

Technical consultants and community meetings



Main sector

- Smart buildings
- Citizen engagement

Overview

For the retrofitting activities to succeed in Tartu (see more under [Tartu retrofitting package](#)), the active participation of citizens is required. All the buildings in the pilot area are privately owned and a collective decision by the owners is necessary for renovation activities to take place. The SEC project can support this process, but the final decision (including decisions about the technical design and its implementation) has to be made by the representative NGO of the private owners (i.e. housing association). Because of this, the main focus of engagement in Tartu is on the housing associations and the main task is to include the associations into the renovation process (even if they do not participate in the SEC project). The single most important act of engagement will be the housing associations' decision to renovate. Everything in the project will support this decision and help its realisation.

The partner responsible for direct contact with the housing associations is Tartu Regional Energy Agency (TREA). TREA supports the housing associations in building up the necessary knowledge for launching the renovation process. It is important for the residents to understand the benefits and risks of the renovation activities. All the representatives of these associations have been contacted and the renovation possibilities introduced. This includes different funding models for energy efficient renovation, quality requirements for the renovations and specific requirements of the SEC project. At the same time, TREA is in contact with KredEx – a state funded national body offering grants for energy efficient renovation in Estonia - for granting additional funding for the renovations. TREA also coordinates stakeholders responsible for the technical aspects of the renovation process - engineers, designer, building experts etc. - to discuss the technical and economic feasibility of the energy efficient renovation package. All the potential service providers and contractors are thus contacted and invited to the discussion.

Citizen engagement

The citizen engagement process of Tartu's pilot activities can be divided into five main phases:

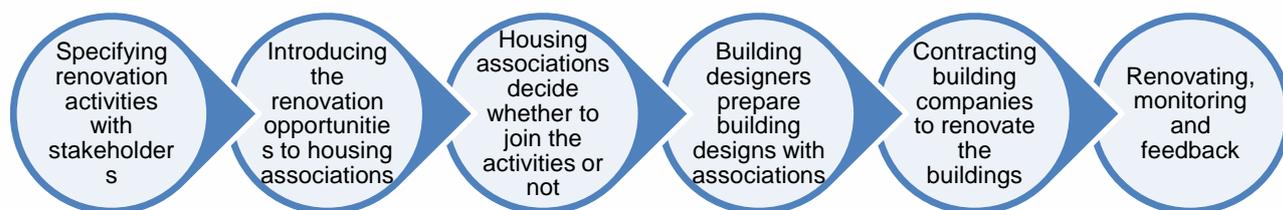
- The first phase is supported by the local dissemination work done by city officials to create a positive image of the renovation and to encourage the housing associations to participate in the process;
- During the second phase, experts from TREA visit the internal meetings of the housing associations to explain the planned renovation process in detail, thereby collecting feedback and suggestions;



- During the third phase, TREA supports the housing associations as technical experts in developing the renovation project that is designed by the contracted engineering company and in implementing the project in the process of renovation;
- During the fourth phase, TREA together with the City of Tartu, the Institute of Baltic Studies (IBS) and the University of Tartu provide knowledge to the pilot area residents on the possibilities and ways of conserving energy in their everyday life at information events and trainings (incl. about how to use the new smart technologies to improve life quality);
- During the fifth phase, TREA monitors the performance of the retrofitted buildings and provides feedback to its residents on energy costs and consumption patterns.

These main consultation phases are supported by other dissemination means, including a local project website (www.tarktartu.ee), a mailing list for pilot area residents and housing associations, regular information meetings and workshops for pilot area residents, study visits to similar construction sites etc.

Process



Benefits

- Increased awareness of energy-efficiency among citizens
- Increased acceptance of new technologies among citizens
- Increased resource and energy efficiency
- Greater transparency of urban processes
- Behavioral change and increased comfort
- Social integration and community feeling

Stakeholders

Owner of the solution	N/A
Service/technology provider	Project partners (TREA, City of Tartu, IBS, University of Tartu)
Users	Pilot area residents, housing associations
Investors	H2020

Potential for replication

In case of Tartu, the citizen engagement strategy is mostly focused of informing, consulting and involving, and to a lesser degree, collaborating and empowering. As renovating the buildings and other project activities require the most input from public authorities, citizens will be mostly communicated with, consulted with and they will be involved in the development of project activities and in certain decision-making processes (collaborating and empowering, i.e. transportation planning app, choosing artworks to go on the facades of their houses, etc.). For replication purposes, baseline studies are crucial to explore the characteristics of the area. For instance, the pilot area in Tartu can be described through the following factors which were accounted for in developing an engagement strategy:

- The majority of residents are 20-39 years old, with a more or less even distribution of men and women;
- The majority of residents have at least high school or vocational education;
- Most of the younger population are tenants studying in the local universities;
- Most of the decisions are made at the housing association level and individual people may be overruled and/or outvoted at apartment owners' meetings;
- A minority of the people are Russian speakers;
- There is little feeling of community/unity both at building and pilot area level.

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