FASTER ALONE, FURTHER TOGETHER – TARTU PARISH FOR AND WITH CITIZENS

Integrated Action Plan
Tartu municipality
2022

Summary

CONTEXT

VISIT ESTONIA TARTU VAL

TARTU PARISH AT A GLANCE

Tartu Parish (10 941 inhabitants) is a typical **suburban municipality** bordering the second largest city of Estonia, the City of Tartu. The territory of the municipality is **742 km²**. There are **71 villages** and 5 small towns in the territory of the rural municipality (this already presents you with an idea of the challenges of inclusion!).

Why do we work on participatory democracy?

Tartu Parish has some experience in the participatory field, on different themes (neighbourhood associations, youth councils, participatory budgeting, to list some of them). **However, there can always be more - more people involved in decision-making, more innovative models and tools implemented for digital participation.**

When joining the URBACT project, Tartu Parish hoped to learn from others´ experiences, create synergy and get inspired. All this has happened on this wonderful learn-by-doing journey, despite all obstacles the global pandemic and other crises have created for the project.

The Integrated Action Plan for Tartu Parish reflects the inspiration and new ideas received from all our partners during our transnational meetings, and the virtual exchange of ideas adjusted to our own needs and context.

Most of all, Tartu Parish is searching for its own track on how to become an attractive suburb with its own identity and activities that, together with the centre of the urban region, would make the region economically and socially more attractive and visible worldwide.

Tartu Parish is also searching for ways to strengthen local democracy, how to become more attractive to its citizens, and how to increase engagement of its residents in decisions and action-making.

There is no one right way to do community engagement. We need to experiment with diferent methods and tools, analog and digital ones.

Where were we in 2019?

Like in other EU countries, the local municipalities are more trusted than the national government but, globally, Estonia is amongst the 10 most trusted (by citizens) countries (national & local government) in the EU.

In terms of voter turnout, however, Estonia is not performing very well with only 50-60% of average voter turnout even though Estonia has the practice of e-voting both on national and local elections (47% of all votes at last municipal elections were casted digitally).

Locally, the Tartu Parish is facing a complex challenge because of the little population spread over a huge municipal territory. The united municipality has a population of over 11,000 inhabitants in an area of over 700 sq. km. The municipality even includes an island with 35 inhabitants situated at 80 kilometers from the town hall.

The very low density of inhabitants means that there is, inevitably, a big distance between citizens and their local government; especially since 2017, when the Tartu Parish was formed by the merger of former rural municipalities, into a larger municipality. This regrouping has led to an increasing gap between inhabitants and the local government.

Where are we by 2022?

Tartu Parish is willing to go further to implement greater participatory democracy. In comparison to the other cities of the Active Citizens' network, Tartu has a specific challenge which is linked to its huge territory.

In that perspective, the use of digital tools may appear as a promising practice to develop participatory democracy. At the same time, physical encounters will continue to matter. As an example, Tarmo Raudsepp, Head of the Planning Department, goes once or twice a month over to the island of Piirissaare (the small island by the Russian border) to meet with the inhabitants of the island directly. Going directly where people are contributes to a greater understanding of the citizens' situation as well as their realities. On the other side, citizens, by meeting with their elected officials, don't feel forgotten. In the case of Tartu, exploring the right combination between digital democracy and 'physical' encounters and meetings with citizens, is part of the numerous perspectives to be explored.
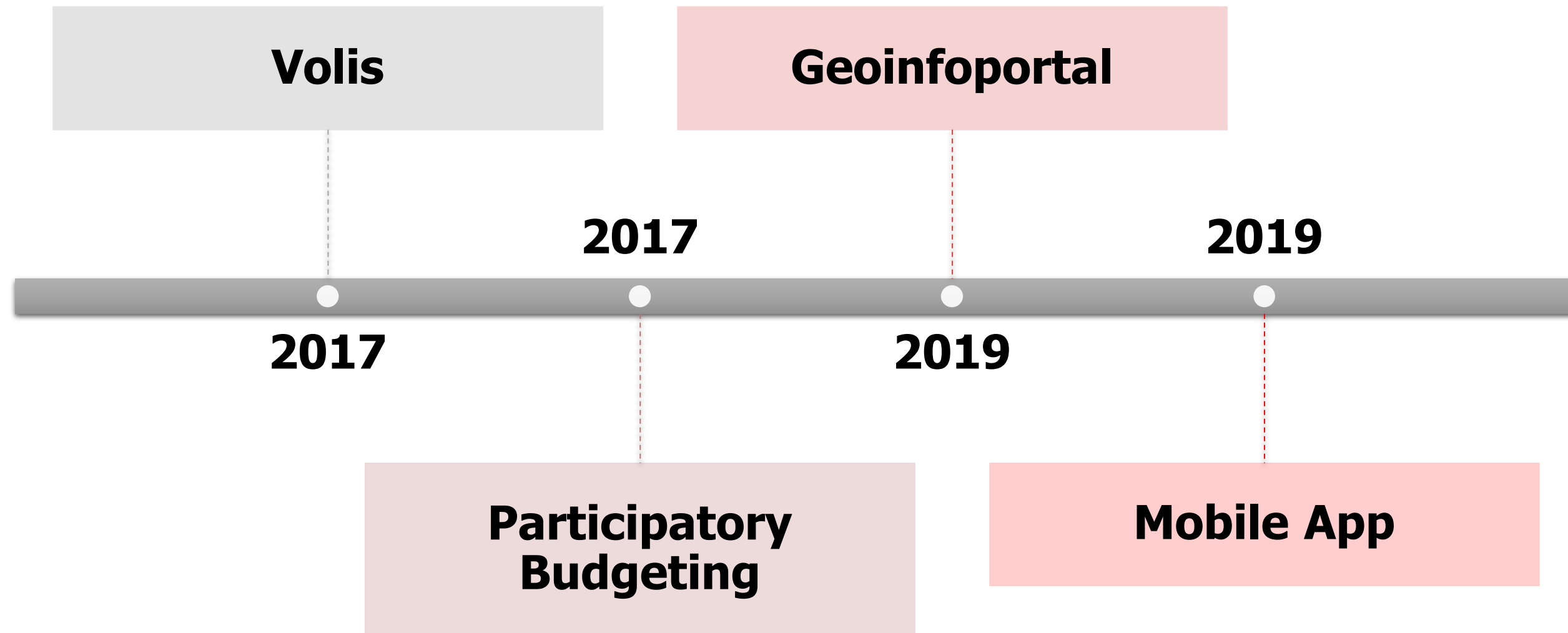
What we already had?

Citizen participation in Urban planning

Master plans are often quite dense, complex and technical (even for the administration) but in order to facilitate people's contribution to the review of a master plan, the municipality of Tartu decided to use a digital tool.

'What we did was to break down the multiple aspects of the plan in order to give information that makes sense to the people, information that they can identify with' explains the Mayor. 'There are more than 280 issues within our Master Plan, so we have used a digital platform for people to be able to navigate within the multiple layers'. To allow people's contributions, the municipality generated an interactive map in which people could pin issues or concerns directly on specific locations.

This contributive process (supported by the digital platform) allowed more people to participate in the review of the master plan, as well as made the plan more understandable and meaningful. Of course, this process is quite tricky because not everyone is comfortable navigating through interactive maps but it remained quite easier for people than reviewing the master plan on paper then sending their comments to the municipality.

