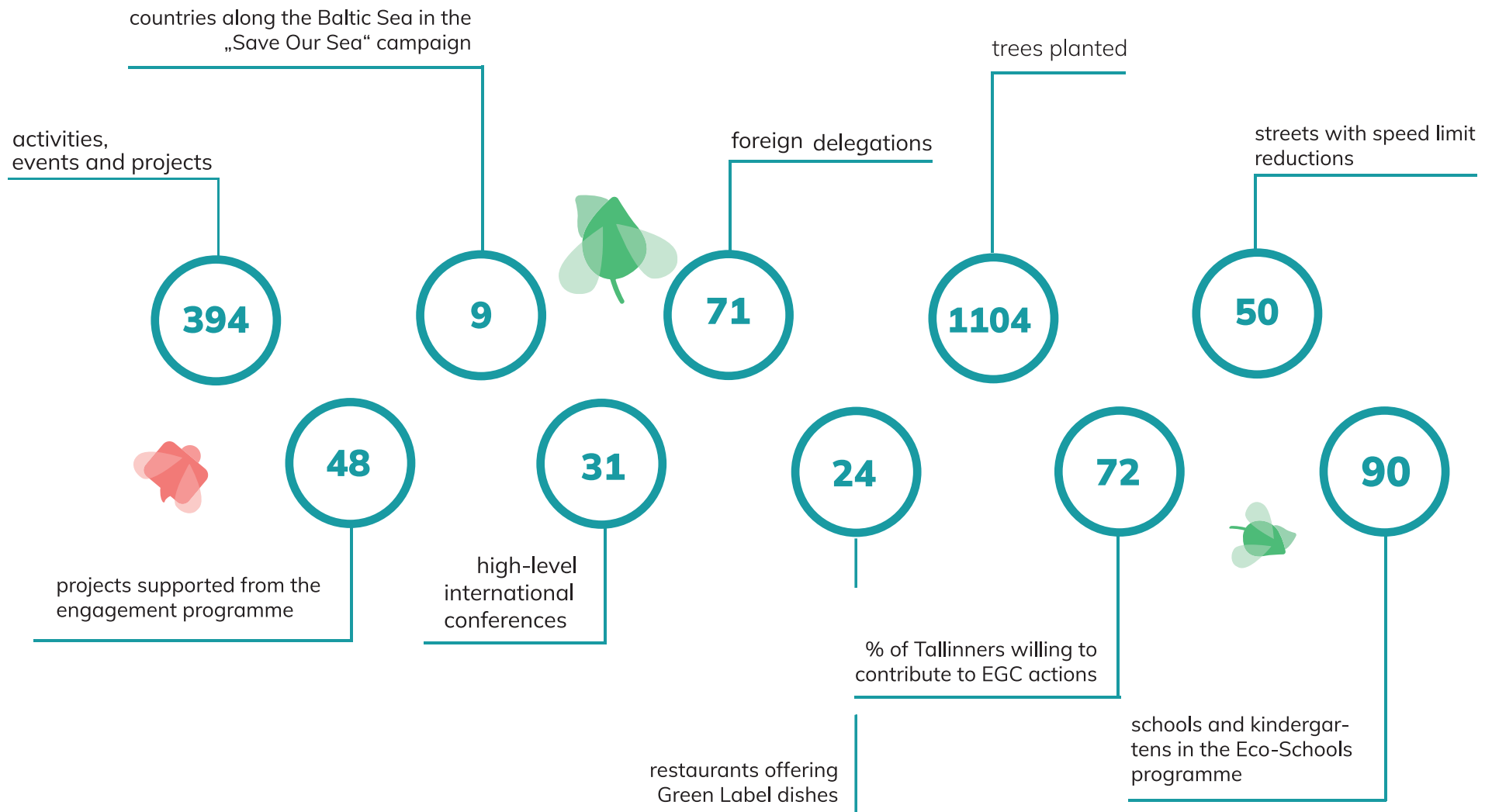




GREEN CAPITAL **IN NUMBERS**

Tallinn has a bog 9 km
from the city centre

FACTS AND FIGURES







TOP MOMENTS

In the year of the Green Capital, Tallinn kickstarted several major projects and new initiatives that may have limited visibility in the nearest term but will significantly impact Tallinn's future for decades. These Flagship and Legacy Projects focused on biodiversity, climate change, green innovation, promoting environmentally friendly practices, and more. All of them contributed to the overarching goal of the Green Capital year – creating a better living environment for us all.

LEGACY PROJECTS



Tallinn Sustainability Governance Hub

Establishment of the international Sustainability Governance Hub, bringing together over 30 cities across Europe with international and global organisations to co-create new knowledge in helping cities to close the action gap between their ambitions and achieving sustainability goals

Green Tracks Tactical urban interventions

- 304 shade trees and 14 flower meadows planted over 3.5 hectares
- 9 food forests in total area of 2246 m²
- 150 trees planted together with the Song Festival collective
- 8 parklets established around the city
- A pop-up summer park installed at the Town Hall Square
- Construction of a community sauna by Linnahall
- Set up of the Jõesuu beach park and coastal area installation

Test in Tallinn

23 innovation projects underway, with 7 of them coming to Tallinn from abroad

39 approved proposals

Over 80 activities to help implementation



FLAGSHIP PROJECTS



Pollinator Highway

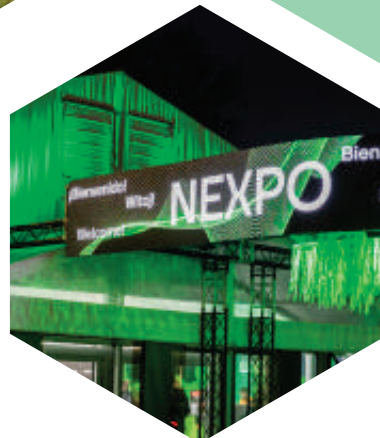
Establishment of the "Place Buzz" – innovative site-specific, environmentally sensitive and community-engaging contemporary installations which are both art works and architectural objects. The project made it to the finals of the New European Bauhaus competition



Sustainable song and dance festival

100,000 people were fed using reusable dishes only

18 tons less garbage produced, 2/3 of the generated waste was recycled



Tallinn Green Tech Week

5 international conferences with over 4000 participants from 64 countries

LEADING PRIORITIES AND KEY OBJECTIVES

Tallinn 2035 Strategy and Tallinn Climate Action Plan 2030 are clearly oriented towards implementing the green transition. Sustainability and the green transition are not only about the natural environment of Tallinn but are fundamental principles for the entire society and economy.

Starship delivery robot
by the Old Town



During the European Green Capital year, Tallinn's three key priorities were

BIODIVERSITY

Preserving biodiversity and expanding urban greenery;

CLIMATE

Increasing climate resilience through innovation;

CITY FOR ALL

Fostering sustainable transformation through citizens engagement and co-creation.

These objectives were implemented through the four focus themes of the European Green Capital programme:



Learning City



Inclusive City



Sustainable City



Smart City

We set the goal on focusing our action plan primarily on initiatives and projects (the so-called Legacy and Flagship Projects) that:

- Have a long-term positive impact;
- Continue beyond the end of the Green Capital year;
- Help accelerate the green transition and the use of green innovation;
- Contribute to a change of mindset within the city organization;
- Promote more environmentally friendly behaviour and practices among the residents, businesses, and other stakeholders;
- Facilitate new co-creation and engagement practices.

LEGACY PROJECT

FLAGSHIP PROJECT

GREEN NUDGING

ENGAGEMENT

PRIORITY 1



PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY AND EXPANDING URBAN GREENERY

Tallinn is actively committed to preserving biodiversity and enhancing urban green spaces, aligning closely with the EU's Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the urban ecosystems goals of the EU Nature Restoration Law. These efforts also support various other EU environmental directives and initiatives, such as the Environmental Action Programme 2030, the EU Soil Strategy 2030, the Green City Accord and the New European Bauhaus.

At the city level, Tallinn's commitment to preservation and enhancement of biodiversity is a cornerstone of Tallinn 2035 Strategy's "Green Transition" objective. This objective aims (among others) to protect and sustain biodiversity by managing green areas sustainably, increasing environmental awareness, implementing effective environmental management systems, and designing urban environments that support diverse wildlife, especially pollinators.



Green Ambassador

LAURI KLEIN

Passionate about wildlife and proud citizen of Tallinn, Lauri is involved in many projects concerning the protection of green areas in Tallinn and its region. He also organized the official European Green Capital biodiversity action days. Lauri insists that cities should be a better living environment and everybody should be happy to live in cities.



Keep calm!

I'm striving towards a rich balance in life. Let's look after life in the middle of life!

Tallinn's Environmental Strategy 2030 and the Urban Greenery Action Plan for 2013-2025 further reinforce these goals. They emphasize developing maintenance plans for city parks and green areas, creating conditions for increasing biodiversity in densely populated areas, enhancing cooperation with district governments to harmonize development of green areas, raising awareness among professionals and raising residents' environmental awareness. This integrated approach underscores Tallinn's commitment to advancing environmental sustainability and enhancing urban greenery as essential components of fostering a resilient and liveable city environment for its residents.

Additionally, Tallinn's Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan prioritize building climate resilience. This includes expanding green spaces, planting more trees, enhancing the city's environmental quality, raising public awareness through events and campaigns, and engaging residents in mapping urban biodiversity. These efforts are crucial elements of the city's adaptation strategy.



To further enhance biological diversity and develop urban nature, the City Council decided to initiate the Environmental Conservation Development Plan, as well as to develop Tallinn Green and Blue Network Spatial Plan in 2024 – both being work in progress. The objective is to preserve nature and create the integrity of a green network. The key focus is on greening the urban space and eliminating existing interruptions in green areas. The development of Tallinn's urban space guidelines is also in progress, providing guidance for the establishment and reconstruction of various types of streets. All these documents will refine the city's strategy and define specific goals and tasks necessary for implementing the green transition.

GREENING URBAN SPACES AND PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY

Ca 80% of the land in Tallinn is in private or state ownership. The land that the city owns, consists mostly of the street network, but also some land formerly occupied by industrial railway and former high-voltage powerline corridors. We see these linear strips of land as a hidden potential for designing and building a city-wide blue-green network both for nature, as well as people.

Linear parks make efficient use of land maximizing green space in densely populated urban areas where regular parks do not suit. Linear parks can offer several advantages over regular parks – they can and are combined with biking networks, but they also help to enhance biodiversity, absorb rainwater, provide refuge during heatwaves, and promote social cohesion, by linking different neighbourhoods and communities.

Establishment of green habitats for pollinators is a novel concept with which Tallinn hopes to become one of the pioneers in Europe.

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

The Pollinator Highway, 1st phase



The development of the first stage of the Pollinator Highway covers mainly the North Tallinn district. To provide Tallinn residents with recreational and community activities, highlight the qualities of connections and urban spaces, and enrich the Pollinator Highway with innovative and experimental urban design elements, the installation competition "Place Buzz" was organized under the EGC 2023. This collaboration involved Tallinn Art Academy and the Architects' Association. The "Place Buzz" made it to the finals at the prestigious New European Bauhaus competition. In addition, a Smithsonian Gardens exhibition on biodiversity was opened in cooperation with the US Embassy in Tallinn.

“Roo” Triin Vallik, Ko Ai

City Official

KAIDI PÕLDOJA

Architect and the head of the Tallinn Spatial Planning and Design Department. She is leading a team of nine professionals specializing in urban planning and design. Her team serves as an in-house office for Tallinn, focusing on comprehensive plans, architecture competitions, and public space design. A standout initiative involves transforming transmission towers into landmarks, challenging perceptions of Soviet-era legacies.

The Pollinator Highway project has helped to raise awareness in the city of the importance of a greener urban space and has encouraged both city authorities and citizens to think more broadly about urban greenery and to experiment with innovative solutions – be it flower meadows or flowerbeds for bees. Thanks to the Pollinator Highway, thinking about biodiversity has become the rule in Tallinn's public space projects.



The development of the Pollinator Highway will continue to create a green corridor approximately 9 km long traversing several districts, benefiting pollinators.

“Põhukabel”

Arhitektuuribüroo Peil:
Eneli Kleemann, Katariina Mustasaar,
Lill Volmer, Mia Martina Peil,
Marie Anette Veesaar

Pelgued allotment garden

In the year of EGC 2023, preparations were undertaken at Pollinator Highway to establish Tallinn's first allotment garden in the North Tallinn district, exclusively for the personal use of residents. The aim is to empower community gardening, support biodiversity and ensure food security.

Pelgued kicked off in March 2023, with an opening event aimed at launching and promoting local community involvement in development of the concept of the garden. From September to November 2023, significant progress was made in digital engagement through the development and introduction of an urban gardening website. This platform was created to provide resources, information, and support for urban gardening enthusiasts throughout Tallinn.

Throughout April 2023 to March 2024, a comprehensive urban gardening workshop programme was implemented, featuring 10 workshops. These workshops were designed to educate participants on sustainable gardening techniques, plant care, and fostering community through gardening. Simultaneously from April 2023 to March 2024, a mentoring programme for urban gardening leaders was established. This initiative aimed to empower and support leaders within the urban gardening community, offering guidance and mentorship to enhance their gardening skills and leadership capabilities.



Pelgued was officially opened in March 2024 and by covering an area of approximately 3,000 square metres, it is the largest and most contemporary urban garden in Tallinn. Members have access to individual bed boxes or garden plots, while collectively maintaining communal beds, a greenhouse, and shared garden spaces. Pelgued also aims to enhance environmental awareness and foster community spirit, emphasizing eco-friendly gardening practices, outdoor education, collaborative activities, and shared responsibilities.

Pelguaed's operations are overseen by the NGO Pelguaed in partnership with the North Tallinn City District and the Tallinn Environment Board, ensuring coordinated efforts and sustainable management practices. In Tallinn's context, this type of city-community partnership introduces an innovative concept where a rental garden is designed and created by the city and maintained collectively by the community members.

Allotment gardens allow for significantly more food production than traditional community gardens with plot sizes of around 1 square metre. Following the example set by Pelguaed, similar gardens are planned to be created in all districts of Tallinn in the future.

The project was financed by the City of Tallinn and supported by the Environmental Investment Centre through the Climate Change Adaptation Measure of the European Economic Area. Project budget was 434 089,80 euros, from which the grant was 368 976,33 euros.

Green Ambassador

MARIA DERLÕŠ

An urban gardening specialist in the city of Tallinn. Today, urban gardening, or growing food in the urban environment, is an increasingly more common part of our urban culture and image. Community and learning gardens can be found in every district of Tallinn. Over a hundred gardens, where carrots and dill, green thinking and a sense of community, are grown and taken care of together.

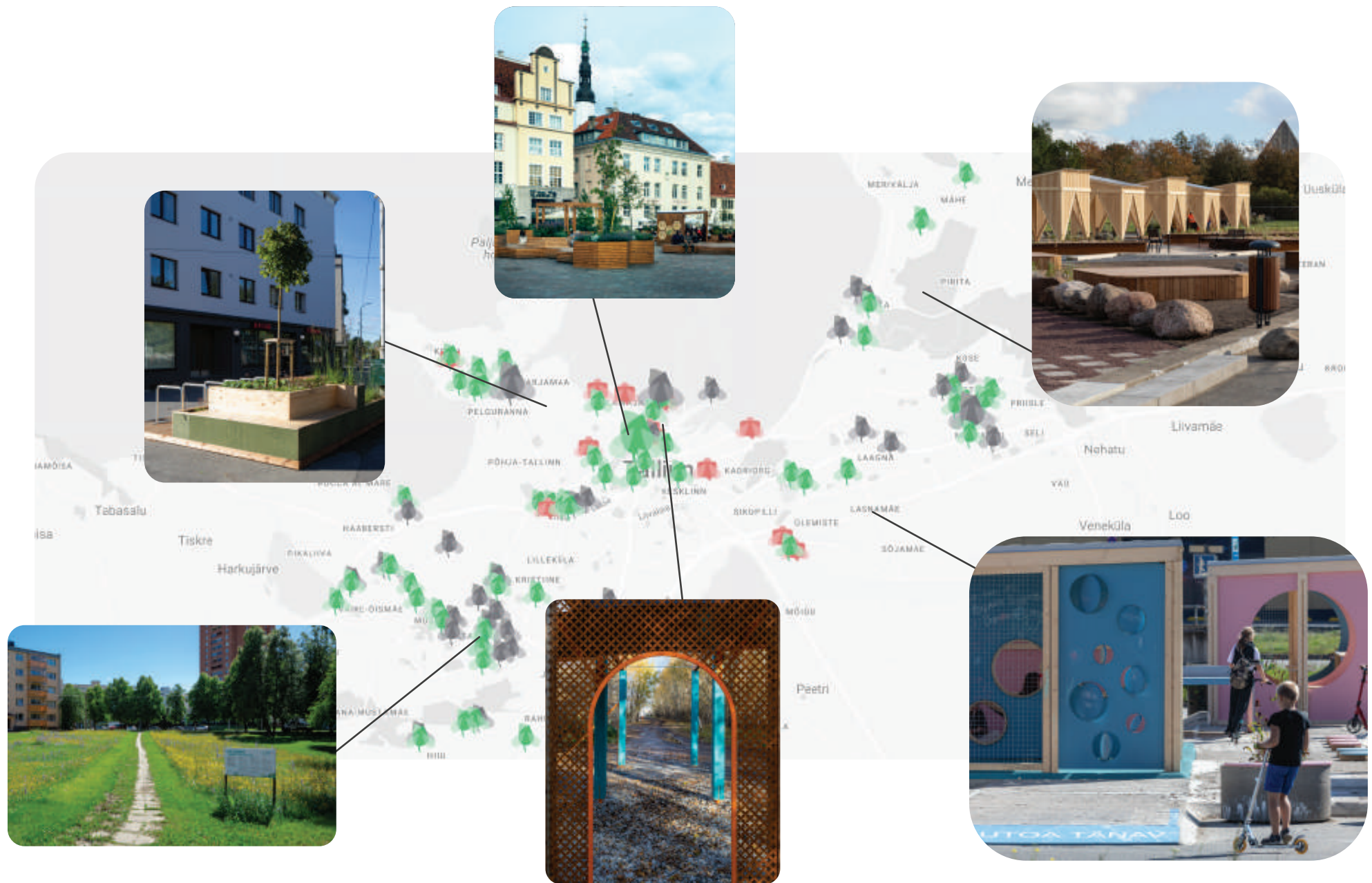
I am working to ensure that our existing "edible" initiatives are sustainable and that more and more people are aware of the positive impacts of urban gardening and the possibilities of engaging in it.