The same approach is also used to integrate citizens' proposal in other spatial planning matters. All spatial planning projects are made public both on paper and on a digital platform. Everybody can make proposals and suggestions using the planning portal with minimum effort (no formalities needed). All proposals are then delt with by the Municipality's planning department. Tartu has a municipality's geoportal: https://gis.tartuvald.ee which contains all kind of spatial information: planning register, master plans, cemetery register, waste management, major road construction projects, road register, municipal land register, etc. 'The geoportal is an online tool that we update on a daily basis', explains one civil servant. Everything is accessible and architects and planners can download all the files they need for their projects. Following the same logic, citizens can easily be involved in forms of participatory (or contributive) spatial planning projects.

Volis platform

Estonia is quite famous for its digitalization and the municipality of Tartu is part of it. Indeed, the municipality uses several digital tools to deliver services and give opportunity to citizens to participate in decision-making processes. Among others, VOLIS.EE is a software solution that enables the involvement of the local population in municipal decision-making processes and the provision of public e-services to the population. VOLIS can be configured to suit the needs of the city: the introduction of a paperless council, government & commissions, etc., to work on drafts or even holding virtual council's session. Meeting agendas and minutes are also automatically disclosed to the public through the VOLIS platform. VOLIS allows you to also initiate drafts and proposals to the local legislation. According to the Estonian legislation, if at least one per cent of the residents wish to, they have the right to initiate a change of legislation (the passage, amendment or repeal of legislation of the rural municipality or city council or government concerning local issues). Such citizens' initiatives shall be debated within three months in the respective council. The VOLIS platform also allows the municipality to hold local referendums (in which citizens vote directly online using their smartphones, tablets or computers). Local government can set up additional polling stations to enable people who are not used to electronic voting, to participate in referendums. The Municipality of Tartu has used VOLIS for local referendums. The first one was to decide upon the symbols/identity of the 'newly created' Tartu municipality (2017). The citizens had to decide upon the coat-of-arms and flag for the municipality. The second referendum was held to approve or disapprove a citizen-based proposal of erecting a massive statue of an Estonian mythical hero on the shore of Lake Saadjärv. This second referendum was open to all citizens residing in the four districts concerned by the project (the idea was rejected according to the popular vote). Unfortunately, the voter turnover is very low. The municipality of Tartu is therefore keener for the moment on using more active approaches (like participatory budgeting, idea gathering, etc.) to involve citizens (keeping in mind the possibility of local referendums if necessary/relevant).

Municipality App

Besides VOLIS, Tartu also has a Municipality App. Tartu Municipality App is a smart solution created in March 2019, for residents of Tartu Municipality in order to create a better and more direct contact between citizens and the municipality. When downloading the app, it is recommended that you create an account and allow notifications, then identify your areas of interest (for example - cultural events in my neighborhood; spatial planning issues and news, etc.). 'This way citizens can always stay informed about the latest information' comments a civil servant. 'With the App, you can ask questions, give your feedback, send pictures or messages, and contact municipal officials to get answers and know what's going on'. With the help of the app, Tartu Municipality can conduct various surveys or calls quickly and conveniently. Officials of Tartu municipality also respond to the notices and questions of the users through the app. The app is still recent but 'we would like the app to work better and have more users. We are going to run a campaign for people to know more about it and download it. Besides that, the main challenge with the app is mainly its dashboard and its numerous functionalities. Updating the content takes time and the functions bring some solutions but also new problems. But we really want this to work. Through these two tools (VOLIS and the app), we can see how digital tools can support more participatory processes, even though they do not work by themselves and need to be sustained constantly to be relevant/useful.

Where are we now, in 2022?
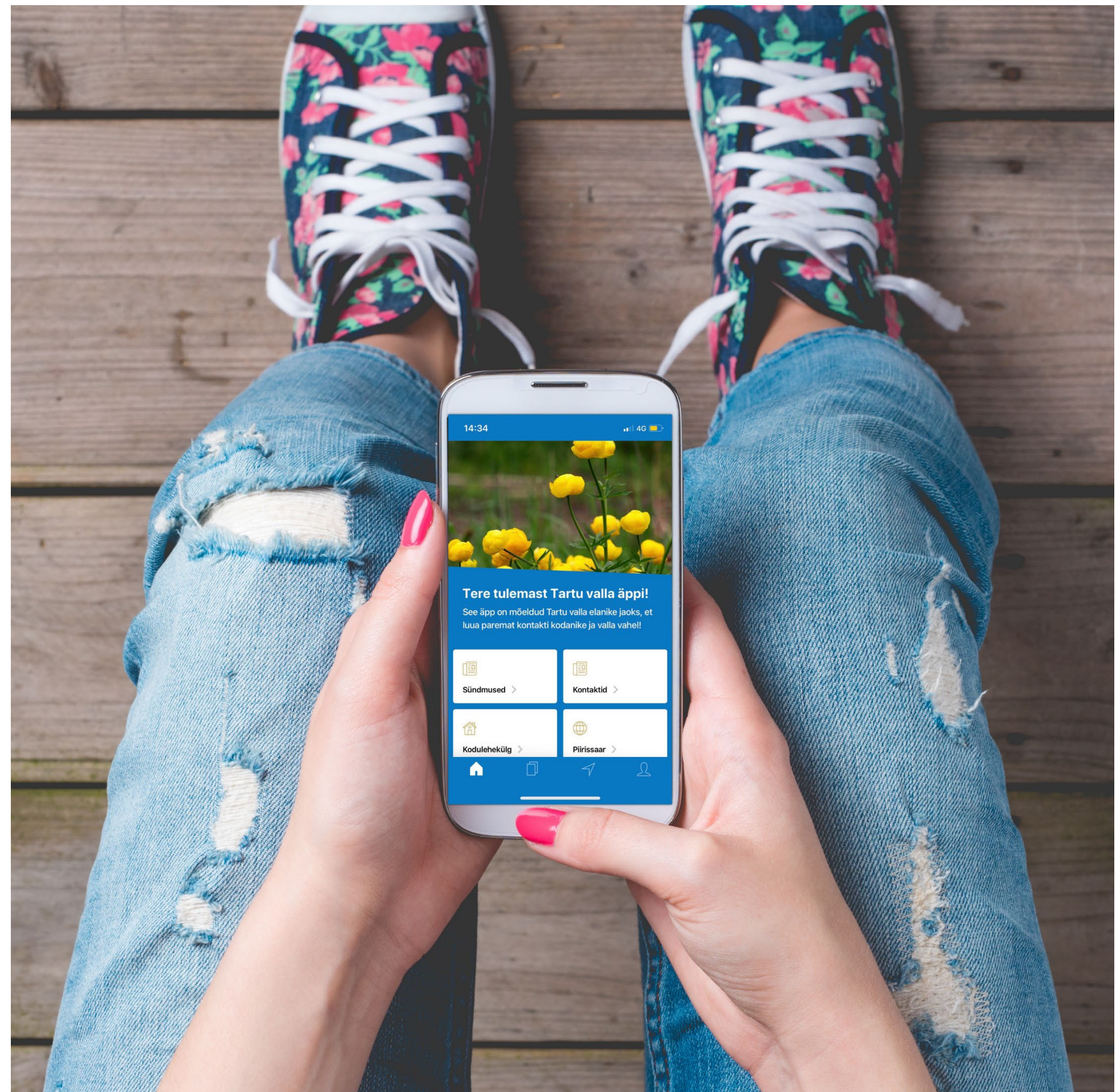
The 2030 vision for Tartu Parish states:

Tartu municipality is an attractive living environment for all its residents with high quality of life, entrepreneurial spirit, and green lifestyle (shortened by the author)

Our envisioned activities in IAP fully support this vision.