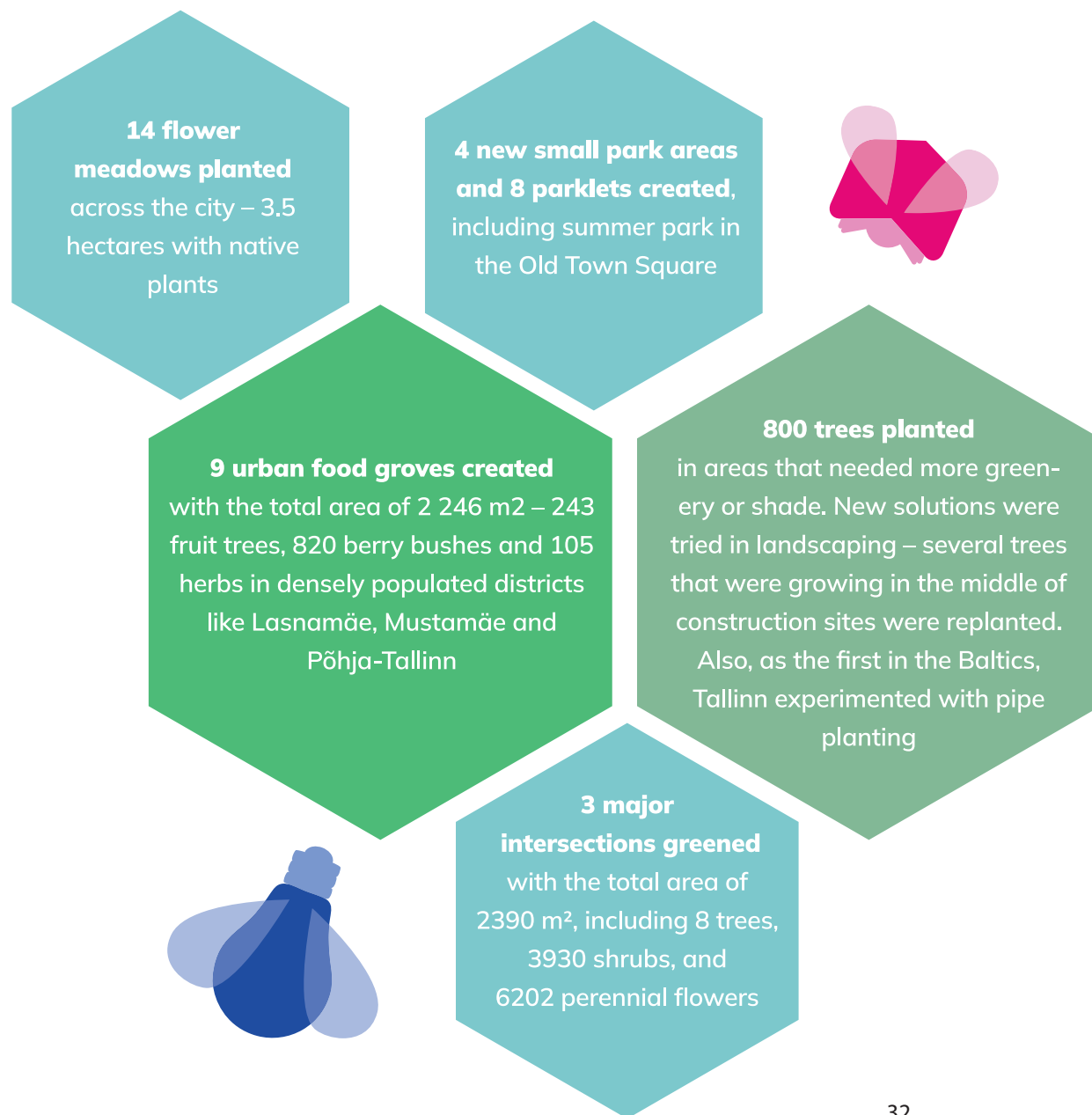
In the year of the European Green capital, Tallinn has made one of its goals to contribute to changes in the urban space. City planning and building are usually slow processes, but many important and visible changes that improve the quality of the space can be brought to life in a shorter period. The Green Tracks project strive to increase greenery and the quality of space in areas where this can be done without long planning processes, using so-called tactical urbanism methods. The project brought together activities aimed at improving the quality of urban space by introducing new greenery and improving the spatial quality in densely used places, creating mitigative measures for climate change-related risks and test new spatial solutions in the form of changes in the spatial organization as well as prototypes in cooperation with city district governments, businesses, universities and local communities. The activities varied in scale and content and took place in every district in the city.

Spatial experimentation was an important part of the project to discern citizens' readiness to accept new solutions and receive feedback to learn and develop from these experiences together. Many places in the city gained a new look either temporarily or permanently and city departments dealing with urban spatial planning monitored the results of the changes and citizens' readiness to accept them.





Some examples of interventions:



Map

greentallinn.eu/en/green-tracks

Based on positive feedback from the citizens, it was decided that the Green Tracs project will continue in the coming years, with an annual budget of at least 0.5 million euros.

In alignment with Tallinn's Climate Action Plan, the city embarked on the Curated Biodiversity journey during its tenure as the European Green Capital. This initiative aimed to develop and implement biodiversity-enhancing maintenance practices across various urban green spaces. A key focus was on reducing the intensity of grass mowing during the summer months, thereby preserving and enhancing the ecological value of Tallinn's meadows.

The project's pilot phase successfully demonstrated the benefits of eco-friendly mowing practices, particularly on the city's most nature-rich meadows. These areas, previously subject to excessive or improper mowing, are now managed sustainably, with mowing occurring once a year or less frequently, and hay being collected to support local biodiversity. Building on the outcomes of this initiative, Tallinn established new principles for green areas maintenance. The approach prioritizes mowing only where necessary and at optimal times, ensuring minimal disruption to natural habitats while maintaining the aesthetic appeal of urban landscapes.



Throughout the implementation of the Curated Biodiversity project, collaboration was the key. Tallinn worked closely with the Environment and Public Works Department, district governments, and the Botanical Garden to ensure the project's success. This cooperative effort enabled the city to leverage expertise in ecological management and community engagement, fostering a shared commitment to sustainable urban development. Throughout August-September 2023, the project's impact was further validated through a survey conducted on the Maptionnaire platform among residents. Over half of the respondents expressed support for reducing or infrequently mowing green areas, reflecting a growing awareness and appreciation for biodiversity conservation efforts in Tallinn.

The Curated Biodiversity project exemplifies Tallinn's dedication to advancing environmental stewardship within urban planning. By adopting innovative practices and engaging citizens in sustainable initiatives, the city continues to set a benchmark for promoting biodiversity and enhancing the quality of urban life.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

EGC 2023 OTHER ACTIVITIES

Creating new protected areas in locations of strategic importance



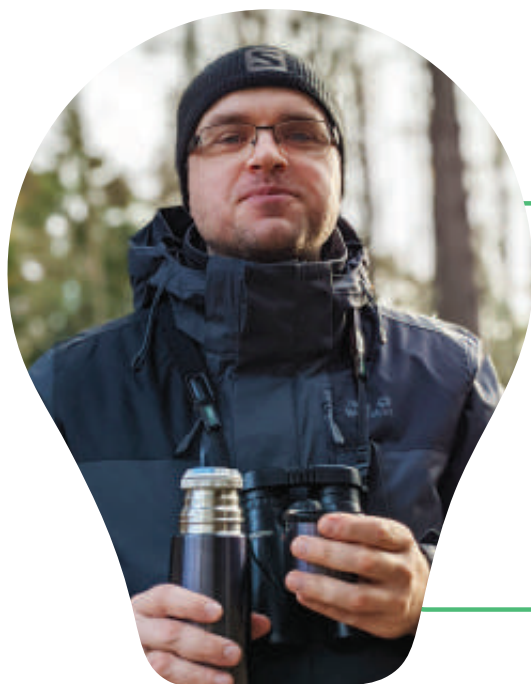
In 2023, Tallinn took significant steps towards environmental conservation by starting the process of establishment two new locally protected areas in strategically important locations. One of these areas, Kakumäe, has been proposed to the Estonian Ministry of Climate for consideration as a national nature protection site. Efforts are also underway to secure protection status for the Astangu-Mäeküla area, totalling approximately 200 hectares between the two sites.

As of January 1, 2024, Tallinn has a total of three locally protected areas and five nationally protected areas, covering 13% of the city's territory. Plans are additionally underway to expand the existing protected area in Merimetsa during 2024, underscoring Tallinn's commitment to preserving its natural heritage and promoting sustainable development.



Environmental surveys and inventories

As part of the EGC 2023 programme, 18 nature-themed surveys were carried out in 2023 to better plan biodiversity protection. For example, 290 hectares were inventoried, and it turned out that Tallinn has 100 hectares of precious habitats. In addition, many valuable habitat indicator species of mosses and lichens were found, including protected and red-listed varieties. The protected bird species were also studied, and it was found that Tallinn has 141 protected bird species out of 166 of whole Estonia (76 species also nest in Tallinn).



City Official

MEELIS UUSTAL

Meelis' daily job is to nudge building projects and detailed plans in Tallinn so that biodiversity and connectivity of green networks are considered. He also coordinates biodiversity surveys so that a better understanding of the species diversity in Tallinn, how the species are doing and what can be done to ensure that they stay here, will be gained.



In my work, I am constantly surprised that regardless of the expansion and growth, Tallinn has remained a biodiversity hotspot even today. Now it is necessary to ensure that the high biodiversity remains for us and future generations.

In 2024 and beyond, restoration and maintenance of valuable ecosystems will continue, such as the Klint Park, which preserves important alvar communities, as well as creating special infrastructure for frogs' protection. Several activities under the EU project "CoastNetLife – Restoration of Coastal Habitats" will take place on the Paljassaare Peninsula, aiming to restore valuable habitats within the Paljassaare Conservation Area.

INNOVATIVE DIGITAL SOLUTIONS AND GREEN TECHNOLOGIES FOR BIODIVERSITY

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

Green Twins

The objective of the Green Twins is to advance digital solutions for modelling blue and green networks in Tallinn's urban environments, allowing for new analyses of urban greenery changes. The model demonstrates how urban greenery evolves over time and helps us understand its impact on the city's ecosystem and resilience. Although 3D modelling is increasingly used in urban planning, its application to green and blue spaces is less common. Integrating information on urban greenery into a 3D city model enhances the comprehensiveness and sustainability of urban planning.

In 2023, the characteristics and parameters of the trees in Tallinn's Toompark (home to approximately 20 tree species), were modelled and described in the 3D model.



In summer 2024, the plan is to map and measure all trees in Tallinn using mobile data acquisition, which includes evaluating their health condition. This data will support the creation of a 3D model of landscaping covering the entire city, that shows, how urban greenery changes over time and providing insights into its effects on the city's ecosystem and resilience to the changing climate.

The project was financed by the ERDF, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research and the City of Tallinn, within the framework of the TalTech FinEst Centre for Smart Cities pilots, and implemented in cooperation with Tallinn Technical University, Aalto University (Finland), and the City of Helsinki.

For more information, visit

www.finestcentre.eu/greentwins.

Pollinator-friendly plant e-catalogue, tree tubing and nature-based interventions

The catalogue features nearly 900 plants suitable for our climate, allowing gardeners and city developers make better choices for maintaining or creating green spaces. The database is continuously updated and provides comprehensive plant information with search capabilities to find plants suitable for gardens, parks, or green spaces. Each plant is rated on a 5-star scale indicating its value to pollinators and the types of pollinators it attracts, including bees, solitary bees, hoverflies, and butterflies.

In May 2023, an advertising campaign introducing the catalogue and pollinator-friendly landscaping was launched. Other activities using this catalogue were the Green Fair, organised on European Day, planting of 14 flower meadows in the city, handing out signs for not mowing the lawn, handing out pollinator-friendly flower seeds.

Several workshops using new technology were held in 2023, for example the VR Showcase of nature-based interventions in Tallinn's participation hub Avalinn (Horizon Europe project GoGreenRoutes).

Tallinn was also the first city in the Baltics to use TreeTube technology in planting trees to places with very limited underground space.



In 2023, 1104 trees were planted in total, including 304 shadow trees.

www.haljastus.tallinn.ee



SUPPORTING CITIZENS ENGAGEMENT AND LOCAL PROJECTS RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT SOS – Save Our Sea

In the year of the European Green Capital, Tallinn launched the "SAVE OUR SEA" campaign to draw attention to the increasingly critical condition of the Baltic Sea and encourage cities and residents around the Baltic Sea to collaborate in its protection and preservation. The campaign was a collaborative effort between Tallinn, Let's Do It World NGO, the city of Helsinki, and the John Nurminen Foundation. It ran from August 31 (Baltic Sea Day) to September 16 (World Cleanup Day). A campaign kick-off webinar for the Baltic Sea region stakeholders was organised in May, and a campaign marketing webinar took place in August

www.seacleanup.org



There were 91 registered events in 45 municipalities across 10 countries and territories (Estonia, Finland, Åland, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, Belgium). In total, 156 257 people participated in campaign activities along the Baltic Sea. You can see an overview of participating cities here:

www.seacleanup.org/participating-cities

In Tallinn, over 15 000 people participated in events including multiple beach cleanup days, a seminar on Baltic Sea biodiversity, Baltic Sea Family Day, and the Going to Zero exhibition. The school programme "Life on the Baltic Sea" at the Seaplane Harbour Maritime Museum brought together 74 different class groups from 31 schools in Tallinn, totalling approximately 1800 children.

These events were organized in partnership with the Estonian Natural History Museum, Estonian Maritime Museum, TalTech's Institute of Marine Systems, the Estonian Environment Agency, children's programme "Garbage Wolf", and the Ahhaa Science Theatre.

The beach cleanups involved city government members, numerous city employees, schools, kindergartens, various companies (including Hilti Estonia, the Finnish Institute in Estonia, diving centre Maremark OÜ, Fazer Eesti OÜ, NIQ, Tallinn Airport, Twilio AS, Tallinna Vesi AS, Omniva and many more), embassies (German, French, British), several NGOs (Baltic Education and Culture Association, Ukrainian citizens' organizations, etc.), volunteers, families, and citizens. Nearly 700 litres of mixed household waste were collected.

The campaign took place in 14 different locations across Estonia. Most successful events included marine litter cleanups, some coinciding with World Cleanup Day, which mobilized 19.1 million people worldwide to clean up 205 000 tons of waste. The second most popular activities were awareness-raising events, such as public discussions, debates, and seminars. The eco-picnic event in Poland was particularly noteworthy. The Finnish marine research vessel R/V Aranda opened its doors to the public, with 684 visitors from Tallinn and Helsinki. The "Let's Go Zero" exhibition attracted more than 20 000 visitors. As part of an international conference in Italy, discussions focused on World Cleanup and the Baltic Sea campaign.

Green Ambassador

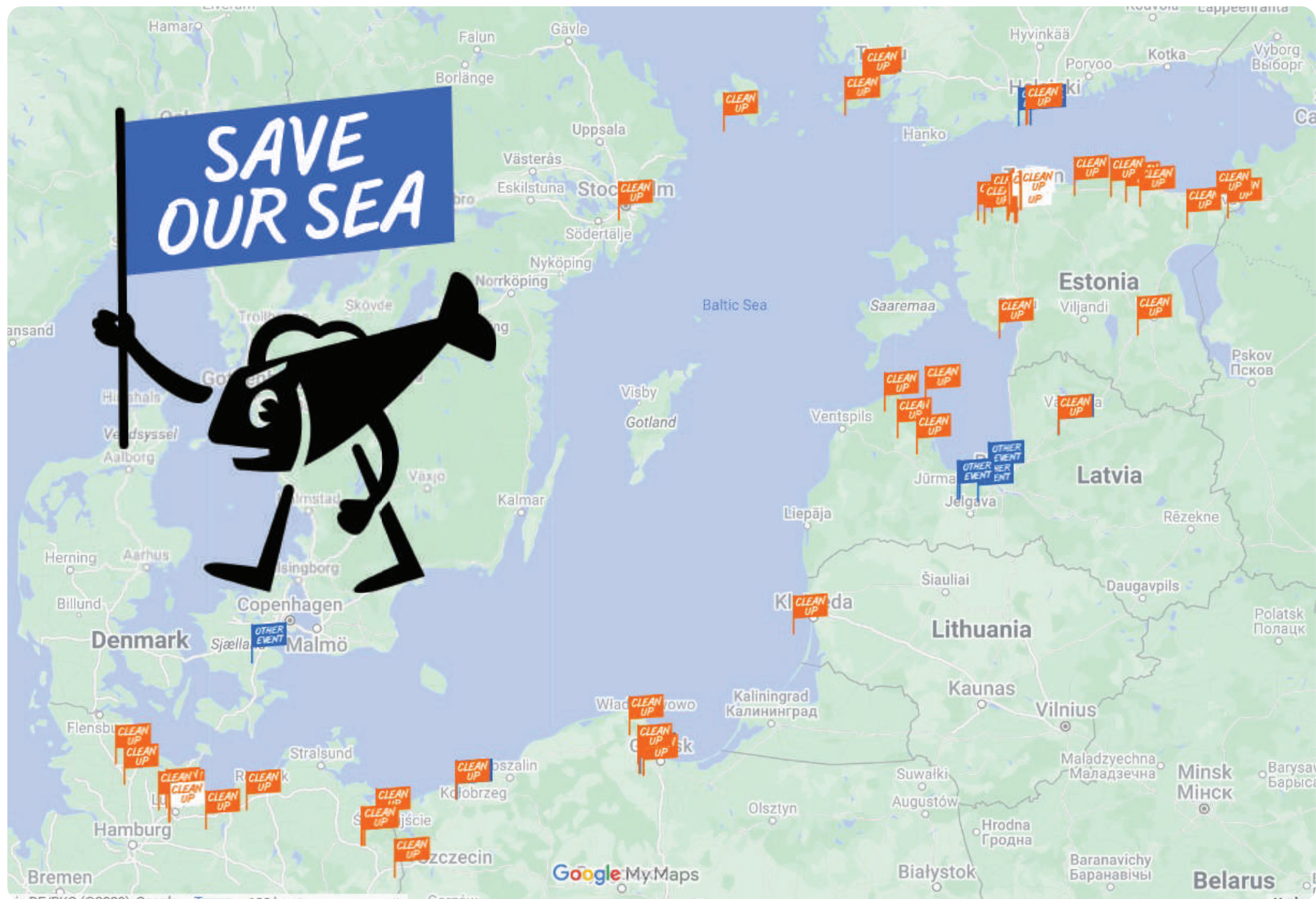
HEIDI SOLBA

Is an inspiring citizen of Tallinn and is strongly dedicated to sustainability in both her professional and private life. Five years ago, with 21 dedicated international environmental leaders, Heidi created the organisation "Let's Do It World". Heidi is now the President and Head of its Global Network. The NGO aims at tackling environmental and social issues due to mismanaged solid waste. "Let's Do It World" also manages the "World Cleanup Day" – the biggest global campaign, which, today, is presented in 197 countries, all over the world. Heidi is strongly passionate about the project

I firmly believe that in collaboration lies the power and the core of lasting change. The mission of our World Cleanup Day is to create environmentally conscious behavioural change in society. We have created the world's largest environmental network in 164 countries, with whom we implement changes in society.









Action days, campaigns and frog ponds

More than 200 people participated in 35 biodiversity action days and cleanups, that were held during the European Green Capital year, giving the citizens the opportunity to take part in restoring the nature of their city by restoring meadows, the Pääsküla bog and other habitats, removing invasive plant species and building shelters for bats.

16 nature observation and study trips were organised, with over 200 people learning more about the nature of Tallinn. Tallinn also cooperated with the Estonian Environment Agency by providing citizens an opportunity to log their interesting nature watch results in a special mobile application, to get a better understanding of the different species of plants, animals and birds that live in Tallinn.

With the citizens engagement, Tallinn also began a project of restoring frog ponds in one of the areas of the city that has a bigger frog population. Tallinn is home to 5 species of amphibians, all of which are protected. Another pond area will be restored in 2024.

As part of the EGC 2023, several educational itineraries for children in the frame of the Nature and environmental conservation theme year in Tallinn's kindergartens and schools were organised with 86 educational institutions of Tallinn participating in the international Eco-Schools Programme. Several institutions and organisations also organised special environmental courses and programmes for adults, like Tallinn Botanical Garden, Open University and Tallinn's Library. The National Museum of Nature organised an exhibition „City with trees", together with the workshops, nature trips and guided tours in different green areas in Tallinn.

In 2023, the Tallinn Environment Board supported the environmental NGOs projects with a total sum of 59 487.65 euros.

New community and educational gardens

Educational gardens are established and maintained by Tallinn's municipal or private institutions, primarily for environmental education purposes and for conducting various outdoor learning activities. These gardens can be found in kindergartens, schools, cultural centres, museums, youth centres, and social care institutions courtyards. While in 2022, there were 129 educational gardens, in 2023, the number grew to 141, engaging approximately 36 255 participants (16 228 children, 2418 teachers and institution staff, 4258 parents and volunteers, 13 281 partners and garden visitors). Currently, there are over 150 educational gardens in Tallinn.

In 2023, 13 new community gardens were established. Across the city, there are now a total of 46 community gardens. In addition to gardening activities, community gardens host various environmental educational and cultural events such as cleanup days, concerts, workshops, lectures, and storytelling evenings.

As a result of successful communication activities of the European Green Capital, environmental conservation topics have resonated with the public and are reflected in the results of the 2024 urban gardening grant applications. In spring 2024, the city financed in total 58 community garden projects through its grant scheme for non-profit organizations. Compared to 2023, the number of applications almost doubled (31 projects in 2023).



Green Ambassador

MAALI ROOMET-ALLES

A landscape architect and author of green capital year insect hotels, who believes that a green mindset begins in childhood and adolescence. This is why she creates many projects for children and teens.



I am not just a landscape architect, but also a passionate green ambassador, dreaming and working towards a greener future. My vision extends beyond simply creating urban spaces - I advocate for environmental sustainability, smart solutions, multifunctional designs, and inclusivity.

Key Performance Indicators for Biodiversity



Target

Share of protected and green areas in Tallinn increases

Base level: 2023,7ha (2020)

Target level: 2500ha (2035)

Result

By 2024 the share of protected and green areas in Tallinn is 2024,7 hectares. Tallinn is in the process of establishing two new protected areas in Kakumäe and Astangu in total ca 2000 hectares.

Citizens of Tallinn environmental awareness index rises (max: 100)

Base level: 47 (2020)

Target level: 65 (2035)

Based on 2023 citizens satisfaction survey, the majority of Tallinn residents feel their responsibility and the need to contribute to the prevention and resolution of environmental problems. Most people agree that one must also contribute to solving environmental problems (90% agree, including 56% completely agree)

Number of study gardens increases

Base level: 37 (2020)

Target level: 130 (2035)

By 2024, 158 educational gardens have been established in various city institutions. These include gardens in schools, kindergartens, museums, care facilities, and youth centres.

Increase of natural surfaces in Tallinn's territory

Target level: 65% (2035)

2023 level: 64,3% (2024)

In 2023, in total 1104 trees planted, incl. 304 shadow trees

Keeping Tallinn's air quality at the level of 2018.

Base level: the average annual concentration of fine particles PM2.5 in ambient air is

7.1 µg/m³ (2018)

Tallinn is among Europe's top ten and the world's top 500 cities with the cleanest air. Last year the average annual concentration of fine particles PM2.5 in ambient air is 4.3

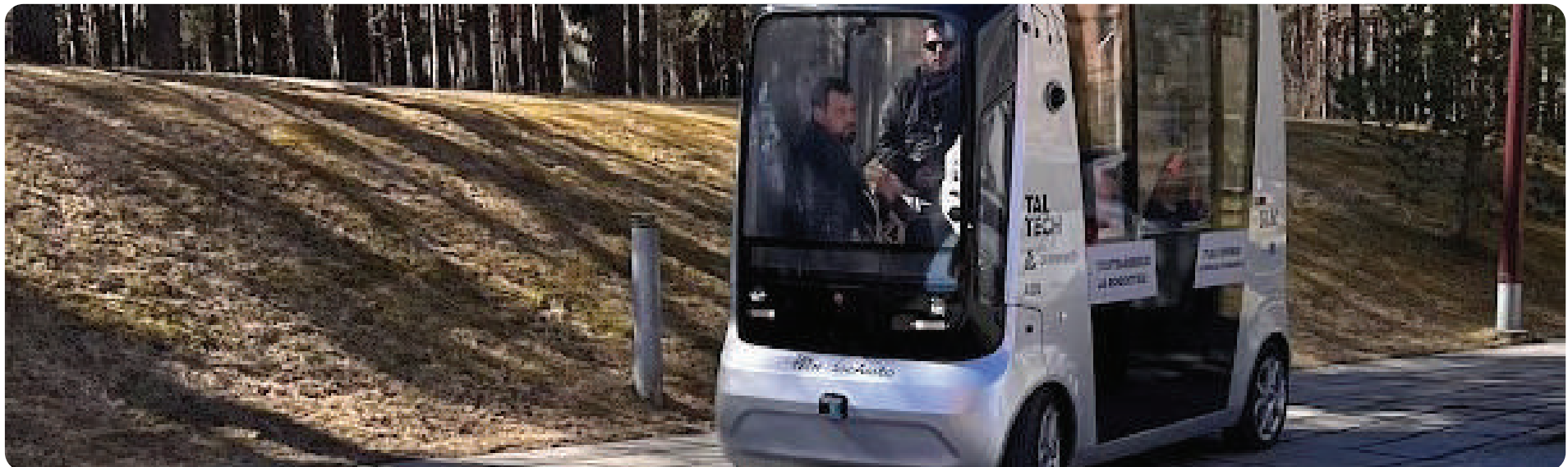
PRIORITY 2



INCREASING CLIMATE RESILIENCE THROUGH INNOVATION

This priority aligns with the EU 2030 Climate and Energy Framework, European Commission's Green Deal and the European Union's long-term vision "A Clean Planet for all" the EU Adaptation Strategy, EU Circular Economy Action Plan, the EU Urban Mobility Framework, the Covenant of Mayors energy policy initiative of the European Commission, as well as the EU's Digital Decade Policy Programme.

Tallinn 2035 outlines strategic directions aimed at fostering healthy mobility and creating a welcoming urban environment. These efforts align closely with strategic goals such as healthy mobility and friendly urban space, emphasizing active mobility's role in improving public health and sustainable urban planning. Initiatives in "Green Transformation" focus on reducing CO₂ emissions through sustainable mobility solutions and alternative fuels. The "Creative Global City" is emphasizing the use of cutting-edge technologies and smart solutions to drive eco-innovation that contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation. To achieve these objectives, Tallinn focuses on centralizing innovation management and empowerment, leveraging the city's role in conducting green technologies pilots and demonstration projects in urban environment.



Tallinn Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan 2030 sets an objective to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 and achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The plan includes transitioning public transport to non-fossil fuels, promoting sustainable mobility, expanding district heating, and building district cooling systems.

In January 2023, Tallinn joined EU's Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change. Tallinn is actively gathering knowledge from the mission to renew its Climate Action Plan.

The city is committed to enhancing its waste management practices through the Waste Management Plan 2022-2026. The main goal of the Waste Management Plan is to establish sustainable waste practices based on the waste hierarchy and set the target of separate collection of biowaste by the beginning of 2024 (actual implementation started in March 2023) and separate collection of textile waste from the beginning 2025. The plan also foresees transforming all waste stations into circular economy centres by 2026, with featured reuse rooms, repair workshops, and similar facilities.



Transition to circular economy

Emphasizing a shift towards a circular economy, the initiative underscores Tallinn's commitment to sustainable development and environmental stewardship. As of 2022, the city achieved a separate collection rate of 50.3% for household waste, being the only municipality in Estonia achieving the 50% recycling rate for municipal waste, set by the EU (Estonia's national goal is 30%). Now the goal is that more than 65% of waste to be recycled by 2035. The implementation of organised waste collection will continue, with greater emphasis placed on separate waste collection, particularly focusing on organic waste and various types of packaging waste. In 2022-2023 Tallinn provided 64 000 biowaste collection bins to the residents, free of charge. Awareness and environmental campaigns will continue, including training programmes for housing cooperatives and the environmental education programme "Preventing and Reducing Waste Generation, Reuse, and Recycling, and Fostering the Habit of Separate Waste Collection" for kindergartens and schools. Municipal institutions will continue to receive separate waste collection bins.



City official

LIINA KANARBIK

Lead specialist in Circular Economy Department in Tallinn Strategic Management Office. She is working daily on promoting waste and circular economy in the city of Tallinn. She was leading a separate biowaste collection campaign where more than 64 000 biowaste containers were distributed to citizens. In addition, she played a role in mandating only reusable dishes, cups and cutlery at public events in Tallinn. She is currently responsible for creating Tallinn's first circular economy development plan by summer 2025.



Embracing our role as the European Green Capital, Tallinn created a guide for sustainable events. By choosing reusable materials, sorting waste, and using only reusable dishes for our guests, we are setting a standard that honors our planet and inspires a greener tomorrow.

In the Green Capital year, Tallinn collaborated with the OECD on preparing the OECD case study on the circular economy in Tallinn. Several workshops were organized involving various circular economy stakeholders from the national ministries, businesses, NGOs, to map Tallinn's opportunities and challenges. The report "The Circular Economy in Tallinn, Estonia" was published at the OECD 5th Roundtable held in Tallinn on June 5, in collaboration with the OECD and the EU Committee of the Regions' Environmental Commission. The OECD report serves as a basis for developing Tallinn's Circular Economy Development Plan, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2024

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-circular-economy-in-tallinn-estonia_06abc3de-en.html

In 2023, Tallinn started reorganising its current waste stations into circular economy centres. The test projects were carried out in cooperation with reuse organizations that resulted in opening four workshops - sewing repair and wood repair workshops, reuse room and general repair workshop – in Tallinn's waste centres. That also enlivens local community groups and gives residents the opportunity to develop and practice the circular economy actions.

An important ongoing reform is the construction of four new modern circular economy centres. In 2024, the first new centre will be opened, and the development of three others is underway. These centres will feature reuse spaces and repair workshops. Solutions for the circular use of materials will be sought in collaboration with the private sector.

Green Ambassador

KATARINA PAPP



Katarina Papp is passionate about educating and engaging people on sustainability and zero waste topics. She is the co-founder and lead manager of "Let's Go to Zero!", a travelling exhibition and educational program that showcases the problem of single-use through art and offers sustainable alternatives. The exhibition has reached more than 30,000 visitors and 50 schools in Estonia, and aims to expand to Europe. She has joined the Tallinn Strategic Management Office as a circular economy expert.



I was an enthusiastic garbage sorter for years until I realized that the only solution to the garbage problem is not to create it. Fortunately, there is nothing complicated here if we are ready to change our consumption habits.

Reuse is normal!

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

Kopli 93 Creative Centre

Kopli 93 is a joint hub where the city, makers and local community come together to serve the mission of co-creating a more sustainable city. The project aimed to strengthen community relationships and trust in the Kopli district through regular cultural and educational meetups.

The city of Tallinn started the pilot in partnership with TalTech Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance, acknowledging that we need a true understanding of the impact of the climate crisis on our society and that change can only start by bringing people together. At the core of it was the idea of empowering the community and building their capacity for self-organization. Another key objective was reviving and upgrading traditional skills and know-how alongside modern innovation, to promote co-creation, and bottom-up circular economy.

Kopli 93 engaged local residents and stakeholders like vocational schools, NGOs, makerspaces, artisans, businesses, and activists to diversify and boost the local productive, creative and economic environment and make the neighbourhood more resilient. The project also sought to foster a community of researchers committed to advancing and sharing the knowledge and community practices developed at Kopli 93 and disseminate its outcomes not only within Tallinn and Estonia but also internationally.

As of today, Kopli 93 became a functional fab city hub with a community of locals and stakeholders, with new competences and skills needed for green societal transformation, as well as a meeting place for crafting, making, teaching, experimenting, and learning.



Main achievements and outcomes from 2022-2023 include:

- renovating former garages into maker spaces and workshops;
- establishing a community garden, and creating Tallinn's first learning apiary;
- launching the "Living Archive" – an archive of stories, photos and memories of community residents, and the "Cartography"- a map of the local partners, businesses and resources to make community needs more easily met;
- organising numerous trainings, workshops, story collections, films, and other cultural events.

In 2023, Kopli 93 community also started negotiations with other existing and newly created makerspaces in the city, to map their needs and specializations and to connect them and partner with the city of Tallinn's circular economy centres.

Kopli 93 Creative Centre was financed by the city of Tallinn and supported by the Horizon Europe project CENTRINNO. Other pilot cities were Milan (Italy), with other participants being an additional eight European cities: Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Barcelona (Spain), Blönduós (Iceland), Geneva (Switzerland), Copenhagen (Denmark), Milan (Italy), Paris (France) and Zagreb (Croatia).

<https://centrinno.eu>

EGC 2023 LEGACY PROJECT

Sustainable Events

To support responsible organization of public events under the Green Capital programme, Sustainable Events Guidelines were developed in 2022. The guidelines set minimum requirements and criteria in key areas such as materials, catering, waste management, transport, noise, energy efficiency, and communication. Throughout 2022, the guidelines were piloted during some larger events held in Tallinn, such as Tallinn Marathon and Old Town Days. Starting from June 2023, these requirements became mandatory for all events organized by the city. In July 2023, Tallinn banned all single-use dishes and utensils at public events within the city, paving the way for nationwide enforcement starting January 2024.



EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

Trash-Free National Youth Song and Dance Festival "Holy is the Land"

The event took place in July 2023 and brought together more than 30 000 participants and over 100 000 visitors. Under the flagship of Tallinn – European Green Capital 2023, Estonian Song and Dance Festival Foundation explored possibilities to significantly reduce the ecological footprint of one of the biggest cultural gatherings in Estonia.

As a result, more than 130 000 people were fed using only reusable dishes (~100 times turns of reusable deposit cups and dishes), saving ~ 500,000 disposable tableware, avoiding production of 3.5 tons of waste (which is about two times less than previous events). 70 separate waste collection containers and 10 additional public water taps were installed on site. More efficient public transport was organized – special buses and trams, and bicycle parking lots.

Tallinn was the first capital in Europe to implement reusable solutions during such a large-scale event.

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

TREASoURcE – Regional

Demonstrations and Replications of Systematic Solutions in Circular Economy Value Chains

The aim of the project is to initiate systemic changes by developing circular economy solutions for currently underutilized or unused plastic waste, end-of-life electric vehicle batteries, and bio-waste. Implementing these solutions together with companies, local governments, and sector experts is expected to significantly enhance product and material circulation in the Baltic and North Sea regions.

Tallinn is the main replication area of the project, experimenting with innovative sensor-based technology within waste stations to monitor waste flows and developing a digital application for citizen involvement. Further pilots with the Tallinn Waste Center involve collecting big data from specialized waste containers, while collaborations with Tehnopol and Tallinn Waste Recycling Center focus on digitalizing waste transport processes.

Green Ambassador

RAGMAR SAKSING

An entrepreneur and Tehnopol GreenTech sector leader. As a biologist, he is inspired by the wisdom of nature, and in his work, the question "How would nature solve this?" is always a starting point. Ragmar says he's ready to share his knowledge and skills and support other entrepreneurs in their transition to more environmentally friendly practices.

As a biologist, I am inspired by the wisdom of nature. My passion for innovation, entrepreneurship, and promoting environmental sustainability are values to which I am dedicated, and through which I wish to create a positive impact in my hometown.



Ibiot. Testing smart sensors in waste bins

In 2023, Tallinn collaborated with company Ibiot/Cleanhand to initiate pilot projects testing sensors in waste containers. These sensors monitor container fill levels and signal waste transport operators when containers need emptying, allowing for flexible collection management. During the project, **100 public waste containers were digitalized**, and features such as big data export and a geoinformation desk were developed. Analysis of collected data showed that **85.7% containers were emptied when half-full, with up to 10% overflowing at the time of collection**, indicating that emptying might have been postponed. Volume-based emptying could potentially save **at least 50% of costs** and reduce environmental footprint from transportation accordingly. The project demonstrated that volume-based waste collection can save costs for the municipality and citizens, reduce environmental footprint, and improve waste management in the sector. The Ibiot also sparked interest in neighbouring countries, creating further collaboration opportunities. **Ibiot**

The TREASoURcE project is funded by the Horizon Europe and ongoing until the end of May 2026. The total budget of the project is nearly 10 million euros, with Tallinn's contribution being 305 687 euros.

TREASoURcE Website

Tallinn 2035 Development Strategy foresees the implementation of environmental and quality management systems in all city departments and organisations. To operate more sustainably and responsibly and to set an example of environmentally responsible behaviour for others, in spring 2022, Tallinn Strategy Centre commissioned Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI Tallinn) to conduct an analysis of an environmental management system and develop an action plan for Tallinn's city institutions and enterprises in preparation for the year as the European Green Capital. Additionally, four training sessions and roundtable discussions for city offices, departments and businesses were held, to introduce various environmental management systems and discuss the needs and opportunities for implementing these systems in the city organisation.

In March 2023, Tallinn City Government decided that city offices, district governments, and managed institutions must implement the Green Office system and obtain the relevant certification (or renew existing ones) by September 30, 2023, for city departments and city district governments, and by December 31, 2023, for other city institutions. Today, most city departments have obtained the Green Office certification. Furthermore, 86 educational institutions in Tallinn are participating in the Green Schools Programme, and several Tallinn museums have also received Green Museum certifications. This work will continue into 2024 and beyond. The implementation of environmental management helps to reduce the organization's environmental impact and support sustainable development. It also serves as an effective tool for implementing circular economy principles within the city organization.

These measures highlight Tallinn's commitment to sustainable waste management and environmental stewardship, positioning the city as a leader in waste reduction and transition to circular economy efforts in Estonia.