Political context

After the last elections in October 2021, 1/3 of the Council members were new. Thus, there are new challenges, new plans, new opportunities, and most importantly new promises to engage communities in developing all areas.

One of the focus is to develop digital readiness to face all challenges related to COVID (digital tools for council work, digital maps solutions to engage in urban planning, etc.).

The challenges:

· to create awareness and general understanding of the new policies and governance principles among the new council
· each civil servant of Tartu municipality should know and understand the main principles of open governance (see ACTION TABLE – *Code of Open Governance and Engagement*)

There is a vision on how smaller communities in Tartu municipality can be engageged and on how the process can be facilitated by community organizers, but we do not have them yet.

Thus, the additional challenge is:

· **to institutionalize the community organizers, community associations or any similar bodies.**

Digital tools

Web-applications based on the ArcGIS platform is used to enable easy access to relevant spatial data of different themes: urban renewal/planning, waste management, public infrastructure maintenance, landscaping and others. During urban planning, web-based solutions are developed to enable relevant information to be accessible to the public and to collect proposals (*see Figure 1*).
Blog to report on major investments in progress

Legal context

Public consultation on Urban Planning issues: It is an obligation by law, however master plans and other documents are very complex and technical (even for the administration). In order to facilitate people's contribution to the review of the master plan, the municipality decided to use a digital platform where people can easily navigate through different layers and pin issues or concerns directly on specific locations.

All spatial planning projects are made public both on paper and on a digital platform. Everybody can make proposals and suggestions using the planning portal with minimum effort (no formalities needed).

Democracy challenges for Tartu municipality

- **Developing participatory urban planning** (rapidly developing new areas, many stakeholders involved, thus this area needs attention)

- **Listening to citizens and asking their opinions** (sparsely populated area, need to hear everybody´s voice)

- **Supporting lively neighborhood** (general passiveness, few activists / "spark persons" but they need support)

- **Co-deciding upon public budget allocation** (PB needs updates, new energy and tools)

A learning journey

Who are the stakeholders?

The main expectations for and main principles to select our ULG group were:

- To get fresh view and broad perspective
- To get new ideas and experiences from various sectors/organizations on communication and engagement
- ULG members as facilitators of communication between local administration and communities and influencers on improved communication and engagement

All this leads to more targeted and efficient communication and engagement

The Municipality team for the URBACT/Active Citizens project is:

- **Jarno Laur**, Head of Tartu Municipality
- **Tarmo Raudsepp** (Deputy Head)
- **Estrit Aasma** (communication specialist)
- **Eve Kallas** (municipal secretary)
- **Tõnis Tõnissoo** (landslide), from November 2021 he is the Project manager of current project for Tartu municipality, previous to that Maido Puna was on this position

The local content manager for the project and ULG coordinator is external expert **Kristina Reinsalu from the Estonian e-Governance Academy.**

NGOs
- Lähte Youth center
- Laeva Youth Center

Citizens/Volunteers
- Piirissare island guard
- Koogi Village activist
- Culture worker
- Äksi Village activist, editor of monthly municipal Journal
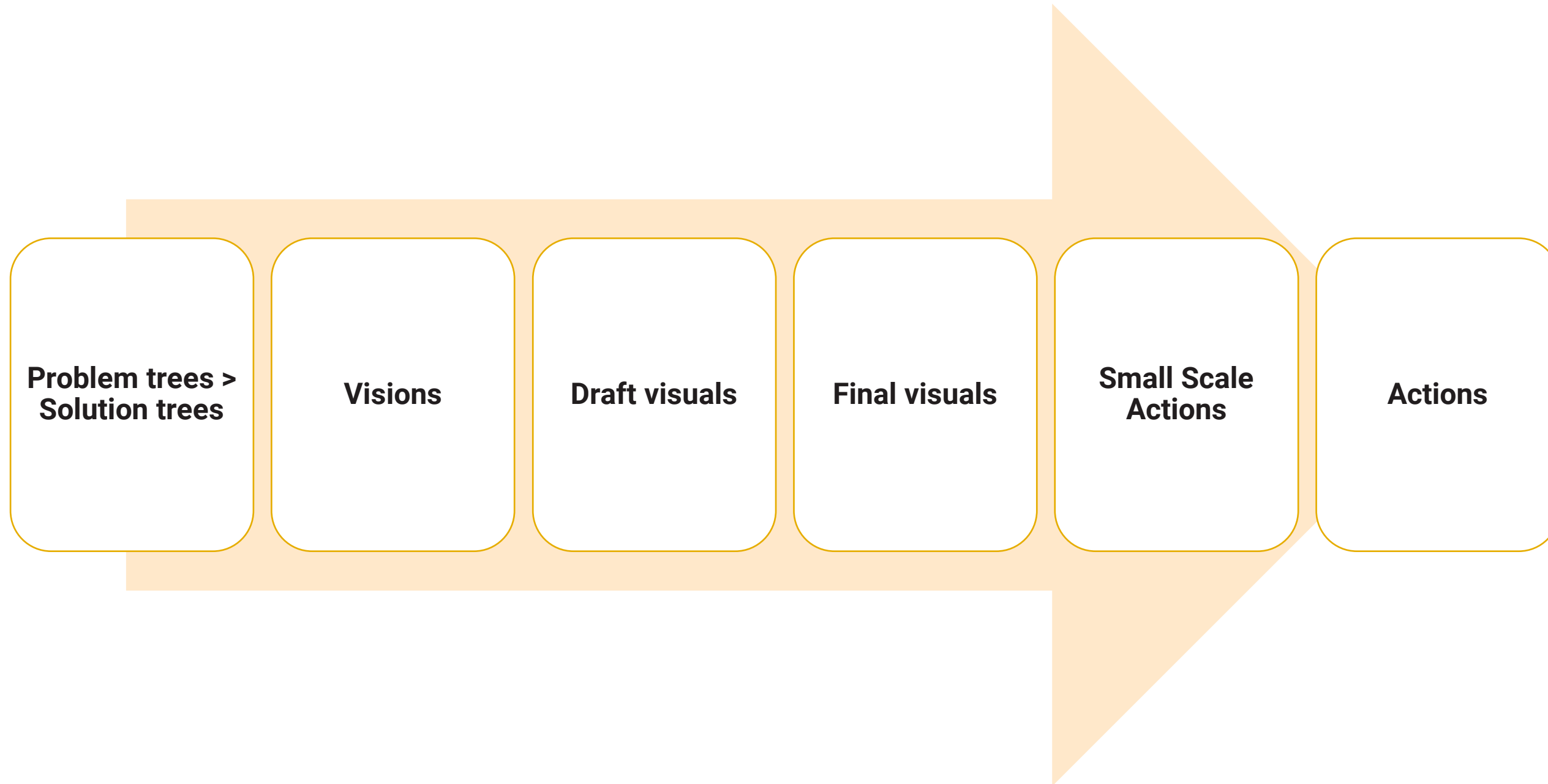
Public Authorities
- Council of Tartu Municipality
- Foundation Tartu Valla Kommunaal
- Lähte Gymnasium
- Tabivere Basic School
- Tabivere Kindergarten
- Ripsik Kindergarten
- Sport School
- Music School