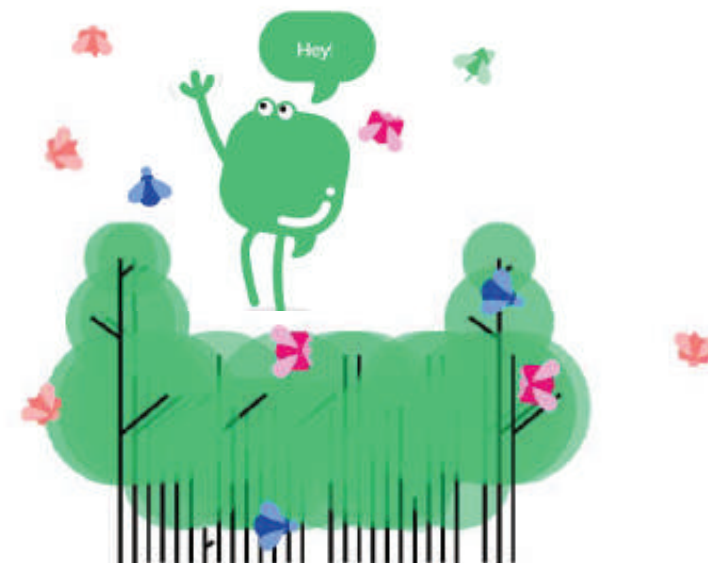
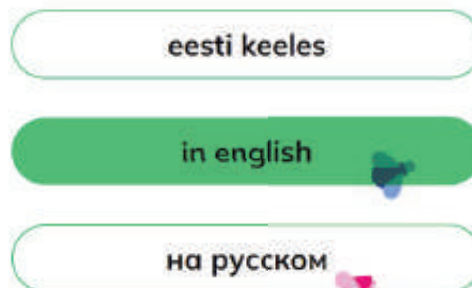
The Green Compass game was developed during the European Green Capital year, with the aim of helping people to understand their current environmental behaviour, to nudge them on four topics: mobility, consumption, energy and in biodiversity. Users were rewarded with little trees for all their current environmentally friendly actions and then were encouraged to give promises to add some more environmentally friendly actions to their everyday life. The main difference with usual CO2 footprint calculators was that people got positive feedback and encouragement to change their habits. The game was launched in June 2023 and collected over 15 000 pledges throughout the year.

<https://rohekompass.ee/en/>

Green pledges already been made:

015815

Green Compass



The Climate Neutral Tallinn initiative emphasizes the creation of collaborative green transition networks to advance local Green Deals and enhance the decision-making capabilities of city officials in relevant fields.

The concept of the R-Klubi (short for "Green Club" in Estonian) emerged from extensive discussions and the findings of the University of Tartu's study "The role of local governments in implementing green transition in Estonia" from November 2022, commissioned by the State Chancellery. The study highlighted that beyond larger cities, most local governments lack cohesive green policies, marked by inconsistency and randomness, and have a limited understanding of green transformation. It underscored the necessity for a collaborative municipal network to manage local green transformation, share best practices, facilitate peer learning, and initiate joint projects.

In spring 2023, Mayor of Tallinn, Mihhail Kõlvart, proposed establishing a national network of local governments focused on green transition, known as the R-Klubi (Green Club). This network acts as a catalyst for municipal leaders, concentrating on strategically chosen environmental and climate issues to guide, conceptualize, and integrate green transformation into the daily management and investment activities of local governments.

The Green Club was founded in partnership with the City of Tallinn, the Estonian Association of Cities and Municipalities, and the National Environment Investments Agency. Its launch took place during the Cities and Municipalities Days on April 12-13 in Tallinn. As the European Green Capital and the inaugural chair of the network, Tallinn played a pivotal role in initiating and funding the club activities in 2023.

"Tallinn has initiatives and experiences as the European Green Capital that we can share with other municipalities, such as the green factor, green procurements, and transitioning to a circular economy. However, there are also valuable lessons to learn from others – similar initiatives are implemented differently in Tallinn and other cities. It is undoubtedly beneficial to exchange experiences and collaborate on new development projects when common interests align", Mayor Kõlvart remarked.

Green Club operates under the leadership of municipalities with a rotating presidency, contributing content, involving international, national, and research partners in network events, and forming the club's steering committee.



BOOSTING GREEN INNOVATION AND EXPERIMENTING

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

NEXPO and Tallinn Green Tech Week

Tallinn Greentech Week and NEXPO (the green technologies exhibition) took place on November 14-17 and was one of the highlights and major events of the Green Capital for showcasing advanced green technologies and promoting international collaboration between European cities, GreenTech companies and leading experts. The Week was organized by the Green Capital team in collaboration with several partners from Estonia and abroad.

The showcase focused on green innovation and displayed nearly 80 exhibitors from around the world. One of the central aims of NEXPO was to raise awareness among people of Estonia about green technologies and highlight how these innovative solutions will affect our daily lives in the future. NEXPO had 64 hours of substantive events programme, featuring a pitch competition, networking events, science, youth, and startup theme days. Green innovation is gaining momentum around the globe, and many solutions that used to be considered science fiction are now becoming tangible. NEXPO had over 2700 visitors.



Alongside NEXPO, the Green Technologies Week hosted five major international conferences and brought together over 4000 participants from 64 countries.

The Cleantech Forum Europe brought together influential leaders in cleantech, focusing on innovation, startups, investment, and governmental policies.

The GreenEST Summit 2023, organised by Technopol, was the largest green technology conference in the region with 400 participants, including experts from the public and private sectors, green technology entrepreneurs, and investors across Europe.

The Smart City Convention, organised in partnership with Tallinn EGC 2023 team and TalTech FinEst Smart City Center of Excellence, brought together 32 city delegations from 26 countries worldwide to discuss strategic urban innovation and smart city tools' human-centred application.

Estonia's first balanced economy conference, **"Elephant in the Room,"** organized by the NGO Green Tiger, explored future economic models and the role of businesses and policymakers in implementing balanced economy principles.

The Green Governance Conference, a collaboration between the Tallinn Strategy Centre and the Stockholm Environment Institute, gathered cities from the Baltic Sea Region and beyond to exchange best practices in green governance and sustainable consumption and production.

Overall, Tallinn Greentech Week and NEXPO were pivotal in advancing discussions, collaboration, and innovation in green technologies. They positioned Tallinn as a global hub for sustainable development and smart city solutions, fostering connections among European cities, businesses, and academic institutions to drive forward the green agenda on a global scale.



nexpotallinn.com

Test in Tallinn was initiated by the Mayor of Tallinn and the EGC 2023 team in cooperation with Tallinn Entrepreneurship Board for exploiting the potential of green innovation and strengthening collaboration with private sector. Tallinn aims to become an attractive hub for testing various (green) technologies, helping both domestic and foreign companies reach global markets with their products and services.

The project represents a unique systematic approach and partnership format to testing innovative solutions in the city, where City of Tallinn offers a conducive environment for testing, open data, and reliable partnership to facilitate the process. Through Test In Tallinn, a company has the opportunity to test its prototypes and technologies in urban environments, while the city gains the opportunity to assess and analyse the usefulness and potential future applications of these technologies (such as the GScan's cosmic radiation scanner tested on the facade of the city government building) for the city at the larger scale.

The city supports testing on a case-by-case basis for innovation projects lasting up to 12 months. After initial validation and analysis of project applications by entrepreneurs, projects are directed to an upper evaluation committee comprising city departments and experts (e.g. Tehnopol). The committee assesses the project's innovative, economic and social impact, sustainability, and applicability in collaboration with Tallinn.

To date, 37 applications have been received, with 21 projects are approved and ongoing. Of the 37 applications received, 18 are from Estonian companies, with the remaining 19 from various countries including, among others, Argentina, the United Kingdom, South Korea, Finland, and the Netherlands.



While focusing on urban mobility, renewable energy, and energy savings, the programme is also open to other test projects, such as innovative materials or educational technologies.

Some examples of the ongoing projects:

XD Visuals is testing a software solution combining planned and current environmental data into a 6D hybrid information model using Tallinn's foundational data to validate scalability and test the model's capabilities.

Cubedai aims to test an energy-saving solution on one of the Tallinn's buildings to confirm hypotheses and find references for scaling.

Spödy wishes to test, improve, and adapt educational games for children aged 3-7.

Pocoplay is testing the generation of employee training materials using artificial intelligence. Over nine months, interviews and prototyping will be conducted at a city institution.

Caeli BV (Netherlands) is testing the possibility of monitoring and visualizing air quality based on satellite data. The solution helps Tallinn test data availability and clarity, aiding in climate change mitigation.

For more information on Test in Tallinn and how to apply, visit: tallinnovation.ee/testintallinn



IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY ON BUILDINGS AND TRANSITION TO GREEN ENERGY

EGC 2023 LEGACY PROJECT

SOFT Academy

In 2023, Tallinn's SOFT Academy project was selected among the top 14 from 99 applications in the European Urban Initiative programme, securing a nearly 5 million euro grant from the ERDF. SOFT Academy marks Tallinn's first neighbourhood-based renovation project, which involves comprehensive renovation of four apartment buildings built in the 1960s along with the refurbishment of public space between and around buildings. The project aims to develop and test an engagement model for city governments to accelerate comprehensive renovation of panel houses.

The project involves apartment associations in utilizing innovative environmentally friendly solutions for renovation work. These associations also contribute to the planning of refurbishment and landscaping of public space, based on the principles of the New European Bauhaus, circular economy, and sustainable renovation. Project activities are ongoing and will continue until August 2027. The concept of a renovation accelerator for Tallinn is being developed, and consideration is being given to how the city can better coordinate future renovation waves. The project partners include TalTech, the Estonian Apartment Association, apartment associations, NGO Elav Tänav, companies Yoko Oma Ltd., MAB Verte Ltd., Think Softer Planning AB (Sweden), as well as the cities of Warsaw (Poland), and Aarhus (Denmark). The EU grant is 4 999 248 euros, the project total cost is 6 249 060 euros.

Green Ambassador

RALF MARTIN SOE

Smart City researcher and expert in Digital Governance for more than ten years, Ralf-Martin is also the founder of the Finest Centre for Smart Cities, based in Tallinn. The core principles of the FinEst Centre for Smart Cities are to improve the citizens' quality of life in urban areas bringing strong and effective cooperation at various levels in the process. City leaders, researchers, scientists, citizens, business managers, and engineers are brought together to create the better version of smart cities.

We launched FinEst, a smart city centre of excellence, with the aim of making cities a better living environment through scientific development. Tallinn as the European Green Capital 2023 was an occasion to pursue the research on smart cities and green initiatives, it also gave a greater reach to the various propositions.



In addition, Tallinn has also helped citizens with a support scheme for renovating the facades of the buildings, to improve energy efficiency. In 2023 the budget for this support scheme was 360 000 euros.

EGC 2023 LEGACY PROJECT

The European Green Capital Solar Park

In 2023, Tallinn's Green Capital year was marked by an objective to undertake projects that bring long-term impactful changes. Utilitas initiated the construction of city's largest solar park with a capacity of 9.3 MW, consisting of 15 600 panels covering 11 hectares. This new solar park directly contributes to reducing the city's carbon footprint. The decision to invest in this project in 2023 led to it symbolically being named the European Green Capital Solar Park. It was inaugurated in June 2024, and the total investment cost was 8 million euros.

To enhance the city's environment and improve the quality of work and living environments, approximately 5000 trees were planted around the solar park. This new facility complements Utilitas' existing energy complex in Tallinn, which includes two combined heat and power plants and a smaller solar park. In 2024, the complex will expand to include green hydrogen production and a station, as well as a heat storage facility.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

EGC 2023 OTHER ACTIVITIES

Investments to green energy

In pursuit of sustainable energy production, the City of Tallinn is investing in solar batteries installations on municipality-owned buildings. In 2022, the city began to build solar power plants on its buildings to reduce the need for the purchase of grid electricity and, through that, the grid service. Currently, over 30 city buildings have solar panels installed on their roofs, with installations continuing in the coming years. The largest ongoing project is at the Tondiraba Ice Hall, where up to 1 hectare of solar panels can be installed on the roof. Each MWh of solar electricity produced reduces emissions by approx. 0.64 tons per MWh compared to grid electricity. If all 30 solar power plants built in Tallinn so far with a total capacity of 1 MW produced a total of 1000 MWh of electricity per year, the annual emissions would decrease by 640 tons compared to grid electricity. Additional procurements are already being planned to increase the proportion of solar energy generated on Tallinn's rooftops. Solar power stations are also planned for Tallinn Botanical Gardens, and Tallinn Zoo, with an annual investment plan of 0.8 million euros over the next two years. Moreover, all new municipal buildings include solar panels as part of their construction. From 2022, also a new subsidy scheme has been available to assist housing associations in installing solar panels.

One of Tallinn's strategic objectives is to ensure the availability of environmentally friendly district heating. Tallinn boasts a highly developed and widely covered district heating network (there are 4792 buildings in the city's district heating area, with a district heating network spanning 520 km), and plans are underway to expand in cooperation with the city and the district heating company Utilitas who have established a joint venture, Utilitas Tallinna Soojus.

This newly formed entity focuses on investing in sustainable district heating and cooling systems. Utilitas Tallinn has invested approximately 450 million euros into Tallinn's district heating networks with the goal of achieving carbon neutrality before 2030. New technologies are being developed to utilize also seawater and wastewater for renewable energy solutions, which could reduce CO2 emissions by at least 100 000 tons annually compared to current levels.

Tallinn has also launched its first district cooling project in Fahle Quarter. The initial cooling capacity is 2.5 MW, expandable to 8 MW, and potentially up to 20 MW with the development of the Central-Tallinn cooling station and network. Most of the cooling energy will be produced by heat pumps using wastewater and seawater, significantly reducing primary energy consumption. District cooling is far more energy-efficient and has a smaller carbon footprint than local cooling solutions. The project is scheduled to become operational in 2030, with an estimated investment cost of approximately 450 million euros.

There is also a focus on increasing the energy efficiency of city-owned buildings, including the use of construction solutions based on wooden modules. Additionally, new energy production solutions are being tested, such as energy production from seawater.



In 2023, Tallinn City Council approved the "Tallinn Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan until 2035," which prioritizes the development of sustainable modes of transportation. By 2035, the aim is that 70% of citizens use public transportation compared to other mobility options. Our aim is to have carbon-neutral public transport by 2035.

Tallinn has developed a city mobility model using specialized software PTV Visum to analyse various possible reorganizations and their impact on the mobility environment. Additionally, an increase in data-based monitoring capacity is planned for 2024. Cameras will be installed in various locations in the city to provide real-time information on pedestrians, cyclists, and electric scooter users.

Starting with simpler reorganizations, speed limits have been gradually reduced in 2022-2023. Speed limits of 30 km/h and 40 km/h have been implemented on approximately 50 streets. Reductions in speed limits will continue, especially in the city centre and areas where traffic-related noise has harmful effects on residents' health and the environment. Completely eliminating private vehicle use is not realistic, but Tallinn is making efforts to accelerate the transition to electric vehicles. To this end, Tallinn has developed a concept for public electric vehicle charging infrastructure. In 2024, the first tender will be carried out on approximately 60 city-owned properties to establish a public charging network. Development of the charging infrastructure will continue in the following years.

Public transport in Tallinn has been free since 2013, now an active direction is being taken to improve transport connections and switch the bus fleet to renewable fuels. All Tallinn's trolleys and trams already run on renewable electricity, nearly 40% of buses use biogas produced from biowaste, and the aim is to significantly increase this volume in the coming years. In 2022-2023 the city purchased 350 new buses that have a preparedness to use biogas, and in 2023, city also tested the first hydrogen bus. In 2024, the first 15 electric buses will start operating in Tallinn, and there are plans for a larger-scale transition from diesel and biogas buses to electric buses in the long term.





Significant changes in the city's public transportation system began in 2023. Construction of the new tram line, connecting Tallinn Airport with Tallinn Port, will be completed in autumn 2024. With funding from the European Union, two additional tram lines will be built between 2024 and 2029. Additionally, there are plans to reconstruct Tallinn's trolleybus network, expand it, and introduce new-generation battery trolleybuses. To ensure better integration of public transportation, cooperation is underway with the state and surrounding municipalities to develop multimodal junctions, integrating city public transport with national railway transport. In the long term, there are plans to create a unified regional public transportation network in Tallinn and Harju County.

Green Ambassador

KRISTJAN LIND

Estonian entrepreneur, co-founder and CEO of Bikeep. His story is inspirational as he created his company by combining all of his passions. He is really committed towards citizens' well-being in urban areas. Bikeep is a small infrastructure for micro mobility which provides safe bike parking all over the world thanks to smart innovation. You can now park your bike with ease and in total safety. Kristjan usually introduces this idea by saying: "Please, show me a negative side of cycling."

**Our mission is to make cities environments
that support the health
of their citizens.**



Development of cycling infrastructure continues in line with Tallinn's cycling strategy – 17 new lanes to be created between 2022 and 2026. In recent years, a pilot project for temporary cycle paths in the city centre has been implemented, leading to a 2-4-fold increase in the number of cyclists in various locations. Based on this information, the decision has been made to establish permanent cycle paths in the city centre, funded by the European Union and the city budget. In 2024, Tallinn will build 8 major cycle path connections, connecting different city districts to the city centre. In 2024, an analysis will be conducted to assess the possibilities of establishing a city-led public bike-sharing scheme. From 2022, the city is also supporting the construction of bicycle storage facilities of the apartment buildings. In 2023 the budget was 165 000 euros and will be 315 000 euros in 2024.



Supporting healthy mobility of children. Tallinn provides €100 for a school child to buy a bicycle if they obtain a bicycle licence and an additional €25 for a safety helmet. By June 2023, there were 325 applicants.

In 2024, Tallinn started the pilot project, where city is renting electric bicycles from CityBike for work-related trips, to promote physical activity among our employees, reduce the number of work-related trips made by cars, and decrease both individual and the city organisation's carbon footprint.

Key Performance Indicators for Innovative Climate Resilience



Target

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the territory of Tallinn. Base level: 4,2 M tons of CO₂ (2007). Target level: 40% reduction by 2030. Carbon neutral by 2050

Share of municipal waste recycling. Base level: 50 % (2020)
Target level: over 65% (2030)

Residents will have a public transport stop within a 400m radius of their home. Base level: 87,3% (2020).
Target level: 90% (2035)

Public transport, walking and cycling increase in Tallinn's modal shift
Base level: 41% (2020)
Target level: 50% (2025), 70% (2035)

The percentage of pupils in general education schools who move independently to school.
Base level: school 87% (2019), hobbies and exercise 86% (2019)
Target level: 90% (2035)

Tallinn places regularly in the TOP 20 of international competitions and indexes of innovation and sustainability. Base level: Intelligent Community of the Year 2020, II-III place in the European Innovation Capital competition 2017. Goal level: TOP 20 in European Digital City Index, Global Destination Sustainability Index, CityKeys, Expat City Ranking, and others alike.

Result

The GHG emissions have not been measured in 2022/23.

2022 level: 50,3%

2023 level: 87,8%

2023 level: 63%

School: 80%.
Hobbies and extracurricular activities: 69%

2023
TOP10 of European Cities and Regions of the Future
TOP 8 Startup Heatmap Europe
TOP 23 Expat City Ranking
TOP 32 IMD Smart City Index
Global Destination Sustainability Index 63,8 on a scale of 100

PRIORITY 3



CITY FOR ALL. FOSTERING TRANSFORMATION THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY GOVERNANCE AND CITIZENS ENGAGEMENT

Sustainability governance

Sustainability is not only a paradigm but also an inclusive and collaborative governance method. This priority area supports all the objectives of the UN 2023 Agenda, the European Green Deal, as well as the Urban Agenda of the EU.

EGC 2023 LEGACY PROJECT

Sustainability Governance Competence Centre

In the year of the European Green Capital, the City of Tallinn launched an international competence centre that consolidates and shares best practices, knowledge, and experiences to support the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) both in Tallinn and in other cities and municipalities in Estonia and beyond. The centre primarily focuses on sustainability management and governance topics.



International Hub

As part of the Flagship, we launched an International Hub with three main objectives:

1. To provide a space for knowledge exchange around work done by cities and various networks and organisations on the topic of sustainability governance;
2. To co-create new expertise helping cities to close the action gap between their ambitions and achieving sustainability goals, such as the SDGs;
3. To feed into the policy dialogue about the important role of cities in achieving the 2030 agenda and the European Green Deal.

On March 21 we presented our plans for 2023 in an online webinar attended by a dedicated group of 25 cities and potential peer learning partners. We confirmed strong interest in the hub through a follow-up survey and fruitful exchanges with Eurocities members of the SDG Taskforce, Stockholm Environment Institute, TalTech, ICLEI, the European Energy Cities network, and Nordregio, to mention some.

During the course of 2023, we organised a series of successful events as part of the hub's activities:

On June 22, we held a session about the hub during the **Urban Future Conference** in Stuttgart, Germany, with representatives from Demos Helsinki, ICLEI and the cities of Mannheim, Stuttgart and Espoo. We delved into what it means to build sustainability governance in cities, including "humble" governance.

On September 5, we held a side event to the global **Open Government Partnership (OGP) Summit** held in Tallinn, with a panel discussion, followed by a reception hosted by the Mayor of Tallinn. Over 130 participants from 30 countries attended the discussion on how open government and citizen engagement can help achieve SDGs.

On September 28-29, we hosted a **Peer Review** session organised by **Interreg Policy Learning Platform** to gather feedback on the work done by the city of Tallinn on the governance topic. Prominent experts, such as Prof. Dr Louis Meuleman, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development (PS4SD), and Jeremy Williams, International Public Policy Observatory (IPPO) and UCL, and peers from the city of Malmö and Madrid provided valuable insights.

On November 15, we hosted a network meeting for the **URBACT network Cities for Sustainability Governance**, including representatives from the network of Finland's six largest cities: SDGs46. The event was supported by the **Smart City Convention**.

Finally, we hosted **two online peer learning events** on May 31 and November 8, 2023. Both dealt with topics relevant to the wishes expressed by hub members.



Tallinn was appointed as vice chair in the Eurocities SDGs taskforce and the Urban Agenda working group in early 2024. In the first quarter of 2024, Tallinn received six international speaking requests on Green Capital and sustainability governance.

Looking ahead, the Hub work continues with collaboration with the EU JRC, OECD, UNECE, UN Habitat, UNEP and many other organisations, as well as organising international trainings, workshops and peer learning sessions planned for 2024, and a newly launched quarterly newsletter.

Tallinn is also a partner in the new URBACT "Cities for Sustainability Governance" network (2023-2025). The network aims to strengthen how cities work on holistic sustainability through new governance approaches, closing the action gap between ambitions we set and what is being achieved on the ground. In this project, Tallinn is focusing on building organisational culture and mindset for sustainability. This involves creating a narrative for storytelling and communicating the sustainable city; revising and amending all city training programmes with sustainable development modules.

EGC 2023 LEGACY PROJECT

Tallinn Sustainability Governance Model

One of Tallinn's key objectives as the European Green Capital has been the so called "green nudging" – initiating organizational changes within the city through modernizing city management, enhancing synergy and collaboration between sectors, developing competencies and knowledge among city employees on sustainability, and implementing practices of citizen engagement and co-creation so that these become integral parts of the city's DNA and organisational culture.

Tallinn's sustainability governance framework is based on three sustainability pillars – environmental, social, and economic sustainability, and focuses on three key elements of governance: inclusion and collaboration, strategic planning and policy development, organizational development.



In 2023, our focus has been on several key initiatives related to Tallinn Sustainability Governance Model development:

- A)** Developing a methodology and tool for the ex-ante assessment of the social, environmental, and economic impacts of planned city investments, projects and interventions.
- B)** Drafting the Tallinn Circular Economy Development Plan within the SDG framework.
- C)** Creating a tool to assess the alignment of Tallinn's development planning system with SDGs.

The goal is to assist city leaders and officials in conceptualizing SDGs, facilitating the identification of synergies or conflicts between sectors, and mapping the necessary stakeholder involvement both within and outside the city organization.

In parallel, alongside the development of the sustainability governance model, the **Communication Plan "Sustainable Tallinn"** has been drafted. This communication plan draws on the experiences and narratives of Tallinn as the European Green Capital. Its objective is to enhance external communication by framing city activities through the lens of sustainability, ensuring clear, understandable, and consistent messaging. The plan also encompasses internal communication activities aimed at improving the competencies of city employees, fostering a sustainability mindset, raising awareness, and aligning the city organization's values with sustainability principles. These efforts, including the finalization of the communication plan, are scheduled to conclude by the end of 2024.

In addition, in cooperation with the city's human resource department, the EGC 2023 team organized a **Green Capital training course for the city officials and employees** on the topics of sustainable development, waste management, circular economy, green procurements, climate change, urban greenery and biodiversity. A total of 328 people participated in the four lecture days.

In 2024, it is planned to revise all the city training programmes (both for officials and politicians), to include sustainable development as an integral part of the organisational learning.



Twinning

Third direction of the Competence Centre work is supporting other municipalities through twinning initiatives. In 2023, four twinning projects were launched with Vinnytsia (Ukraine), Kutaisi (Georgia), Saaremaa municipality, and the city of Narva (Estonia) in the fields of circular economy and urban greenery.

"On the topic of sustainability management, Tallinn is a pioneer and a frontrunner among European cities. We aim to elevate the importance of sustainable development in the EU urban policies and the European Commission. The circular economy is a crucial element for reaching sustainability targets for Tallinn, and we have already taken significant steps in this direction, especially after the creation of a comprehensive OECD report on Tallinn's transition to a circular economy".

Margot Roose, Deputy Mayor of Tallinn

In the spring of 2024, a study visit, and training seminar were held in Tallinn for these twinning municipalities. Together with experts from Tallinn's circular economy department and consultancy company Civitta, consultations were provided for creating a waste management plan for Vinnytsia, a circular economy roadmap for Kutaisi, and a circular economy roadmap for Saaremaa Municipality. During the visit, Tallinn introduced its sustainability governance model and shared best practices and lessons learned in waste and circular economy management in Tallinn.



CITIZENS' ENGAGEMENT AND CO-CREATION

EGC 2023 LEGACY PROJECT



Citizens' engagement programme "Let's create together"

One of the goals of the Green Capital was to involve as many city residents, institutions, and organizations as possible and give them the opportunity to become co-creators. Thus, the European Green Capital programme "Let's Create Together" was launched. After three rounds, more than 100 applications were received, with almost half of them being granted funding. The programme supported a total of 49 different projects with over one million euros.

Here are some examples of the projects:

A temporary park in Town Hall Square by the Estonian Association of Architects, providing seating and hosting various activities that temporarily revitalized the square through landscaping and spatial installations.

"Let's Go Zero!" exhibition organised by the same name NGO. The aim was to visually convey the nature of waste, the magnitude of the problem, and offer solutions through impactful metaphors. Visitors could view and interact with exhibits to gain an understanding of the circular economy and the possibilities of material recycling.

Green and Sustainable May Run. NGO "Liikuv Eesti" ("Estonia on the move") used innovative medals for Estonia's largest women's sport event, made of seed paper, which everyone could later plant in a suitable location. The event also implemented EGC 2023 environmentally friendly event guidelines.

Construction of the **Logi Community Sauna** by NGO "Kuum ja Külma" ("Hot and Cold") –a citizen-initiated wood-fired seaside steam room. It also offers opportunities for winter swimming and various leisure activities in the summer. Operated by local community members and volunteers, the sauna promotes significant social involvement.

"**URBANINSECTA**" – large modular insect hotels by the Company Cappo, created in different locations to draw attention to insects as a unique part of urban nature and emphasize their importance in the ecosystem.

ECO-FRIENDLY CHOICES IN FOOD CULTURE. NGO "Tallinn Restaurant Week" aimed to make restaurants use more environmentally friendly produced food options. In cooperation with the city, guidelines were set to help restaurants highlight dishes from their regular menus to meet specific criteria. These chosen dishes were then marked with an according green label. 24 restaurants took part in this effort.

Green Ambassador

KRISTJAN PÄESKE

Co-owner of Lee Restaurant and Lore Bistro, quietly leading by example in the Estonian hospitality scene. Both venues, acclaimed for their Green Key certification, embody a commitment to environmental stewardship and the well-being of their staff.

From farm to table – by working with the local community we go back to our roots and towards a more balanced living environment.



CLIMATHON. Cleantech Estonia invited all interested parties to participate in a 24-hour Climathon on October 27-28, held at TalTech's Innovation Centre Mektory. The goal was to find innovative solutions to urban climate problems and contribute to creating a more sustainable urban environment. The best teams were supported with financial and non-financial rewards to further develop their ideas.

CIRCULAR DESIGN STUDIO "TRASH TO TREND". The studio was opened in partnership with Tallinn Art Academy and fashion designer Reet Aus. It focused on extending the lifespan of clothing and footwear, promoting sustainable consumption.

TALLINN MARATHON – Estonia's most participated international sports event. The medals of the event were produced from old electronic devices and vinyl records. Tallinn was the first European capital to make the participation medals for an international sports event using consumer electronics waste.

URBAN CHICKENS IN THE NORTH FACTORY – NGO "Põhjala Factory" created the first urban garden in Kopli peninsula and received an addition in the form of five urban chickens at the premises of Põhjala factory.

"MODEL, THIS IS A STORY ABOUT SPACE" – from May 7 to June 4, the gallery street of Solaris Shopping Centre was filled with imaginative models created by the students at Architecture School. The exhibition was a collaboration, showcasing creative solutions from children and youth on topics related to urban space and living environments.

"THE BIRD AVIARY OF THE CAPITAL ON PALJASSAARE" – a bird watching and ringing centre established by the Tallinn Bird Club. The aim was to spark interest among the area residents in understanding and preserving nature.

IMPACT DAY 2023 – the largest international sustainability festival in the Baltics took place on October 5-6. More than 2000 guests and 100 performers on 3 stages and over 50 organizations at the expo area took part in this event.

"TALLINN SMART BEEHIVES 2.0" – a green technology project by TalTech Tehnopol. Three experimental organic beehives, equipped with solar panels and sensors that measure temperature, humidity, light, carbon dioxide, noise, airborne organic compounds etc., were placed on the roofs and courtyards of the city buildings, with sensors transmitting data and alert signals to the hive owners.



GREEN CAPITAL AMBASSADORS

Environmental issues cannot be solved by anyone alone, so our priority in the year of the European Green Capital was to strengthen cooperation with Tallinn's residents, businesses, and other organizations.

Green Capital Ambassadors – in total 16 environmental activists, influencers, designers, scientists, cultural figures, and entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds who, through their example, actions, or knowledge, could inspire others and contribute to the implementation of more environmentally sustainable lifestyles and principles. We involved Green Capital ambassadors in various activities and events, and many of them led different Green Capital projects or were involved in other ways.

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT CityHUB

The CityHub is an exhibition and co-creation space equipped with state-of-the-art visualization technology, with the aim of facilitating citizens' participation in urban design processes and fostering meaningful discussions between the city, developers, professionals, and citizens. The hub was opened in August 2023, offering space for regular meetings, exhibitions and seminars.

Green Ambassador

MIHHAIL JEVDOKIMOV

Head of inclusion and environmental education division Tallinn Urban Environment and Public Works Department. Mihhail has a Master of Arts in Social Science (MA) degree in Political Science and specializes in citizen inclusion and participation. He believes what providing opportunities for the citizens to participate in public decision making and consensus building is essential to modern governance.

Effective inclusion is best achieved when all the different stakeholders are aware of the process of participation, understand what it means at different stages and see how it shapes decision making process.



EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

Participatory Budgeting

In the European Green Capital year, a total of €1 000 000 was allocated for Tallinn's 2023 participatory budget. The focus of the participatory budgeting concentrated on projects in 12 EGC areas. During the idea collection phase, a total of 415 ideas were submitted from all districts of Tallinn. The city analysed the submitted ideas from temporal, financial, technical, and legal perspectives, and 114 ideas were forwarded to the public final vote. Any person aged at least 14, whose residence was registered in the Tallinn population register, could participate in the vote. A total of 9433 residents participated in the participatory budget vote, casting a total of 15 693 votes for the 114 ideas. All the winning ideas – total of 8, one for each of Tallinn's districts – were environmental and urban space themed, such as creating insect stops (bus shelters with plant-covered roofs), enhancing street spaces with cozy pocket parks, noise-cancelling landscaping, planting new food groves and installing public drinking water taps. The 2024 participatory budget will also focus primarily on environmental and greener urban space projects.

EGC 2023 FLAGSHIP PROJECT

Tallinn's Green Capital Citizens' Assembly

The Green Capital title inspired the city organization to find and experiment with more effective methods of co-creation and engagement, providing a great opportunity for collective thinking, deeper collaboration with residents, businesses, and organizations, and raising awareness about nature. The Citizens' Assembly is an inclusive format that was first used in Tallinn as a part of the Green Capital programme. The Green Capital Citizens' Assembly followed an internationally established structure. 30 000 invitations were sent out and 60 participants were selected by geographical and socio-economical aspects, and the first assembly took place from October 7 to November 4. With the help of experts and stakeholders, Tallinn invited citizens to discuss and answer the question: „How can we link Tallinn's green spaces into an inviting urban whole?". The Assembly made 39 proposals, that were handed over to the city government and are currently in the process of being sorted for implementation.

onlineexpo.com/en/rahvakogu



Key performance Indicators for Sustainability Governance and Citizens Engagement

Target

Number of co-creation events organised. Target: 50

Number of international events on sustainable urban development organised.
Target: 4

Number of people engaged to the City Hub Events.
Target: 200

Number of people involved in the Climate Assembly.
Target: 500

Number of sustainable urban development projects initiated:
Target: 20

Number of events, implementing the Environmentally Friendly
Events Guideline.
Target: 50

Result

Altogether 138 co-creation events were organised

In collaboration with international partners, Tallinn organised and hosted 31 high-level conferences in 2023.

Altogether 60 events were organised at the City Hub, with over 900 participants

Tallinn wanted 500 people to accept the invitation to the citizen's assembly, but altogether over 800 people responded to the invitation.

61

52



ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

It is crucial to cultivate environmentally conscious habits in children and young people, ensuring they grow into adults who understand the significance of environmental issues and the impact of their actions on the environment. Therefore, considerable effort has been invested in engaging children and youth during the European Green Capital year.

Environmental themed school year

The academic year 2022/2023 in Tallinn schools and kindergartens was dedicated to nature and environmental protection. Tallinn has 57 municipal schools and 127 kindergartens, 97 of them are part of the Eco-Schools programme. Twelve partners were involved in offering a diverse range of activities, including Botanical Gardens, Zoo, the Eco-Schools initiative, and the Environmental Society of Tallinn Youth.

Green Ambassador

VIIVI LOKK

Viivi Lokk has worked in advancing the Tallinn educational system for over 20 years and has contributed a lot to bringing more sustainability focus to Tallinn schools and kindergartens. She oversaw the nature and environmental protection theme-year 2022/2023 in Tallinn schools and kindergartens. She is currently working as the quality manager of the Tallinn Kopli Vocational School.

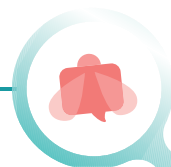
Every action for the nature-preserving, sustainable world and a better tomorrow starts with me. If our next young generation acquires value attitudes and behaviours as learners from kindergarten onwards to maintain a sustainable world, we have fulfilled our mission as educators.



Highlights of the school year programme

Events organised by the Youth Environmental Society "Keskkonnaühisus"

("Environmental Unity"). Young people orchestrated happenings addressing various environmental topics for their peers. They took the initiative in organising seminars and selecting topics and speakers appealing to young audiences.



Inventions and Innovation Competition in Tallinn kindergartens.

Children were encouraged to propose ideas for addressing environmental issues through the reuse of materials. 53 kindergartens took part in the competition.



Research and Creative Works Conference of Natural Sciences Teachers.

Aimed to inspire students to creatively approach environmental problems and propose solutions to contemporary environmental challenges.



Mascot "Kimmu"

A drawing competition was held to select the European Green Capital 2023 symbol. The search was for a mascot representing city nature, environmental protection, intelligence, and sustainable thinking. Approximately 800 drawings were submitted, with the winning design by 12-year-old Mona Vilms. Kimmu is depicted as a nature creature promoting environmental protection, biodiversity preservation, and outdoor activity. The mascot was present in all the events meant for children and families, interacting with the audience and giving them healthy snacks and books about circularity.

Speech Competition "Biodiverse City"

Fifteen to nineteen-year-olds were invited to compose speeches on the topic "Biodiverse City." Winners included Liisa-Lotte Tõiste in the Estonian language category and Derek Kadu in the English category. Liisa-Lotte delivered the speech at the EGC Opening, while Derek took stage at the EGC Awards Ceremony.

"Tomorrow, I want to breathe"

In collaboration with Tallinn – European Green Capital 2023, the Youth Environmental Association "Keskkonnaühisus" organised an environmentally focused event at the Viru Centre as part of the Clean Air and Blue Skies Day. The event commenced with a panel discussion titled "Can the Green Transition Withstand Turbulence?" followed by roundtable discussions on topics such as consumption, investment, urban planning, forestry, transportation, and food. Attendees had the opportunity to reduce digital waste with assistance from Telia and utilise the Green Compass. Approximately 120 youths took part.

The Youth Environmental Association "Keskkonnaühisus", established in 2022 by three high school students, aims to unite environmentally conscious youth in Estonia and provide educational opportunities on environmental topics. The association's focus on initiatives led by young people for young people ensures that the topics addressed resonate with their peers' perspectives.

School Programme at NEXPO

Special tours for school groups were organised at the green technology exposition NEXPO, allowing students to learn about new technologies with the guidance of experts. Altogether 15 tours were organised for 365 students from 12 schools.

Waste sorting workshops in kindergartens

To mark Tallinn's designation as the European Green Capital, training workshops were conducted in over 20 kindergartens in January, focusing on waste sorting and environmental awareness among children.