Private sector and other
- Juulamõisa Café
- SA Ice Age Center
- Tartu University Centre for Applied Social Sciences

Roadmap for ULG

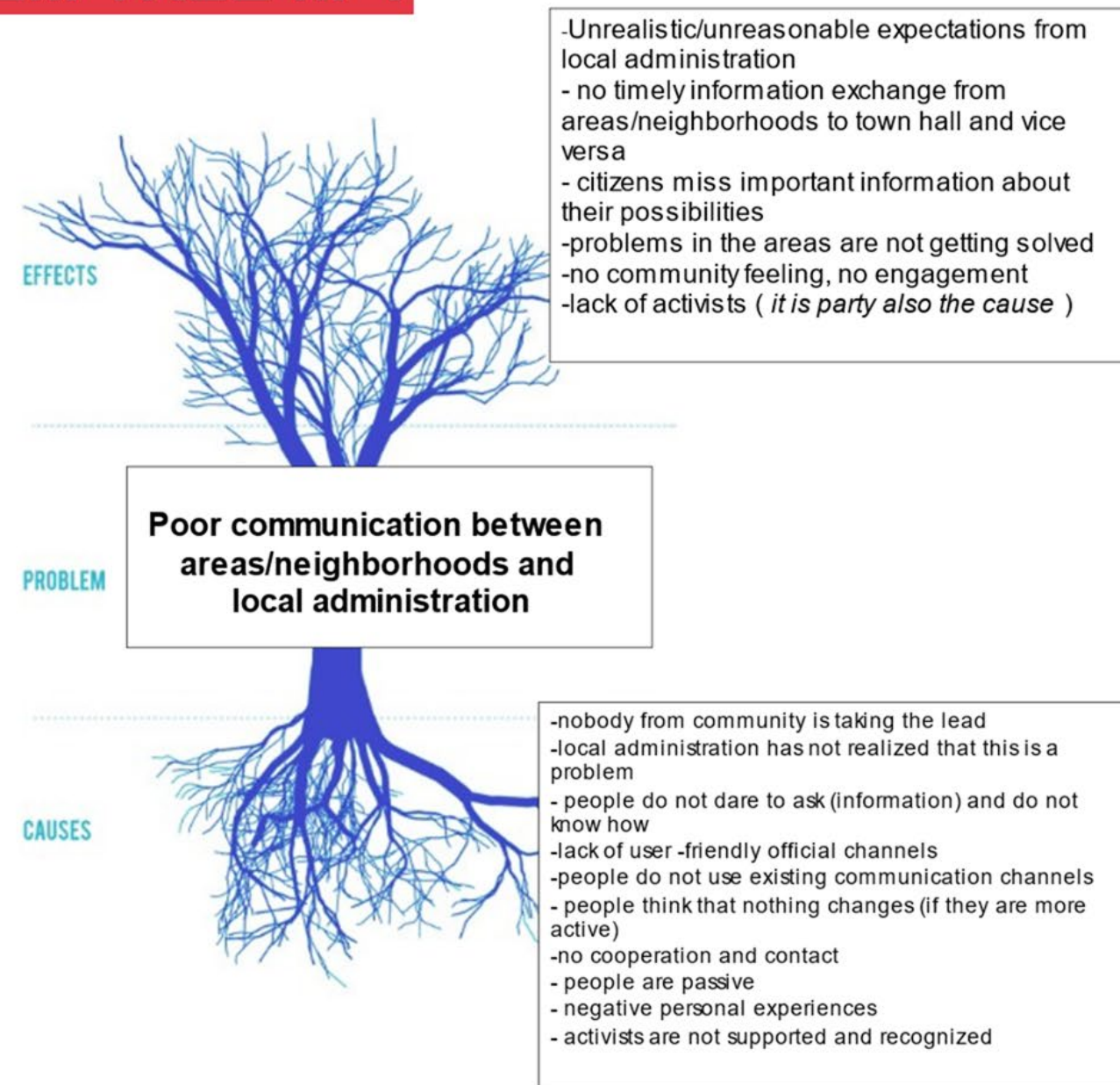| Problem trees > Solution trees | Visions | Draft visuals | Final visuals | Small Scale Actions | Actions |

ULG activities & outcome

(1)Brainstorming at the ULG kick-off meeting initially marked the problems to be investigated further through problem tree exercises:

   a.IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT Community leaders

   b.MORE Dialogue on Regional development

   c.Participatory Budgeting NEEDS updates

(2)Problem tree exercises (see next page)

(3)Online questionnaire to help to define the challenges as problems distributed among ULG members and 11 thorough responses which helped to define the core problems:
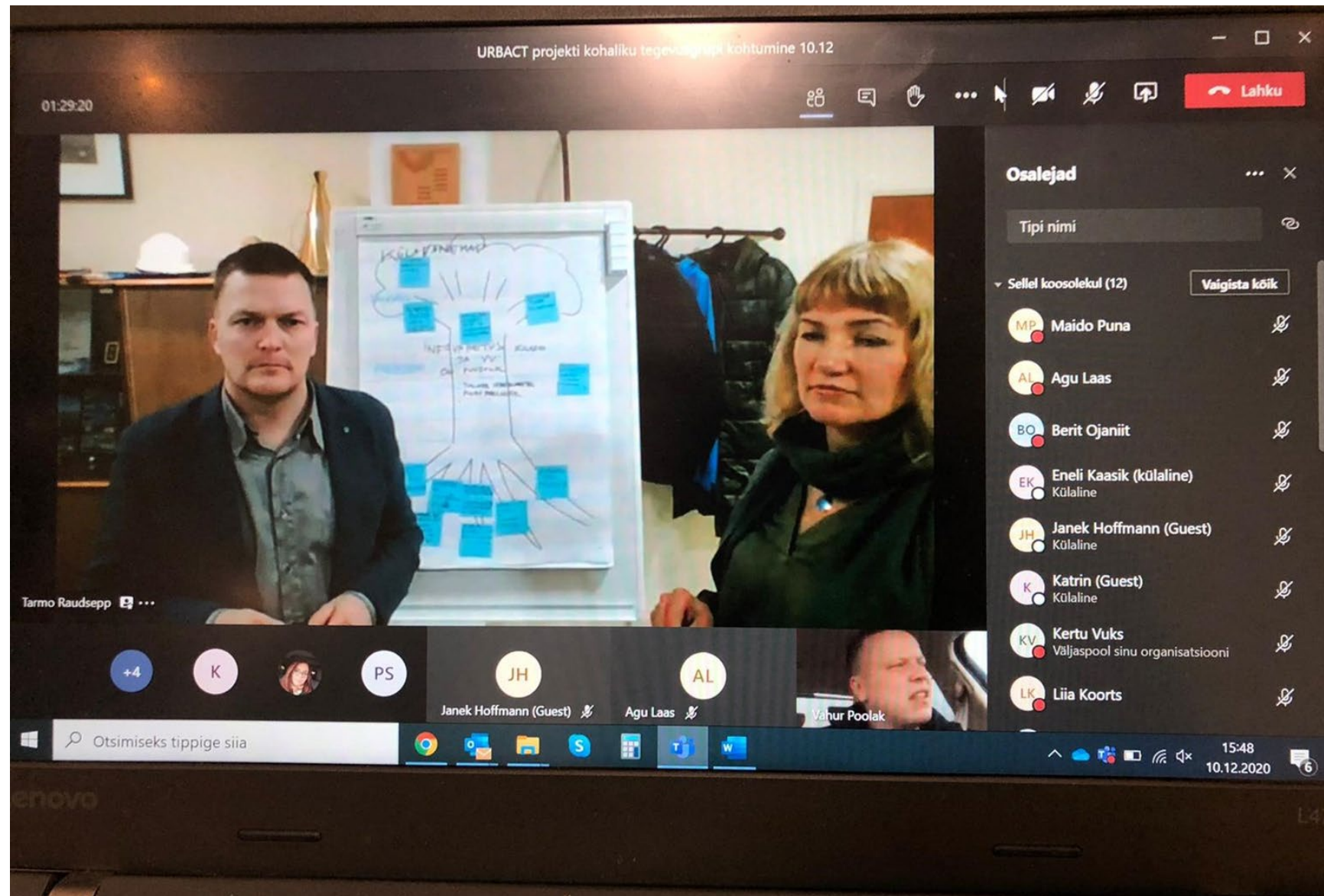
Analysing the problems