Food waste workshops in schools

During the opening of Tallinn as the European Green Capital 2023, workshops were conducted in 22 Tallinn schools for 7th to 9th grade students, focusing on economical and sustainable food consumption. Led by Peeter Pihel, chef of Fotografiska Tallinn restaurant and advocate for Estonian food and sustainability, the workshops introduced eco-friendly concepts and innovative approaches to sustainable living and eating.

Since these workshops were very popular, we had another round of similar events in November, when students could visit FotografiskaS and learn how to cook without food waste. 33 classes from 17 different schools took part, altogether 585 students.



Green Ambassador

MARKKO MÄLL

Markko has been helping the world solve the waste problem already from 2012, when he started collaboration with Let's Do It World. He is a waste consultant and founder of Nutriloop—a company whose vision is to tighten the carbon and nutrient loop to transition towards a more effective, circular and resilient food system.

I dream of a world that integrates and uses bio-waste to grow local and healthy food. I dream of a new food system based on a circular economy and community, where compost made from bio-waste is an integral part of growing chemical-free food – a bio circulation model where the problem of one system becomes the solution of another.



Waste Wolf teaches children to sort garbage

The Waste Wolf educational program aims to teach children aged 5-7 about waste prevention, recycling, and the circular economy, fostering environmental awareness from an early age. The programme includes visits to kindergartens and elementary schools and activities at city events for families. The aim is to raise environmental awareness by teaching children age-appropriate waste prevention, waste collection by type and the basics of circular economy, including introducing the problem of marine litter and ways to prevent and reduce it.

Biodiversity Action Days

Students from Tallinn schools participated in activities such as building bat shelters and maintaining bird nest boxes, promoting biodiversity conservation in urban areas. Seven schools and around 250 students took part of the bat shelter building project. Tallinn is rich in bats, there are 12 species of bats living in Estonia, all live in Tallinn, too. In nature, bats find shelter in tree cavities, buildings, bridges, and other structures, but there are not enough of these places. The child-made shelters were installed in their schoolyards and in the two bat-rich areas of Tallinn, Kadriorg and Ülemiste.

Over 450 children from 10 kindergartens took part in the bird nest cleaning action days. It is necessary to empty the boxes of old nest material every year to prevent the spread of parasites in the nest before a new nesting period.

"Let's Go Zero!" Exhibition and Educational Programme

Designed to raise environmental awareness among children and young people, this interactive exhibition is accompanied by educational workshops on environmental topics. 24 student groups visited the exhibition, and 35 workshops were held.

Beekeeping Education

Tallinn Beekeepers Society implemented a beekeeping education programme in educational institutions to promote biodiversity awareness. The programme took place in 6 kindergartens and 4 schools. In addition, the itinerary was available at several big family events. Altogether 1000 kids took part.

PARK(ing) Day

PARK(ing) Day is a global event where curbside parking spaces are transformed into small parks or recreational areas. Three parking spaces in Tallinn were converted for PARK(ing) Day by the students of Estonian Art Academy, offering activities such as outdoor sitting space, games, and mini golf, encouraging citizens to rethink urban spaces.

"My Car-free City". Robotex First Green City Entrepreneurial Competition

Robotex International 2023 Robot League focused on the theme "My Car-free City," encouraging children to explore robotics and sustainability. The purpose of organizing the Green City Entrepreneurial competition was to introduce entrepreneurship and its connection to energy saving and green thinking, as well as the possibility of using robots and, even more widely, automation through the creation of new companies to young target groups. More than 100 children aged 7-12 years, in total of 65 teams around the world participated in the event and presented their technology-related works and prototypes.



Student Hackathon

A 10-hour hackathon provided high school and vocational students with an opportunity to develop business ideas for enhancing urban environments, with mentorship from industry experts. 44 young people took part of the hackathon and came up with 10 ideas.

Children and Family Events during the Save Our Sea Campaign

The Baltic Sea Family Day offered opportunities for families to explore a research vessel and participate in environmental classes on marine life. Approximately 700 people took part. The Maritime Museum also held special programmes on the Baltic Sea for school groups from September to November. Over 1000 students took part of the museum programmes.

Vivita Free Play Area

The project collected fallen trees from Tallinn's parks, which were then used to make the main components of the playground. Two workshops were organised in the Vivita studio to design the area, and in addition, the children were able to participate in the design process independently any time they visited. Children could come up with ideas, plan, saw, sand, paint and drill. In total, more than 80 children and young people participated in the workshops and construction of the play area. In agreement with the city, area of Kakumäe beach became the permanent location of the playground, housing the installation since the end of June 2023.



GLOBAL COLLABORATION



One of the broader goals of the European Green Capital in 2023 was to enhance Tallinn's international reputation and create a positive image among other cities and international organizations. It was also crucial to establish strong collaboration with global key partners, both to enrich the title year, ensure follow-up activities, as well as to enhance competence and potential in sustainable city management.

In collaboration with international partners, Tallinn hosted **31 high-level conferences** in 2023. Our partners included influential organizations such as the European Commission, OECD, Committee of the Regions, Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, ICLEI, and Eurocities. In addition to topics like green innovation, sustainable urban management, and smart city concepts, these conferences addressed challenges such as energy efficiency, digital twinning, and urban problems resulting from climate change.

In 2023, Tallinn joined with the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change and the New Bauhaus and received invitations to join ICLEI and the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Official events

The official Opening Ceremony of the European Green Capital 2023 was held on January 21st at the Tallinn Cruise Terminal, where Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius and the Mayor of the 2022 European Green Capital Grenoble, Éric Piolle, handed over the European Green Capital title to Tallinn. The opening ceremony was a theatrical performance featuring specially created musical performances, short films, speeches, and surprises. The opening event was broadcasted on national television, accompanied by specially produced clips introducing Tallinn's activities as the Green Capital.



The European Green Capital and European Green Leaf Awards Ceremony took place on October 5th. We were delighted to congratulate the City of Vilnius for receiving the European Green Capital 2025 title and our best wishes go to the proud winners of European Green Leaf Award 2025 – the city of Trevisio and the city of Viladecans.

The world premiere of the nature film "Rohelisem Tallinn" ("Greener Tallinn") took place at the Awards Ceremony, created especially for this occasion by Joosep Matjus and Katri Rannastu, featuring original music "Aastaajad" ("Seasons") composed by Tauno Aints and performed by the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Tõnu Kaljuste.

European Green Capital Network meetings

During the title year, two European Green Capital Network (EGCN) meetings were organised in Tallinn. The meeting in January 2023 was focused on discussions on the network's modus operandi, renewal of the Terms of Reference (initiated by Tallinn), network's working plan and priority themes. Members were also introduced to Tallinn's EGC 2023 programme and flagship projects, and city's urban innovation projects in Ülemiste City hub. The event hosted 33 participants.

The second meeting was organised back-to-back with the EGC Awards Ceremony and the European Green Leaf Network meeting in October 2023. This event brought together 72 participants from 18 countries and 32 cities and covered cities' experiences in tackling climate mitigation and adaptation and dealing with greening and biodiversity. The New European Bauhaus initiative was introduced, along the new Terms of Reference, that were developed during the year in cooperation with the EGCN Troika and the DG ENVi. The document was approved by the EGC Network members.



International conferences and events held in Tallinn

The European Green Capital year was very vivid with international events focusing on various topics from sustainability governance, green energy transition, circular economy to urban innovation.

On January 26, the 3rd Smart City Exchange Forum "Collaboration drives innovation: City-to-city, research & innovation partnerships" focused on collaboration structures between cities and research and innovation ecosystems. The first part of the day covered the concept of twin cities Helsinki and Tallinn, while the second part zoomed into regional, European, and international examples of city-to-city collaboration.

The 5th international OECD circular economy roundtable was held in Tallinn on June 6, co-organised by the European Committee of Regions ENVE Commission, OECD and EGC 2023 Tallinn. The report on Tallinn's circular economy was introduced. More than 100 people from 24 countries participated in the event, with another 200 people from 63 countries watching the live broadcast. The roundtable was listed as a part of the EU Green Week programme.

On September 5, the international conference "Empowering Cities: Accelerating the Green Energy Transition" was organized by Tallinn – European Green Capital 2023 and the Covenant of Mayors Europe. We hosted 85 participants from 21 countries and 38 cities.

The focus of the event was to accelerate the transition to renewable energy in urban areas. Discussions covered Tallinn's energy sector challenges and solutions, there were discussions of what are the best innovative solutions for sustainable cities and how to create them.



The keynote speaker of the event was Kadri Simson, European Commissioner for Energy. According to her, most of the produced energy is consumed in cities, and therefore cities and their residents play a significant role in the green transition. *"Collaboration between cities, countries, and the European Commission helped us achieve significant gas savings last year, and only together will we achieve our 2030 and 2050 goals. We cannot change our history and location, but we can change the way we produce and consume energy,"* she concluded.

On September 5, Tallinn organized a pre-event to the Open Government Partnership Summit, featuring a panel discussion, followed by a reception hosted by the Mayor of Tallinn, Mihhail Kõlvart. The goal was to gather local leaders to discuss the importance of local action to "turbocharge" the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Mayors, governors, and leading experts highlighted how local and regional governments are making the SDGs a reality on the ground through open government and citizen engagement. Cities were highlighted as places for democratic innovation and inclusivity, with transparency as a core principle uniting government around the world.

The international sustainable tourism destinations conference Green Destinations 2023 was held on October 9-10. During the conference, a cooperation memorandum for a green corridor between Estonia and Finland was signed. It brought together around 240 attendees from 43 different countries around the world. Visitors came from Europe, North America, the Middle East, Central America, Asia and Africa. Over two days, attendees discussed what their destinations could do to enhance their sustainability efforts, and how they can guide travellers to notice and acknowledge these solutions. The conference was organised by the Tourism Department of the Tallinn Strategic Management Office (Visit Tallinn) and the Tourism Department of the Estonian Business and Innovation Agency (Visit Estonia).



From 14 to 17 November, the European Green Capital 2023 organised its biggest event – The GreenTech Week

The main feature of the week was the biggest green technology exhibition in the history of Estonia – NEXPO Tallinn. Under the flagship of NEXPO, five international conferences were organised during the week:

- The **Greenest Summit** took place on November 13th and had an audience of 158 people;
- The **Cleantech Forum Europe**, hosted by the city on November 14-16, gathered over 270 experts around the world;
- A special **Smart Cities Convention**, November 14-15, had 163 participants from 25 countries and 32 cities. The event received the acknowledgment by the Estonian Convention Bureau as one of the best international conferences held in Tallinn during 2023;
- The conference **"Driving change: empowering sustainability through green governance"** was organised on November 16, by the Stockholm Environment Institute and Tallinn Strategy Centre, gathering 181 participants;
- Estonia's first balanced economy conference **"Elephant in the Room"** was organised on November 17 by the NGO "Green Tiger". The conference gathered 270 participants.





Tallinn's Green Capital Year on the international stage

The Green Capital programme, its flagship projects, initiatives, and ongoing legacy were strategically presented at selected events during the Cities and Regions Week, as well as the EU Open Day in Brussels.

In February 2023, the cities of Tallinn, Lahti and Grenoble co-organised a roundtable on urban governance models for just and green transition in European cities and the role of European Green Capitals in this process, held in Brussels. The roundtable focused on the European Green Capitals' role on implementing the local Green Deal, shaping the EU urban policy and redefining the challenges of urban governance. The roundtable was followed by the Tallinn Mayor's reception at the Brussels Town Hall.

In June, Tallinn was the official partner of the Urban Future Forum 2023 in Stuttgart. We organized a session on "Consensus-building and leadership around shared goals – how to create a new culture of city governance" to map and accelerate the much-needed changes in sustainability governance.

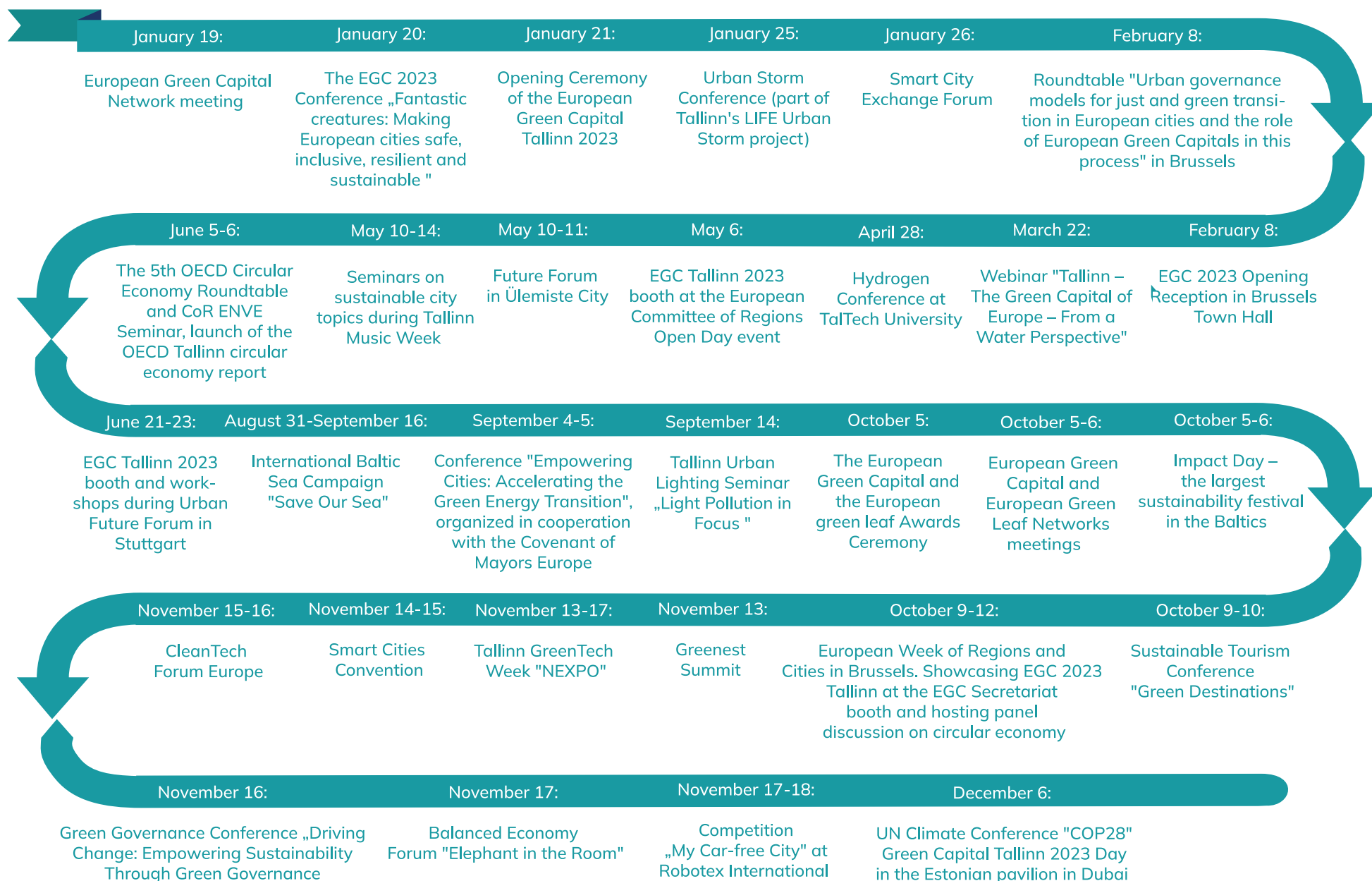
Together with representatives from Demos Helsinki, ICLEI and the cities of Mannheim, Stuttgart, and Espoo, we delved into what it means to build sustainability governance in cities, how the SDGs are becoming a mature tool for cities to work towards sustainable development, and an International Sustainability Governance Hub was launched. We also held a European Green Capital 2023 booth and organised an exceedingly popular reception for over 300 guests.

Tallinn was also the official partner of the Estonian Pavilion during the UN Climate Conference "COP28" in Dubai. We hosted a thematical programme titled "Wild Cities: Urban innovation and Sustainability" on December 6. A total of eight workshops focusing from urban sustainability leadership and smart city initiatives, emphasizing the role of policies and collaborations in achieving Sustainable Development Goals were held during that time. The programme was a deep dive into the challenges and solutions in urbanization, transport, and the environment, exploring digital green twins and their role in urban system optimization, while highlighting how digital tools are pivotal for climate adaptation and citizen engagement.

Our programme involved speakers from international organizations such as ICLEI, OECD and HELCOM. The City of Tallinn engaged various local companies, international experts, and representatives of academia, such as TalTech, Tallinn and Tartu Universities.



Summary of the international events





COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The primary focus in communication was on spreading change and engaging citizens. We showcased the rapid transformations in Tallinn and actively engaged citizens, communities, organizations, and businesses in building a greener city together. Such is the example of the "Green Ambassadors" initiative, where we invited environmentally active citizens to be part of the European Green Capital endeavours.

Green Ambassador

ALJONA ZUEVA

Aljona is the founder of "Rohelinn" ("Green City"), an NGO with the goal of making Tallinn a cleaner and greener city by removing garbage from the streets. "Rohelinn" takes a different approach to this common way of keeping cities clean, as it combines picking up trash with fun experiences. One of "Rohelinn's" missions is environmental education and protecting the planet for future generations.

We created an NGO to make waste collection more fun and raise awareness. We dream of the day we will be able to shut it down.



A significant portion of the communication effort was directed towards explaining environmental topics to the people of Tallinn. These topics are complex, and it is crucial for the citizens to comprehend the green initiatives to actively participate in making the city more sustainable.

Because initiating change in the city was an important focus for Tallinn in its EGC year, the slogan we came up with was **"Wildly changing"**. It referred to us willing to make the city "wilder" in terms of biodiversity, but also to showcase how Tallinn keeps evolving to become more sustainable. Since our event programme was divided into four city categories – smart, sustainable, learning and inclusive – our visual identity had four little insects that accordingly symbolized innovation, sustainability, knowledge inclusivity. We decided straight from the beginning that we did not want to simply use green colour, as there are so many other colours in nature. Thus, we created a colourful and likeable visual identity which was easy to notice and remember for the citizens.

Media relations

1700 stories in Estonian media

1 000 000 readers of content marketing stories

In Estonia, the goal was to be visible in the media with the activities of the Green Capital throughout the year. The EGC communication team sent out more than 60 press releases in 2023. From January to December, the total number of coverages in Estonian media was almost 1,700. The most active month was May, with 196 stories published. Only during one month, March (time of local elections), the number of positive stories dipped below 50%. The most positive month was October, with 79% coverage, and no negative stories about the Green Capital.

We had a successful content marketing cooperation with Estonia's largest news portal "Delfi", where a total of 1 051 750 people read our 250 articles, saw the videos and listened to podcasts. The focus of the project was on environmental education, promoting the European Green Capital year and our events. Every month, 5 articles, 2 podcasts and 2 videos were published in both Estonian and Russian languages. On average, the articles were read 75 000 times a month.

The focus of the articles was different every month: urban space, energy, circular economy and waste, climate change, biodiversity, nature conservation, water, Baltic Sea, mobility, green innovation, and looking back at the year. The most popular articles were about the Citizen's Assembly, sorting waste, the history of environmental actions in Tallinn, the "Green Tracks" project, zero-energy buildings and the restoration of Pääsküla bog.