- Poor communication between areas/neighbourhoods and local administration
- No dialogue, engagement for solving local problems in communities
- Current Participatory Budgeting model favours larger neighbourhood

PROBLEM TREE nr 1

EFFECTS
- Unrealistic/unreasonable expectations from local administration
- no timely information exchange from areas/neighborhoods to town hall and vice versa
- citizens miss important information about their possibilities
- problems in the areas are not getting solved
- no community feeling, no engagement
- lack of activists (*it is party also the cause*)

PROBLEM
Poor communication between areas/neighborhoods and local administration

CAUSES
- nobody from community is taking the lead
- local administration has not realized that this is a problem
- people do not dare to ask (information) and do not know how
- lack of user -friendly official channels
- people do not use existing communication channels
- people think that nothing changes (if they are more active)
- no cooperation and contact
- people are passive
- negative personal experiences
- activists are not supported and recognized

ULG worked in different modes

Small
Scale
Actions

SMALL SCALE ACTION N°1

Active and fruitful dialogue between local administration and communities- **Everyone is tuned, everyone is informed!**

Active Citizens´ challenge:
Listening to citizens and asking their opinions

An extensive [survey](#) on communication and engagement preferences of citizens. 1-page survey disseminated in all possible contact points (libraries, etc.) and channels (online and onsite)

What did we want to achieve ?
- an overview of how many people receive their information and which channels they prefer to get their communication from
- to prototype citizens and identify which are the communication bubbles they are in, and which are the best places and who are the best facilitators for more effective communication and engagement.

SMALL SCALE ACTION N°1

What were the effects produced by your SSA? What came out of the SSA? What did we learn from it?

- The most popular information channels are FB groups and monthly magazines
- However, citizens prefer to participate sharing their opinions via online questionnaires (like this we just did) or at different onsite events

People said:

- *"I really want to take part in different decisions and activities, but there is a time lapse when the information reaches me and many times it is too late then to participate. My recommendation is to use quick pop-up messages via app, maybe just some keywords, so I am aware that my contribution is expected. Participation should be easy and quick – as this survey!"*
- *" We would like to get more information about the current situation and future developments of concrete areas".*
- *"Monthly magazine is too fancy, something more modest would do"*
- *"Keep up the good work!. If the municipality could attract even more companies to offer services here, we do not need to go to Tartu City at all!"*
- *"Tartu municipality should even promote more proudly that we are the sportiest municipality!"*

CONCLUSIONS
1. **Use more polls and other interactive means to get people's opinions and proposals**
2. **At the same time we should organize and use all real onsite events (festivals, community meetings) to give people more opportunities to share their concerns, expectations, proposals.**
3. **Participatory Budgeting needs better communication (timely, better targeted, motivating)**
4. **Young people would like to have their channel (but what?)**
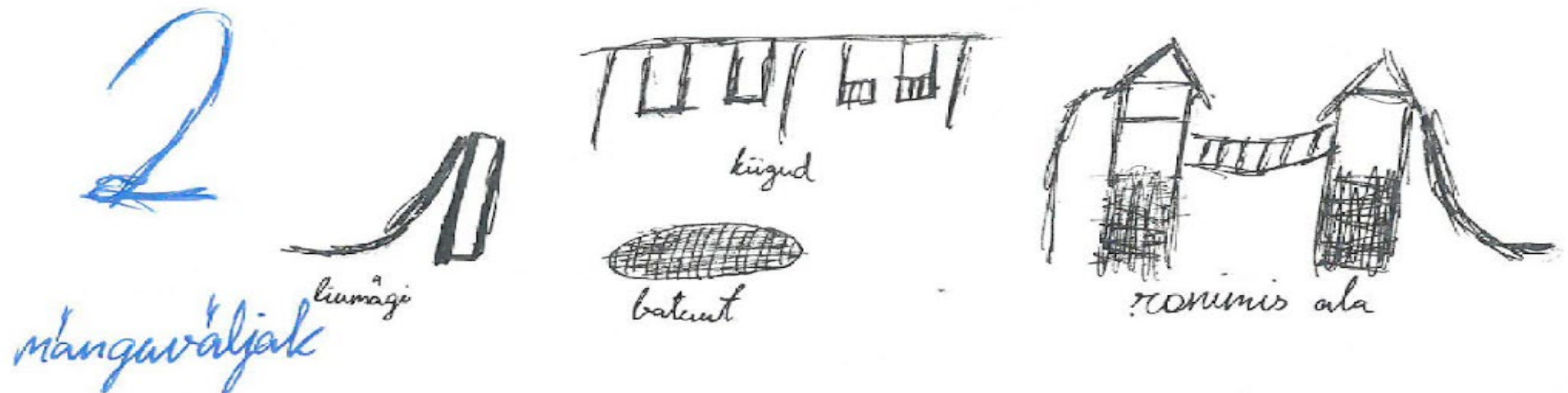
SMALL SCALE ACTION N°2

TITLE OF SSA: Design Your Beach Promenade!

Active Citizens challenge: **Developing participatory urban planning**

We engaged students of Kõrveküla Basic School in designing the new promenade along lake Kõrveküla

We aimed to:
- **Get ideas from school kids for new objects and activities**
- **Make them feel that there are participating in developing the neighborhood**
- **Prove that the users are very valuable content providers**

KÕRVEKÜLA RANNAPROMENAADI KUJUNDAMINE

SMALL SCALE ACTION N°3

TITLE: New Edition of Participatory Budgeting started!
Active Citizens challenge: **Co-deciding upon public budget allocation**

As one of the conclusions of the communication survey was the need to promote more actively the PB, we prepared a serie of videos inspiring citizens to come up with their new ideas.

WE hoped to get more people aware of the process, but we also hoped to increase the community activism and collaboration.

Results:

· **Record number of votes – 1269**
· **smaller communities proved to be very active**

MINI SCALE ACTION N°4

TITLE: Help to design the Tartu Municipality calendar for 2022!
Active Citizens challenge:
Listening to citizens and asking their opinions

The new calendar will be designed using exclusively photos made and submitted by citizens.

39 authors submitted 300 photos!

Action plan

Action table 1/1
(Urban Planning)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Online game (SIMTartu or Valdcraft). A smart application designed to introduce spatial planning processes, visualize plans and / or gather ideas from those involved and / or assess the preconditions and consequences of creative placemaking.	**Developing participatory urban planning**	**Informed participants-** people and / or organizations involved have a better overview of the planned activities and their effects; **Increased participation** - using an attractive and easy-to use- digital solution attracts and encourages people to think on complex topics	Planning department and municipality + planning committee of the Council	State agencies developing GIS solutions and processing important basic data: Land Board, Building Register. The partners in creating the game are private IT companies.	Facilitating factors - 1) The Land Board has already created a virtual 3D twin for buildings covering the whole of Estonia. Creating a 3D layer of vegetation and the ability to "build" into the 3D model in your own environment. 2) Estonian people are well equipped with smart tools and corresponding skills. 3) Virtual models / models are easier to create and monitor than physical ones. Obstacles - 1) Developing a game is time and money consuming. 2) Gathering and using the results of the game to develop the final planning solution can be difficult. 3) there is a risk that the purpose of the game will disappear for the player or become the "ultimate truth" for the player.	Concept 2022-2024, Creation of the game 2024-2027.

Action table 1/2
(Urban Planning)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Idea collections for planning public space Involvement of as many people and stakeholders as possible in the process of planning the public space (parks, green areas, street space, as well as public service objects such as educational institutions, welfare institutions, etc.) through the collection of ideas.	**Developing Participatory Urban planning**	Increased Community feeling and motivation to participate more (brainstorming becomes part of every public space planning process and the procedural rules for brainstorming have been developed).	Planning department and municipality + planning committee of the Council	thematic interest groups and, if possible, neighboring local governments for the development of unified rules are partners in the development of procedural rules. 2) IT companies are partners in creating a technical solution 3) when using the solutions, the partners are local residents, thematic interest groups, potential users, etc.	Favorable factors - 1) Tartu municipality has several positive experiences in collecting ideas. 2) People's existing IT knowledge and technical equipment are sufficient for participation. 3) does not require large expenditures in developing solutions. Obstacles: 1) When using an electronic channel only, the ideas of people who do not have smart devices are not collected, 2) if the results of the idea collection are not reflected in the final solution, there is a risk that the solution will be abandoned. 3) the risk that ideas will be submitted by a narrow audience, so ideas will not vary.	Rules: 2022-2023, creation of technical solution 2022-2025
Green Paper on Planning-guidelines for planning and implementing engagement of citizens for all stakeholders involved in planning processes	**Developing Participatory Urban planning**	Construction and Planning Department (municipality architect and GIS specialist)	Construction and Planning Department (municipality architect and GIS specialist)		Favorable factors: public consultations in planning is already quite well regulated and stakeholders are used to engaging the public; existing map-solutions support the process Obstacles: to create an eclectic, Interactive document with cool examples, interlinked with all ohter relevant processes; resóurces	2024-2025

Action table 1/3
(Urban Planning)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Updating of Municipality's Geoportal to enable collecting of citizen's feedback / proposals on different themes and new functionalities added (e.g in case of playgrounds and sport objects to provide feedback and report on maintenance problems, to give feedback on green areas etc.) The action is supported by promotion activities: when a municipality goes to a community etc. event, the new functionalities will be introduced	**Developing Participatory Urban planning**	Increased participation: active residents can contribute to the improvement of public space applications to give feedback.	**Communication specialist; GIS specialist**	Architecture and planning agencies ; companies dealing with energy, gas etc. supplies; Land Authority; other municipalities	Favorable context: Citizens are used to use interactive map solutions as they are available already for some time Obstacles: general passiveness to bother to give any feedback at all	2022-2023

Action table 2/1
(Dialogue with Citizens)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Transmissions of council meetings in Social Media Council meetings broadcasted as Facebook events, YouTube videos etc. Citizens have possibility to interact and post questions.	**Dialogue with citizens**	Increased awareness of work process of municipality and current challenges, future plans etc. This leads to more motivation to give feedback, new ideas	Head of Council, Head of planning Commitee		Favorable factors: Existing digital platform for council work supports the live transmissions; social media is widely used by citizens Some municipalities in the region already do that and can share their best practices Risks: Depends on political will and support	2022
The municipality comes to visit the event If possible, they go to a community event (the mayor, like a super chef, goes to a café, a tent, etc. on Midsummer's Day, etc.) There is an annual plan of events, from there you can manage where to go, about 10 events during the year. Communities could invite themselves or, for example, once a year in cafes or similar places in different places	**Dialogue with citizens**	Informed citizens – information comes to citizens and not the other way round. Increased motivation to participate – the unformal format of dialogue and engagement motivates to participate and contribute in solving community problems	Communication specialist, culture specialist	Community leaders	Favorable context: previous experience tells – people come along Risks: environmental factors we cannot control (pandemic, security risk, bad weather etc.)	Spring-autumn 2022

Action table 2/2

Dialogue with Citizens)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Good Practice for Engagement (GPE) Consists of two parts: Part 1 defines the areas where open communication and engagement are important and outlines the planned activities of Tartu municipality (this part could be public). Part 2 is practical toolbox with a variety of inclusion methods and digital tools that support this inclusion.	**Dialogue with citizens**	Increased participation of citizens as the municipality staff has clear guidelines and is better armed and skilled. As the political situation changes, officials already have the knowledge, skills and routines to engage. Increased motivation of citizens as it is clear to people where Tartu municipality is moving with openness and involvement	Administration, Communication specialist	External expert (Kristina Reinsalu)	Favourable context - Existence of political will to let citizens to influence the decision / process really. Engage when this has real impact) The more strategic and the greater the impact, more opportunities to participate there should be. The obstacle is if it remains just a document in the desk drawer, if it is not possible to agree on who will do it, and if there is no resource to actually do the engagement activities.	2023

Action table 2/3

(Dialogue with Citizens)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Continuation of the current ULG after URBACT Steps to institutionalize: - acute and motivating name in Estonia - define the purpose of the working group's activities (work instructions) - Specify format (periodical with set intervals or topics based, split in groups etc.) - Mapping of organizations / individuals to extend the current ULG - Establish a work plan (for one year or more)	**Dialogue with citizens**	Enriches engagement: gives an external view and another perspective on the municipal topics, brings in new ideas and experiences for communication and involvement Better targeted and effective communication connected community: ULG members are facilitators between the municipality and the community	**Department of Planning and Development, Communication specialist**	External expert, current ULG coordinator Kristina Reinsalu	Favourable context: ULG has already established itself in a sense, there are people who are familiar with the issues of inclusion and ready to contribute -There is a clear work plan (IAP) or upcoming activities that ULG can advise on Obstacles: -Same as we experienced with ULG so far - people don't have time, the topic of involvement still remains abstract, etc. -Someone has to pay for it and spend a lot of energy - who?	2022
Periodical Survey on Communication and Engagement (+ topical polls, surveys e-g on public transport etc.)	**Dialogue with citizens**	Improves engagement and the expectations and needs of citizens are clear. Increases participation and motivation as everyone can have a say.	Communication specialist	Libraries, community centers	Favorable context: as SSA showed, people are happy to contribute this way Obstacles: if there are too few participants, we cannot make any conclusions based on input	2022