In January, August and October, articles introducing the Green Capital were also published in Latvian and Lithuanian news portals affiliated with "Delfi". In January – a general article about Tallinn being the Green Capital of Europe; in August – what the year of the Green Capital has brought to Tallinn from a tourist's perspective; in October – NEXPO and the Test in Tallinn initiative.

Tallinn media

Tallinn has its own newspaper, published in Estonian and Russian, and two television news programmes. Throughout the year, European Green Capital news were prominently shown in these channels.

TV-shows

300 000 viewers for clips in Estonian Song contest

15 TV programmes about the EGC year

We also cooperated on TV-shows and video clips raising environmental awareness on Estonian public broadcasting channels ETV and ETV+ and private channel "Kanal 2".

The opening ceremony of the European Green Capital year was broadcasted on the national public broadcasting channel ETV and had 60 000 viewers.

We also cooperated with ETV to produce Green Capital themed videoclips for the Estonian Eurovision show "Eesti Laul" ("Estonian Song"), which reached an audience of 300 000 people. Our event on Europe Day 2023 was also shown by ETV.

We produced eight "Ecological" series for ETV+, which is a Russian language channel by the Estonian public broadcasting system. The topics were water in the city, linear parks, mobility, bicycling vs driving, food and biowaste, helping the environment, green spaces and biodiversity in Tallinn, and green innovation. The series reached a viewership of 5000-8000 people per episode.

On the private channel "Kanal 2", we had special coverage during four episodes on the topics of climate adaptation projects in Tallinn, urban greenery, circular economy, and green innovation



Foreign media coverage

Over 250 stories in international media

We cooperated with the European Green Capital Secretariat, Visit Estonia and the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ensure good coverage of Tallinn's European Green Capital year in foreign media. We had over 250 articles, TV and radio interviews in 2023, including Politico, Euronews, Euractive, Sustainable Europe Magazine, Publico, Deutsche Welle, LN24, and Innovation Origins among others. Coverage in the foreign media has reached all over the world, from Baltics and Nordics to South America, Canada and Dubai. The work with the Brussels-based communications consultant continues in 2024.

MARKETING

The arrivals gate at Lennart Meri Tallinn International Airport was branded using the Tallinn – European Green Capital 2023 theme, welcoming visitors to the city. The gate remained branded throughout the entire year, reminding everyone traveling to and from Tallinn, that we are the proud holders of the title of 2023. We also used branding at Tallinn and Tartu Bus stations and Tallinn Port terminals.

Additional visibility of EGC in Tallinn's urban space was achieved using specially designed messages on Tallinn's biogas buses and our marked EGC tram. In all our marketing activities and campaigns, we always thought of the sustainability aspect — concentrating on reuse and rebrand or creating as little waste as possible. For example, we used seed paper for all our fliers, so they could be planted afterwards; chose only such presents that were practical and produced consciously; and turned all our used banner textiles into carrier bags, giving fabric waste a shot at new life.

ORGANIZED CAMPAIGNS

Mobility

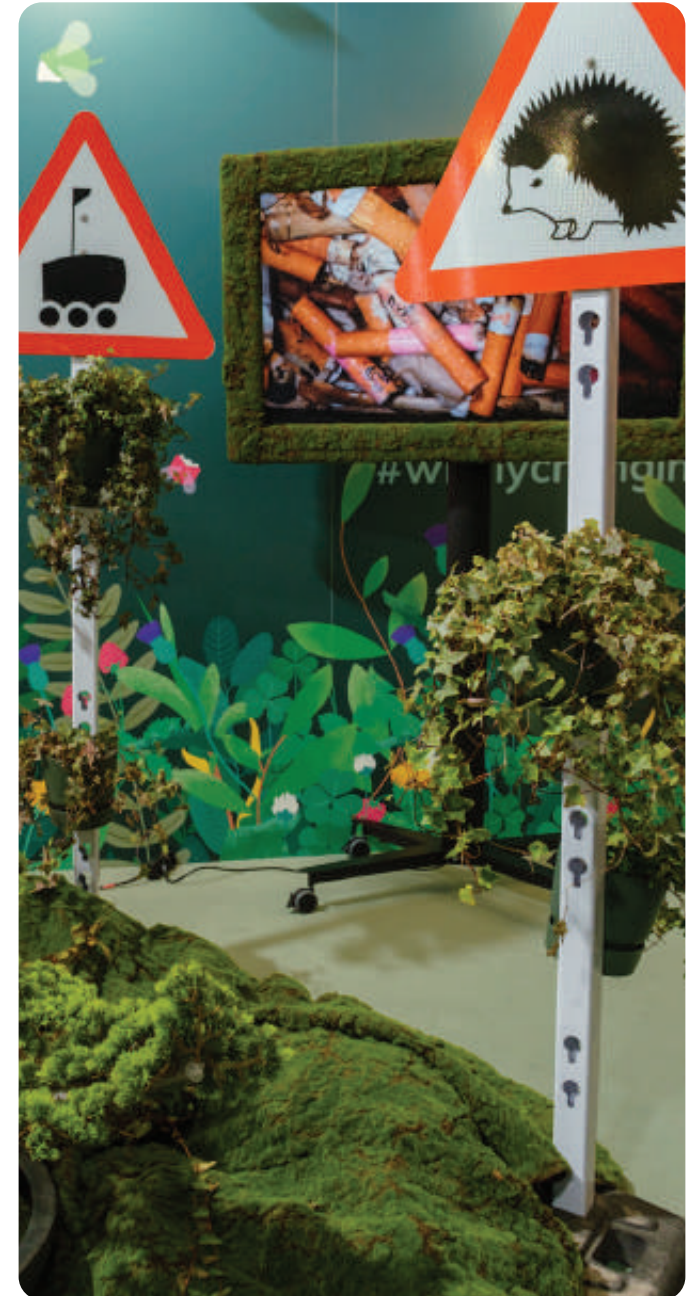
January 2023-April 2024

Messages: "Are you wasting half of your salary on parking costs? Opt for public transport" or "More buses, bicycles and pedestrians equals less traffic jams".

Mediums: Motivational stickers on the rear windows of the city's biogas buses to encourage car drivers use public transport instead and specially marked EGC tram, thanking users for preferring public transportation.

Social media and radio: During the mobility themed month in September, we used similar messages in social media and radio ads.

Results: The messages on the buses were visible throughout the year, and were really difficult to miss for anyone, sitting behind the wheel in Tallinn.



"How the city has changed"

January 16-29, 2023

Aim: Introduction of the Green Capital visuals, explaining the "Wildly changing" slogan and rolling out of the EGC2023 programme.

Channels: Bus stops and other outdoor advertising spaces (total of 26 ads), public transport screens, social media, Delfi news portal. Additionally, we held an outdoor exhibition in Tammsaare Park in the city centre for the month of January, with 24 posters introducing the EGC programme and aim.

Biodiverse gardening

June 5-July 2, 2023 & July 17- August 6, 2023

Media campaign "Entice butterflies to your garden"; direct mail "Every seed counts"; promotional hangers in the tram distributing biodiverse seeds; public transport screens promoting the biodiverse plant catalogue.

Channels: Funny videos on social media, YouTube, Delfi, Postimees and local cinemas, plus online banner ads; animated 10" clip on LED screens in public transport; four different radio stations.

Direct mail was sent out with a mix of biodiverse flower seeds and a message to do your part in creating more biodiversity in the city. The initiative was chosen as the best direct mail campaign of the quarter by Omniva (Estonian Post).

Hangers in the tram provided white clover seeds and a message to create a biodiverse lawn that needs less mowing.

Results: The media campaign reached over 159 000 people. The visitor numbers for the biodiverse plant catalogue went up from 20 to 300-500 visitors a day.

Consumption and circular economy

June 26-July 2, 2023

Before and during the Youth Song and Dance Festival, we aimed to get young people to consume less and promote circularity.

Messages: "This storage is full. Do you also have too many clothes in your wardrobe?" "This storage is full. Is your trash bin filling up too quickly as well?"

Channels: Bus stop and LED screens (total of 100), intercom in supermarkets (1 600 000 reach).

Green Compass

July 17-August 20, 2023

The Green Compass game was developed during the European Green Capital year, with the aim of helping people understand their current environmental behaviour.

Channels: Social media, YouTube, Delfi, Postimees and SmartAd.

We also promoted the game during different EGC events and in schools.

<https://rohekompass.ee/en/>



**100 AASTAT TAGASI
SAI LASNAMÄELE OTSE
VAID LENNUKIGA –
NIMELT ASUS
SEAL LENNUVÄLI**

Tänapäeval viib Lasnamäele 25 bussiliini ja kesklinna jõuab Lasnamäe lõppu vaid 20 minutiga.

#metsikultmuutuv
greentallinn.ee

Tallinn
Euroopa
roheline
pealinn 2023



SAVE OUR SEA!

**THE BALTIC SEA
IS A DEAD SEA**

**CIGARETTE BUTTS
ARE POISONING
OUR WATERS!**

A CIGARETTE BUTT DISCARDED IN A PARK, ON THE BEACH OR ON THE STREET WILL ULTIMATELY END UP IN THE SEA, POISONING UP TO 1000 LITRES OF WATER.

IF I DIE, YOU WILL SUFFER AS WELL.

FIND OUT MORE

WWW.SEACLEANUP.ORG

Tallinn



SAVE OUR SEA

August 21-September 16, 2023

A joint effort of the European Green Capital 2023 — Tallinn, the city of Helsinki and Let's Do It World initiative. The aim of the media campaign was to bring attention to the Baltic Sea's environmental problems and empower people living along its shores to take action.

Channels: Radio, intercom in supermarkets; bus stations and other public spaces in the city, LED screens, local cinema and social media

INES-ISSA VILLIDO

An Estonian entrepreneur and artist. By creating sculptures related to sustainability and especially to ocean pollution, Ines started to dive into sustainable topics and its main challenges, which led her to work with upcycling cigarette butts. Thanks to Ines, a total of 120 cigarette waste bins have been placed throughout Tallinn.

I wish to contribute to the preservation of a sustainable environment through the recycling of waste. My creative and scientific studies are combined in the circular economy company Filaret, whose primary focus is collecting smokestacks and processing them into innovative bioplastics.



My City Tallinn

November 13-December 17, 2023

Aim: To make people of Tallinn prouder of their city

A photo competition of people's favourite places in Tallinn was announced.

The famous people promoting the campaign

were diverse to show inclusivity. The winner received an electric bike.

Channels: Social media, Google Ads, YouTube, news sites, LED screens, billboards, bus stations, radio, intercom and local cinemas

Exhibitions in central park Tammsaare

May 2022 — Biodiversity

September 2022 — Mobility

January 2023 — European Green Capital year

July 2023 — European Green Capital year activities

January 2024 — Overview of the European Green Capital year



Social media and homepage

Our homepage greentallinn.eu was available from November 2022. The website had latest information on the programme, EGC2023 goals, news, flagship projects etc. By the end of 2023 it had 84 000 visitors.

We have four [@greentallinn23](https://www.instagram.com/greentallinn23) social media channels: Facebook, Instagram, X and LinkedIn. By December 2023, the number of followers (mostly organically reached) was:

Facebook: 2866, with the increase of 1600 in 2023. 91.8% of it being Estonian audience. Facebook was our main channel for running Tallinn domestic news in Estonian and Russian. The target audience were people living in Tallinn.

Instagram: 1560, with the increase of 572 in 2023. 80,3% Estonian audience. Instagram, also ran in Estonian, has a younger target audience (up to 30) with a more fun and visual style. We also used the City of Tallinn's [TikTok](#) account on some occasions to reach younger audiences (under 20).

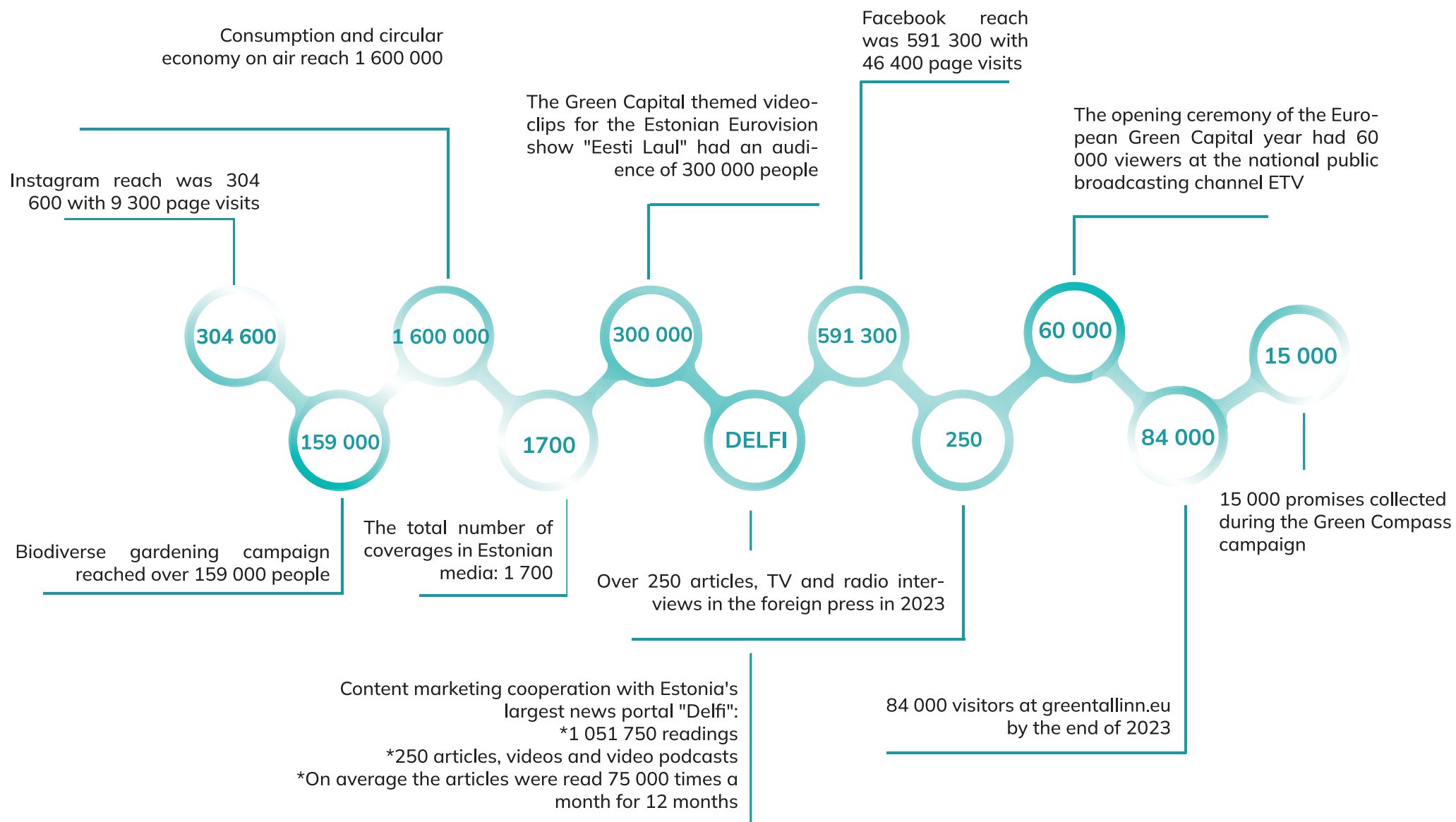
LinkedIn: 1257. This page is truly international – about 30% of its followers are from Estonia and the rest is from around the world – from Colombia to South Africa, India to Australia. This was our professional communications tool to keep the international partners informed of Tallinn's green initiatives, i.e. the work at the sustainability governance hub.

X (Twitter): 420. Used for big international events as a conversation-starter platform with our international connections, i.e scientists and fellow policy-makers.

During the period from January to December 2023, our Facebook reach was 591 300, 46 400 page visits. Instagram reach was 304 600 and 9 300 page visits.



Communication in numbers



Key Performance Indicators for Media and Communication



Target

Citizens' positive opinion on the EGC year and impact.
Target: 70%

Citizens' awareness of the EGC increased.
Target: 90%

Number of participants in the official EGC events.
Target: 50 000

Number of participants involved in the EGC partner events and initiatives. Target: 150 000

Number of new various green transformation initiatives and projects initiated. Target: 50

Number of applications submitted to the EGC Co-creation Fund/number of projects financed. Target: 100/30

Number of cooperation partners involved. Target: 300

Number of corporate partners involved. Target: 100

Result

Just over two-thirds (69%) of those who are aware of the title consider the EGC year that took place to be necessary. More than half (60%) of those who are aware of the title think that ERP has had a positive impact in the year.

By April 2024 87% of residents knew about the EGC title.

Over 122 000 people participated in the official EGC events.

320 000 people participated in the EGC partner events.

Over 35 green transformation initiatives and projects were initiated in the Green Tracks. The Co-creation Fund brought 15 more.

More than 100 applications were submitted to the EGC Co-creation Fund, and 48 projects were financed.

About 378 cooperation partners were involved from NGOs to businesses to individuals.

Around 120 corporate partners

Number of environmental site and media visits. Target: 20

Around 100 site visits by foreign delegations

Media coverage (articles, broadcasts etc).
Target in Estonia: 1000. Target abroad: 250

The total number of coverages in Estonian media was almost 1 700, and over 250 abroad.

Number of media delegations/external groups/visitors hosted during the EGC year. Target: up to 20/30/500

Media delegations 21, foreign delegations 71, over 700 visitors.



ROHKEM   
= VÄHEM  

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS



January-December 2023

Waste Wolf. An educational programme that aims to teach children aged 5-7 about waste prevention, recycling, and the circular economy, fostering environmental awareness from an early age. In 2023, 800 environmental education lessons were conducted in kindergartens and schools of Tallinn, where an estimated 19,200 children participated. The environmental education programme was also carried out at 27 public events around the city. An educational video "Waste Wolf Teaches to Collect Waste by Type" was produced as part of the programme, to be shown on streaming channels and television.

January-December 2023

Special "European Green Capital" programme at Tallinn Botanical Gardens. The programme included 21 different events. The workshops and lectures had almost 600 visitors and the exhibitions nearly 80 000 visits. The programme also included a nature protection fair, which had 700 participants.

January-December 2023

Special "European Green Capital" programme at Tallinn Open University. The programme included 9 workshops on different topics from zero waste to mending different items.

January-December 2023

Special "European Green Capital" programme in Tallinn Public Library, including 10 different workshops, lectures and excursions.