Action table 3/1
(Supporting lively neighbourhoods)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Improving and re-structuring the presentation on community associations on the municipality's website. **The information on communities and association should be** easily found; also the practical information – Community leaders contacts, Statute of the village elder , funding opportunities etc. should be available from one place	**Supporting lively neighborhood**	Improves communication and participation: Local residents can join the already existing structure and communicate with the municipality via "spokesperson". At the moment, an individual's initiative is often stalled because it is not known that anyone is already working in the area with the same goal.	**Culture specialist and communication specialist**	Community activists and associations	Favourable context - available information tools - website, app, Facebook groups, municipality page, etc. Obstacles –unsustainability – too much depends on concrete persons, community leaders – if they leave or get tied all activities remain stagnant.	ASAP
Community campaign actions (soup and debate style) For example, organizing a community event to plant trees around near buildings and discuss important community topics there	**Supporting lively neighborhood**	Increases community feeling and motivation to participate	Municipality architect together with council of culture and community	Communities	Favorable factors: informal event use to attract people Obstacles: Constant need for support and resources. Depends on factors we cannot influence like weather etc.	2022

Action table 3/2
(Supporting lively neighbourhoods)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Community action plan + budget. Each community has its own wallet, the community leader also involves the council committee in it. The activity is supported by competition (campaign + open call etc) to find a community leader (külakäraja). There is also a motivation package for selected community leaders – study tour to other municipality where similar practice works well, etc	**Supporting lively neighborhoods**	Increased motivation and participation, also the satisfaction if something is done jointly. Very important is also shared responsibility – not only municipality is responsible for solving neighborhood problems.	Community activists and council of culture and community	Communities	Favourable context: Budget (money) motivates people to contribute in community life Obstacles: some preparatory work is needed to start planning and implementing this action (currently there are no organized communities everywhere: Sometimes it is hard to find consensus in wishes	2024

Action table 3/3

(Supporting lively Neighbourhoods)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Regular community meetings with local government + **Joint information exchange / meetings among community leaders themselves.** Meetings of community leaders are held to share information and organize cooperation between communities + regular communication and cooperation of the Culture and Community Committee with the communities	**Supporting lively neighborhoods**	Improves and increases participation: improves the flow of information, brings new ideas etc.; good community engagement practices are spreading; the communities themselves can be more active	Community activists and council of culture and community	Communities, community houses	Favourable factors: some communities are already organized and can encourage the others; Obstacles: Lack of common sense, hard to find time slots suitable for everyone etc	2023

Action table 3/4

Supporting lively Neighbourhoods)

ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Appoint a council member for each community In a formal or informal way, each region receives a spokesperson from among the council members. In this way, information from remote or smaller villages could also reach the council. One of the sub-activities could be formation of regional (district) councils The size of the district council depends on the number of inhabitants in the area. The following shall be submitted to the regional council for opinion: - rural municipality development plan and budget strategy; - the general plan of the municipality and its amendments; other drafts important for the region	**Supporting lively neighborhoods**	Stronger (and personal) connection between council and community leads to increased participation and trust	Council + Head of Planning and Development Department + council of planning and department		Favorable factors: Contributing members of the council are already connected to different areas through their place of residence Obstacles - there is no legal basis and if there is no "political will", it will not happen.	2023

Action table 4/1

(Participatory Budgeting)

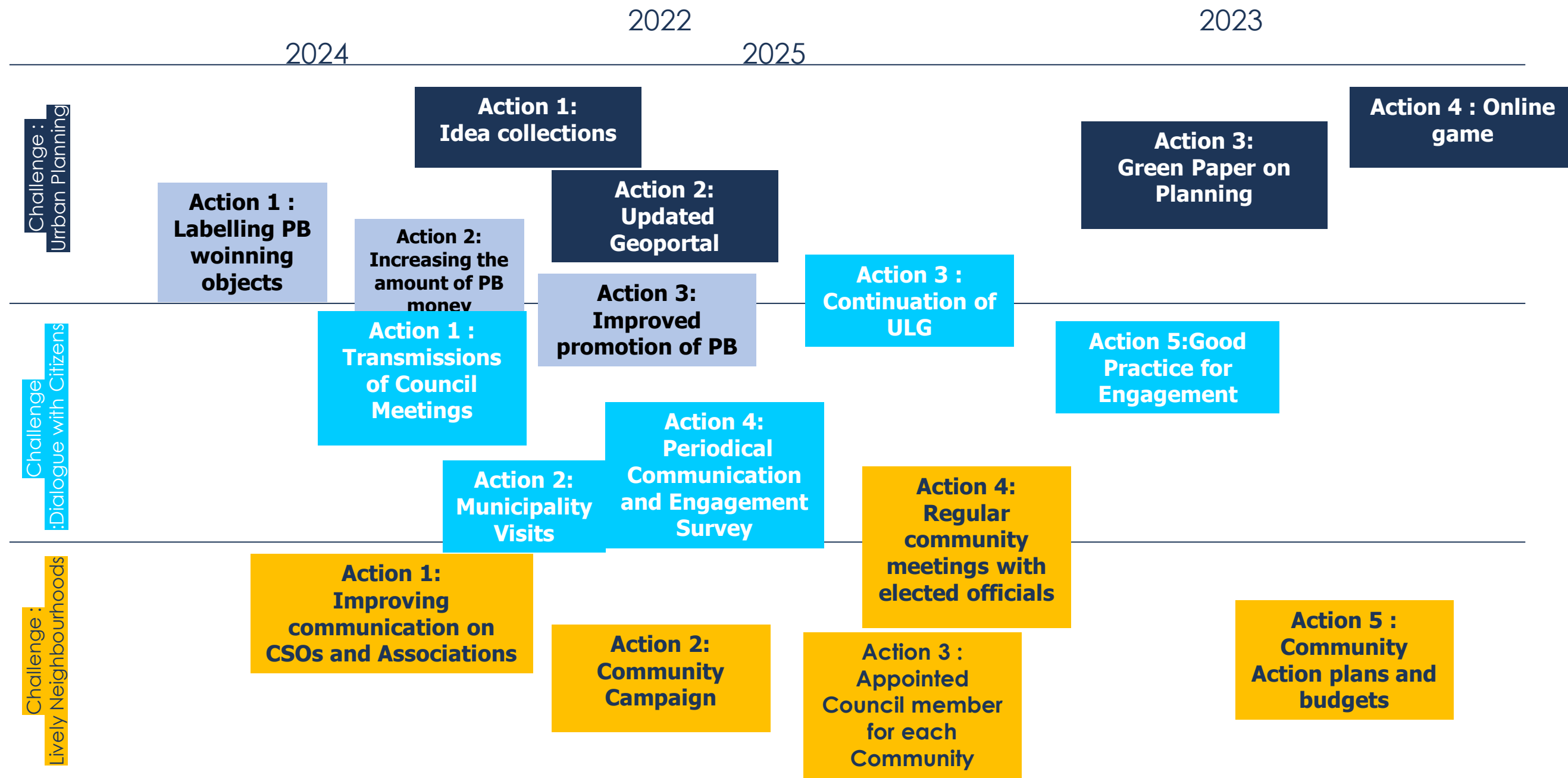| ACTION (describe your intended action)	CHALLENGE(S) (describe to which challenge your action contributes)	EXPECTED RESULTS IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY	LEADER OF THE ACTION (the organization that will take the lead in implementing/piloting the action)	PARTNER(S) (list all the partners, stakeholders who will support, help, contribute to the implementation of the action)	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS (describe here your strengths and assets which will make your action feasible, implementable)	TIMEFRAME (describe here the expected duration, length of the action)
Increasing the amount of money do be decided by citizens	**Participatory Budgeting**	Increased motivation to participate as the impact of participation is bigger (it is possible to implement bigger projects)	Council	Administration	Favorable factors: Political will Obstacle: Financial capability	ASAP
Improved promotion of PB SSA proved that good marketing brings more people to the process	**Participatory Budgeting**	Increased participation and impact as there will be new participants and cooler ideas	Communication specialist	External professionals	Favorable factors: There are already great winning projects from previous years we can use for promotion; thanks to other SSA (communication survey) municipality knows more about effective communication channels Obstacles: General passiveness and lack of "drivers" of activists	2022
Labelling PB winning objects	**Participatory Budgeting**	Increases motivation to participate in deciding on common public space as the "fruits" are easy to see	Culture specialist, Communication specialist	Active citizens who participate in PB	Favorable factors: as it is also a publicity to the authors/communities behind ideas, there is an interest to implement Obstacles: It is costly as the labels should be weather-proof	ASAP

Budget

ACTION	BUDGET
Online Game	*Using existing platforms and resources*
Idea collection for planning public space	2769.-
Green Paper on Planning guidelines	4875.-
Updating of Municipal Geoportal	650.-
Transmissions of council meetings in Social Media	325.-
The municipality comes to visit the event	507.-
Good Practice for Engagement	4875.-
Continuation of the ULG after URBACT	500.-
Periodical Survey on Communication and Engagement	195.-

ACTION	BUDGET
Improving and restructuring the presentation on community associations on the municipality´s website	260.-
Community campaign actions	600.-
Community action plan budget	325.-
Regular community meetings with local government	500.-
Appoint a council member for each community	*No costs planned, but with Council act some additional compensation might be applicable*
Increasing the amount of money to be decided by citizens	*Tp be decided when the next year´s budget is approved*
Improved promotion of PB	65.-
Labelling PB winning objects	50.-

Action plan calendar

2022

2023

2024

2025

Action 1:
Idea collections

Action 3:
Green Paper on Planning

Action 4 : Online game

Action 1 :
Labelling PB woinning objects

Action 2:
Increasing the amount of PB money

Action 2:
Updated Geoportal

Action 3:
Improved promotion of PB

Action 3 :
Continuation of ULG

Action 1 :
Transmissions of Council Meetings

Action 5:Good Practice for Engagement

Action 2:
Municipality Visits

Action 4:
Periodical Communication and Engagement Survey

Action 4:
Regular community meetings with elected officials

Action 1:
Improving communication on CSOs and Associations

Action 2:
Community Campaign

Action 3 :
Appointed Council member for each Community

Action 5 :
Community Action plans and budgets

Potential risks

Risks concerning the environment

Unfortunately, the biggest risks at the moment are related to those risks that municipality cannot control and manage itself at all.

General environment: Due to our geopolitical situation, risk no 1 is the security risk for the region and all municipalities have to be prepared.

Local political environment: currently the political will is very strong, but of course there is always a risk it can change, especially if the general environment changes.

Risks concerning the resources

Unfortunately, the general environment has strong impact on available resources for implementing the IAP. Currently unexpectedly many resources of municipalities are going to solve the humanitarian crises caused by the war in Ukraine.

Risks concerning organizational, cultural,, social change

All actions require, from all stakeholders involved, strong will to do some "extra work", to think out of everyday box, to talk to people you do not talk etc.

Most of our participatory activities are connected to or supported by digital tools. From one hand this is the normality of today and what citizens expect (due to COVID); on the other hand this is a challenge, a risk to lose the "human side" of interaction and participation when going too or - even worse- only digital!

Integration Level

"Vertical" integration

Estonia is part of international Open Governance Partnership initiative that combines the powerful forces to promote transparent, participatory, inclusive and accountable governance. For the last years all national action plans have extra commitments to increase the capacity for co-creative policy-making within local governments. To that end, e-Governance Academy conducts regional workshops on open digital local governance reaching out to all Estonian municipalities. The activity supports the achievement of the strategic goal of 'Estonia 2035', in which 'Estonia is an innovative, reliable and people-centred country'. **Tartu Parish actively attended the trainings.**

T

here is also another important initiative targeting all Estonian municipalities and motivating them for more citizen-centric governnance and services. This is **My Municipality platform** run by the Ministry of Financial Affairs.
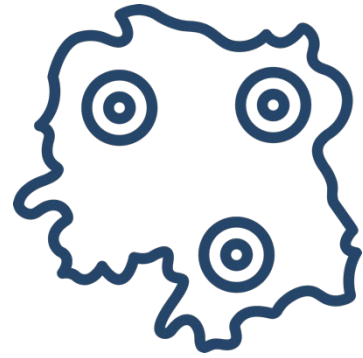
"Horizontal" integration

In order to plan public participation and cooperation between different departments of municipality as well sub-organizations is needed to collect input, analyse it and design the engagement process.

There are few areas where engagement of citizens (public conusltations, etc) and cooperation across different policy areas and departments of a municipality is formally regulated. One of the areas is urban planning. However, in most of the policy areas, the more harmonized view, clear guidelines and steps for public consultation and engagement including internally, is needed.

Therefore, one of the actions we plan to implement is to prepare an Engagement Manual for departments/ officials.

"Territorial" integration

Tartu Parish engages in very close cooperation with Tartu City – there is basically no boundary between the municipality and City and there is a close cooperation in terms of joint services (transport, etc.) and well as in urban planning.

One trigger for increasing reagional cooperation between municipalities is the EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2024 project. The City of Tartu is the Capital; however, the 19 Southern Estonian municipalities, including Tartu Parish, are cooperating in preparations and implementation of this big International inititaive. The European Capital of Culture program will also be completed in a very inclusive way, as well as between municipalities, as with the involvement of citizens of all municipalities involved.
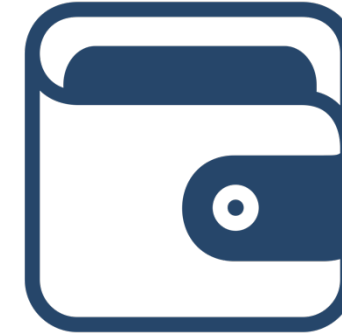
"Resources" integration

We have to accept that implementing participatory democracy is not an easy nor cheap task. There are some investments needed for new level digital tools, for engagement such as tools for opening up urban planning process and to attract youth (see our action in table 1/1 Valdcraft) etc.

However, more than „hard" investments, the municipality needs to invest in its people. And this in two ways – first, to attract people with open mind and good skills including communication skills to work for municipality, and second, to identify local atcivists, who are facilitators and mediators between municipality and crowd, influencers, etc. There are some resources neede to motivate and recognize these people.

FASTER ALONE, FURTHER TOGETHER – TARTU MUNICIPALITY FOR AND WITH CITIZENS!