February-October 2023

Biodiversity Action Days

- Making and installing shelter boxes for bats (February-April, plus 3 days in May – 7 schools)
- Bird nest box maintenance (3 days in March)
- Helping frogs cross the roads (2 weeks in April)
- Control of the invasive curlew rose hip (2 days in June and July)
- Removal of invasive Himalayan balsam (2 days in July and September)
- Restoration of Pääsküla bog (3 days in August)
- Baltic Sea campaign "Save Our Sea" activities in Tallinn (2 weeks, August-September)
- Restoration of stone lizard habitats in Pääsküla bog (2 days in August and September)
- Restoration of Paljassaare dry meadows (2 days in September and October)



February 22 & November 9

Sustainable Hospitality MAD Academy, with 70 participants in the first and 55 participants in the second session

March 23

Seminar on "Exchanging Experiences of Environmentally Friendly Events". How and why does the public sector organize environmentally friendly events? How do large public event organizers implement the environmentally friendly event guidelines? Tallinn Strategy Centre and the Ministry of the Environment organized this seminar to help sharing experiences, where institutions and companies could speak of their lessons learned. A total of 100 people took part in this event.

March & October 2023

Green Labels – Environmentally friendly options in the menus of Tallinn Restaurant Week (TRW). Criteria were prepared, helping the restaurants could label the environmentally friendly dishes offered, and a new section became available in the TRW reservation and ticket sales environment, which gave the opportunity to introduce these options to visitors and guide them towards more sustainable choices. 81 restaurants took part in the Restaurant Week, with 24 restaurants offering the Green Label dishes. The project continues and in Spring 2024, there were already 26 restaurants offering sustainable menus.

April-December 2023

Programme "Green and Smart" for raising awareness in Tallinn's housing co-ops. A total of five activities were carried out several times: web radio broadcasts (3), video (1), innovation conference of apartment associations (1), round tables of apartment associations (5 total, one of which was replaced by the green conference of apartment associations), study tours for apartment associations (3), publications (14). A total of nearly 500 people participated in the series, with publications published within the project reaching 20,000 readers.

May 6

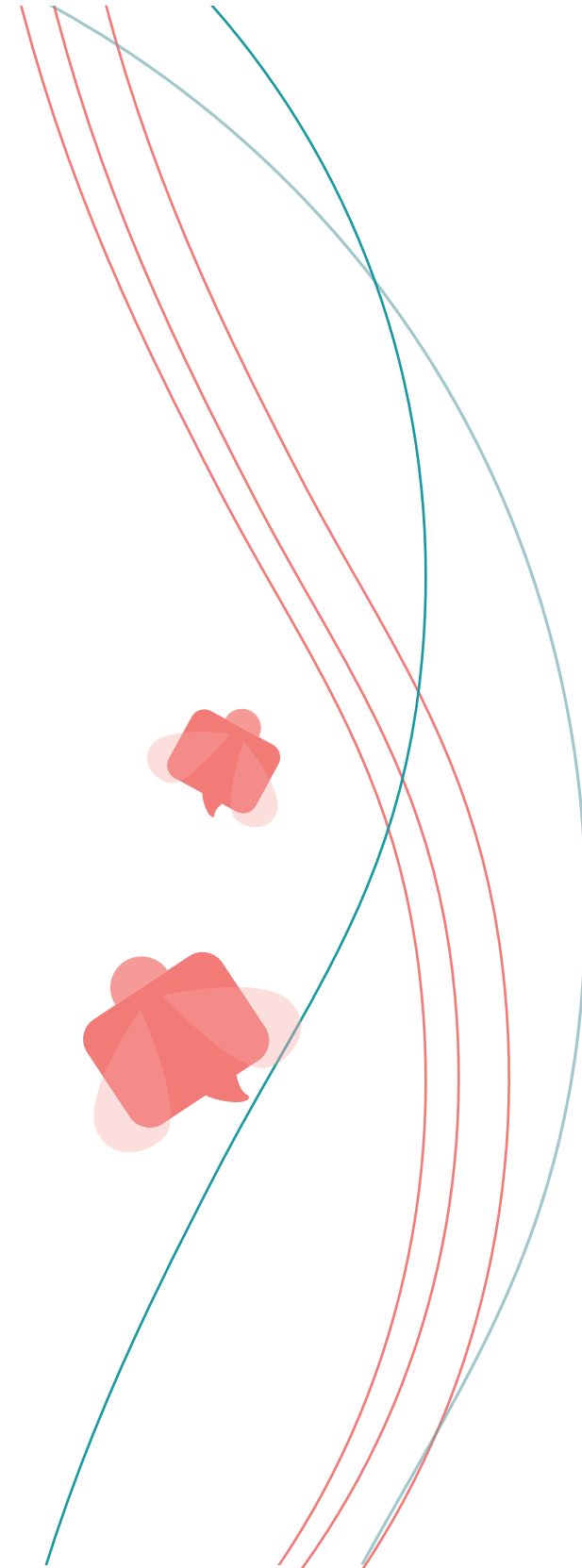
"Let's Do It" initiative. Garbage Collection action day in various green areas in Tallinn that were organized in cooperation with Tallinn's eight district governments.

May 9

Europe Day "GreenFest" dedicated to biodiversity and organized with Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Commission representation and European Parliament Liaison Office in Estonia. We organised 13 workshops for around 500 people, and 8 speakers on stage. The day was broadcasted by the Estonian Public Broadcasting channel.

May 10-14

Sustainability seminars during Tallinn Music Week (TMW). The international music and city festival brought the messages of the Green Capital Tallinn to different target groups, introducing the goals of sustainable development through various programmes. The urban festival featured 7 city stage concerts, 6 public talks, a record market, a children's festival, a youth programme, a tour of art galleries, a bike tour to Putukaväli and the "Maitset" (Tastes) programme highlighting green label restaurants. Audience was over 3000 people.



February 22 & November 9

Sustainable Hospitality MAD Academy, with 70 participants in the first and 55 participants in the second session

May 11-13

Biotoopia Conference. Attended by 400 people onsite, with the addition of 1500 online participants.

June 10

Nature Conservation Fair. Audience of 700 people.

June 10-18

Urban Space Festival. The purpose of the festival was to invite citizens to think, act, watch, experience and discover the topics of climate, living environment and urban space. There were various discussion groups, workshops, concerts, spatial experiments and a night cinema. Thousands of Tallinn inhabitants took part.

September 22

EU Mobility Week and Car-free Day Activities in Tallinn. As part of the European Mobility Week on September 16-22, Tallinn hosted a number of events ranging from guided bicycle rides to PARKing Day. All the events shared a common goal – to encourage people to opt for alternatives to car travel. Over 40 people took part in the three bicycle tours, 200 people went orienteering with public transport and 73rd annual Tour d'ÖÖ joint bicycle ride brought over 2000 cyclists.

October 7-November 4

Green Capital Citizens' Assembly

30 000 invitations were sent out and 60 participants were selected by geographical and socio-economical aspects to form a representative miniTallinn, that made 39 proposals.

September 2022-June 2023

Nature and Environmental theme year in Tallinn Schools and Kindergartens. The objective of the academic year was to enhance awareness of environmental topics among young citizens by incorporating more nature and environmental themes into the curriculum. The themed year included training sessions for teachers, as well as various events, projects, and competitions for students. Tallinn has 57 municipal schools and 127 kindergartens.

September-December 2023

Exhibition "Let's Go Zero". The exhibition on waste and circularity was visited by 30 000 people in Tallinn. In 2024 it will be traveling to four other cities in Estonia.

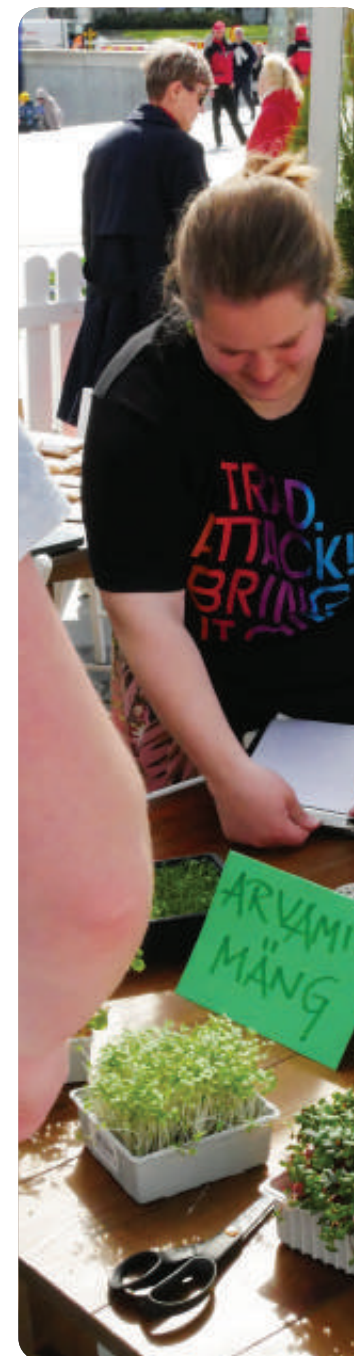
October 2023-April 2024

Exhibition "City with Trees" at the National Museum of Nature

12750 visitors counted from October to December 2023, with the exhibition remaining open until April 2024.

November 3-19

European Green Capital programme at the Black Nights Film Festival. 7 environmentally themed documentaries, viewed by 4800 people.



FINANCING

The European Green Capital 2023 costs were allocated for three consecutive years to cover the planning, implementation, reporting and follow-up communication:



Our private sector and other partners (universities, NGOs etc.) contributed to the EGC year and our city's green transition mainly by providing their know-how and competencies for development and implementation of multiple activities and workshops, hosting international delegations, showcasing responsible business models, contributing to the official programme by organising different campaigns and events, and developing and testing new green technologies in collaboration with the city of Tallinn, academia and citizens. In return, they were allowed to use the European Green Capital identity in their communication, and their own best practices and examples were mentioned in our official Green Capital communication.

The budget of the EGC 2023 comprised funding from the City of Tallinn, the Estonian Government (Ministry of Environment) and the European Commission (award money).



EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2023 BUDGET 01.01.2022 - 31.12.2024

	Tallinn	EU	State	Total
2022				
Communication and marketing	45 000	20 000	-	65 000
Events	30 000	15 000	-	45 000
Reception and representation	40 000	20 000	-	60 000
Personnel costs	180 000	70 000	-	250 000
Total 2022	295 000	125 000	-	420 000
2023				
Programme	7 295 930	270 000	295 000	7 860 930
International events (incl. mandatory events) EUR 1 163 655				
Flagships and Legacy Projects EUR 5 015 757				
Co-creation Fund "Let´s Do It Together" EUR 1 069 471				
Local events EUR 612 047				
Communication and marketing (incl. campaigns)	560 294	155 000	205 000	920 294
Reception and representation costs (incl. international delegations visits)	92 734	30 000	-	122 734
Reporting (incl. surveys and analyses)	80 000	20 000	-	100 000
Personnel	764 691	-	-	764 691
Total 2023	8 793 649	475 000	500 000	9 768 649
2024				
EGC 2023 follow-up communication, reporting, events	204 170	-	-	204 170
EGC Flagship Sustainability Governance Tallinn Model development, peer-learning and international events	385 000	-	-	385 000
Reception and representation	18 010	-	-	18 010
Personnel	354 300	-	-	354 300
Total 2024	934 480	-	-	934 480



CONCLUSIONS

LIFE AFTER. IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Partners

To evaluate the European Green Capital year, we organised two world-café style workshops with our partners.

The first event took place in December 2023 and was aimed at our **Green Ambassadors**. We asked the ambassadors four questions:

- What has changed during the EGC year?
- What activities, initiatives, and projects should continue in Tallinn?
- What could the city do better?
- How would you be willing to contribute yourself, and how could the city support you in this?

Significant changes were observed in biodiversity, city space, city organisation, and the events held. For example, the nature protection action days and nature observation have helped citizens pay more attention to the city's nature and biodiversity.



People also noticed many positive changes in the city space brought by the EGC 2023 Legacy Project "Green Tracks", as well as new developments like the Pollinator Highway or Vana-Kalamaja Street.



Changes in events were also remarked, starting from the waste-free Youth Song and Dance Festival, Dark Nights Film Festival, and green label menus during the Restaurant Week, and ending with the guide to environmentally friendly events.



The participants wanted to see the continuation of engagement programmes like the Citizen Assembly, Green Ambassadors, action days, and Let's Do It Together funding, as well as more engagement of youth and children.



Regarding communication, they noted that the image of the Green Capital has improved and suggested more emphasis on proactive communication and educating citizens on sustainability topics.



The participants also wanted to see the continuation of green procurements, more green planning, and an increase in the network of bicycle roads.

The Green Ambassadors wanted to see continuation of close cooperation between the city and companies and non-profit organisations, and for the city to allocate more time for planning — one year's preparation for the European Green Capital was not seen as sufficient.

We also received a lot of good new ideas for further cooperation.

COLLABORATORS AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

The second workshop was aimed at all EGC partners — businesses, non-profit organisations, universities, and individuals.

We asked the participants three questions:

- What impact did Tallinn achieve during the European Green Capital Year?
- Life after the year of the European Green Capital — how to keep the topic of sustainability relevant in Tallinn and increase the impact?
- In which cooperation models with the city and/or community activities could you and would you like to contribute to make our city more sustainable?

When speaking about the impact of the European Green Capital year, the respondents said that they noticed

- the Green Tracks initiatives;
- the no-mowing policy;
- prioritisation of landscaping, and
new places for spending time in the city;
- the increase in community gardens.

The participants also noticed that:

- more people tried moving around the city without a car;
- the culture of repairing things has improved, and in general;
- the awareness of environmental issues and biodiversity has increased;
- many new discussions were initiated in the society –
for example, on the topic of mowing and biodiversity.



As for the new initiatives, the respondents mentioned the nature action days, more applications for new community gardens, Test in Tallinn, limiting the speed of cars, and the increase of funding for environmental projects.

The Youth Song and Dance Festival and Citizen Assembly were mentioned as events with a big impact. They also noted that reusable dishes are now the new rule at events.

The participants wished for the continuation of several initiatives, starting from more sustainability communication and environmental education, but also the carrying on of more funding for sustainability projects.

The issue of strategies and priorities was also highlighted, remarking that the city's strategic goals should be based on sustainability goals and that the city would have the courage to make decisions that bring big changes.

They also asked the city to prioritize green innovation more and help the success stories of 2023 to grow bigger in the next years.

Many of the partners were interested in continuing cooperation with the city in the future and suggested new ways of cooperation.

THE CITY ORGANISATION

We also gathered quantitative feedback from Tallinn city employees to see how they evaluated the success and impact of the European Green Capital year. Sustainability is still a new topic for many, so it was important for us to see how people reacted to Tallinn being the European Green Capital.

We asked 1609 employees to answer a short survey and got 505 responses, so the response rate was over 30%.

AWARENESS: Almost two thirds (64%) of city employees are well or rather well-aware of what activities and programmes were implemented during the EGC year. 3% indicated that they were not informed at all, and the rest did not report the EGC year's activities as bad or rather bad.

NECESSITY: More than three-quarters (79%) of city employees consider the EGC year necessary. Their share is higher among employees who are well-aware of EGC year activities (well-aware - 91%, poorly - 64%).

PARTICIPATION: Two-thirds (67%) of city employees have taken part in some of the activities of the EGC year; including 75% of those who are well-aware of EGC activities and 58% of those who are poorly informed. Most have participated in trainings for city employees (44%) and used the green compass (24%). Participation in conferences/seminars, special programs or events is indicated by approximately one fifth.

CHANGING BEHAVIOUR: Every third (35%) city employee believes that as a result of the ERP year, they have changed their behaviour either in the office or outside and nearly half (48%) were already environmentally conscious before. Among the changes, in the case of the office, there is more garbage sorting and electricity, water and paper saving. Outside of the office, more conscious waste sorting is also being done, and changing mobility (more mobility on foot, bicycle or public transport) is also noted more often.

IMPACT: More than half (59%) responded that the EGC year has had a positive impact on the environment and urban space and nearly half (47%) saw a positive impact on the development of the city organization. About a tenth think that the EGC year has had both positive and negative impacts on the city and the organization; and another tenth saw negative impact or no impact.

As expected, employees who are well acquainted with the activities of the EGC year see significantly more positive effects. Positive impact on the city: well informed - 70%, poorly - 42%; for the organization: well informed - 55%, poorly - 35%.

In terms of the Green Capital year impact achieved in the city environment, the respondents saw as positive impacts:

- **bringing the topic to the limelight:** increased awareness of environmental issues, change in employees' way of thinking and values;
- the introduction and implementation of **green office** (especially in waste sorting);
- **positive changes in urban space:** urban environment and space are more prominent and visible topics in the city;
- **increase in greenery and biodiversity in the urban space** (tidying up green areas, planting trees, more places to rest);
- on discussions among the **interventions in the urban space**, some respondents single out the temporary park on the town hall square and the reduction of mowing or the creation of flower meadows as effective;
- topics related to mobility were also mentioned: development of public transport, creation of better conditions for cyclists and pedestrians, reduction of car traffic.

A few mentioned negative effects and highlighted:

- **lack of time for more thorough internal discussions and planning:** very limited timeframe for preparations for the Green Capital year and budget etc.);
- too much burden on the workers involved;
- the whole organization does not come along with the topic, and it is difficult to achieve permanent changes.



RESIDENTS

The residents' survey was conducted in spring 2022, as well as in March and April 2024, with the aim of gaining insight into awareness and attitudes towards the Green Capital, environmental attitudes, separate waste collection (including barriers to it), efforts to reduce waste generation, and information needs related to waste.



The satisfaction survey shows that the vast majority of Tallinners feel a responsibility (85%) and a need to contribute (90%) to preventing and alleviating environmental problems.

According to 83% of residents, they have personally changed their behaviour to contribute to preventing and resolving environmental issues.

However, the proportion of Tallinn residents who believe that environmental problems will significantly affect their daily lives in the future has decreased (82% in 2023, 76% in 2024). In the summer of 2023, parts of Tallinn's green areas were left uncut to promote urban biodiversity. In connection with this, residents were asked how many green areas they believed should have their grass cut next summer.

Two-thirds, or 65%, felt that plants should be allowed to grow in grassy areas, or if mowing is necessary, it should only be done on half of the areas, based on the use of the green space (e.g., picnic and play areas).

Since 2022, the city has been experimenting with the use of guidelines for organizing environmentally friendly events, with the guidelines becoming mandatory for all city-organized events in 2023.



The majority of Tallinners considered environmental sustainability at large events important. The most frequently cited important activities at major events were separate waste collection (considered very or rather important by 93%) and attending events without a car (81%).



The survey also asked about the impact of Tallinn's status as the European Green Capital.

The vast majority of Tallinners (87%) were aware that Tallinn held the title of "European Green Capital" in 2023. Of those aware, 69% considered the Green Capital year important for the city and its residents, and 60% believed it had a positive impact solely on Tallinn's environment and urban space.

The most commonly mentioned effects of the Green Capital were the addition of greenery to urban spaces and increased awareness. Residents most frequently noticed the creation of flower beds during the Green Capital year (56%), the renovation of the City Hall and cruise port coastal area (53%), and new parking areas for bikes and electric scooters.

According to 60% of respondents, Tallinn's urban space has sufficient greenery and green spaces. The majority of Tallinners (81%) felt that greenery and green spaces were added to Tallinn's urban space in 2023.





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