

Tallinn's Citizens' Assembly

Insights from Tallinn's
European Green Capital
Year



Our Story in Three Questions

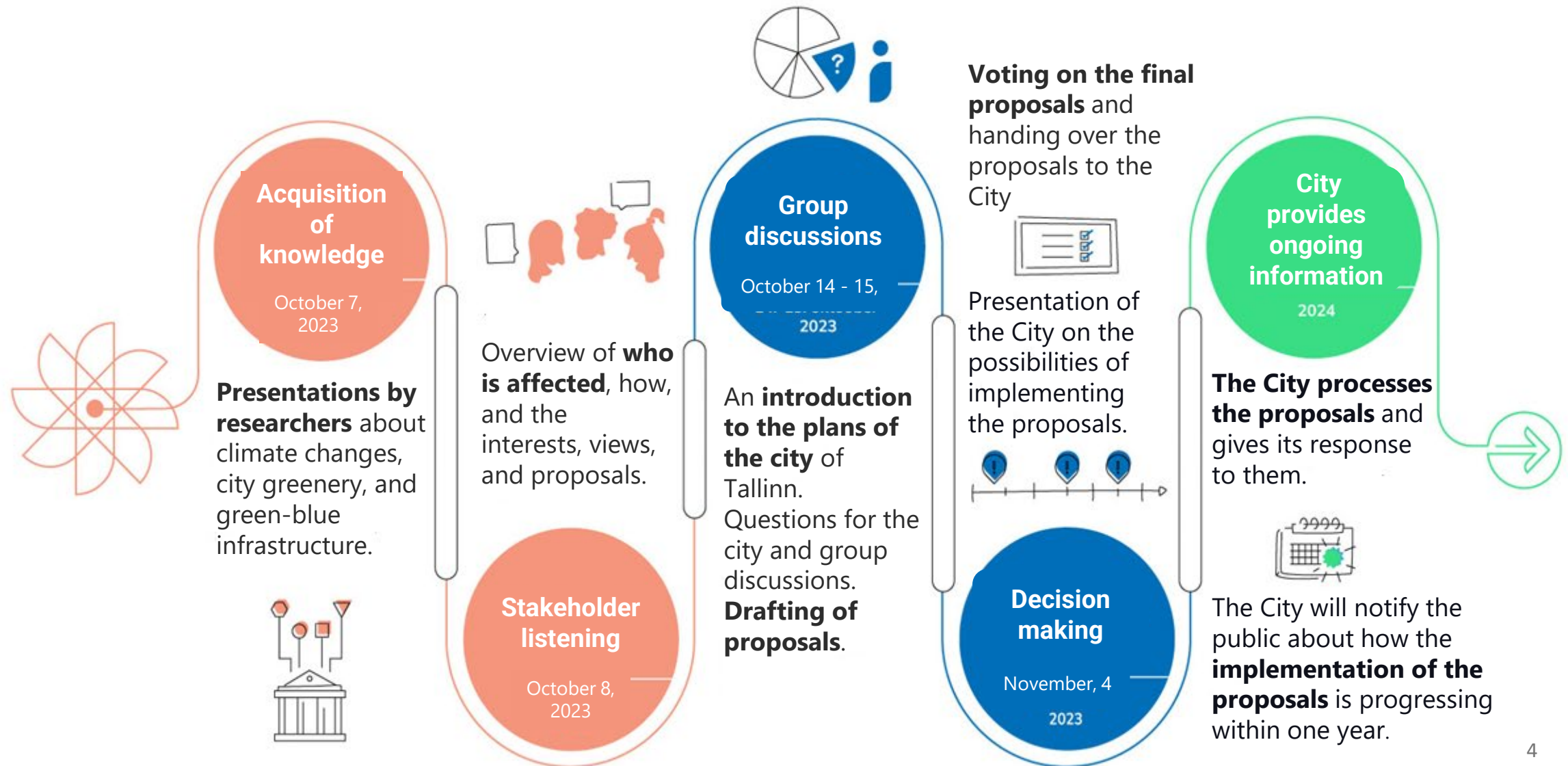
- ① Why did we start a Citizens' Assembly?
- ② How did it actually work in Tallinn?
- ③ What changed as a result?

Why a Citizens' Assembly & who took part

- A new democratic experiment during Tallinn's European Green Capital year
- **One guiding question:** "How can we link Tallinn's green spaces into an inviting urban whole?"
- Anchored in Tallinn 2035 – linking **climate adaptation** and **biodiversity** goals
- A space for citizens to learn, deliberate, and **influence** the city's future
- Participants selected by random draw – balanced across gender, age, language, and district
- Together they formed a **'Mini-Tallinn'** – 60 residents aged 16+, with 45 completing the process



How it actually worked in Tallinn



From Ideas to Final Proposals

- **Urban greenery** – protect mature trees, plant multi-layered vegetation
- **Public spaces** – expand and care for parks
- **Climate resilience** – connect green corridors, use nature-based stormwater solutions
- **Environmental quality** – reduce light and noise pollution
- **Community & governance** – joint action days, better communication, green procurement



Turning proposals into action

- **Expert Working Group** – 40+ officials from six departments reviewed all proposals and suggested practical measures
- **Steering Committee** – eight department heads, chaired by the Deputy Mayor, approved 61 actions and assigned responsibilities
- **Follow-up event** (May 2024) – the City reported back to Assembly members and the public on how proposals were being implemented
- **Citizen feedback** – participants said they truly felt listened to and valued for their voluntary work over five weekends
- **Transparency** – regular public updates on progress
- **Progress** (as of Sept 2025) – 20 actions completed, 28 ongoing, 13 in preparation
- **Integration** – proposals embedded in work plans and future strategic planning



Making it possible: partnership in practice

- **City of Tallinn** – leadership, coordination, and communication
- **DD Center for Democracy** – process design, facilitation, and quality assurance
- **Joint commitment** – shared goal to test a new democratic method
- **International oversight** – experts ensured compliance with deliberative standards
- **Outcome** – a trusted, transparent process co-created by city and citizens

The Consulting Team



Lead Consultant



Process Design Consultant



Participants' Liaison



Stakeholders' Liaison



Main Facilitator



Table Moderators x 10

City Project Team



City Strategy Director



Head of Green Transition Unit



City Project Manager



Development Bureau Strategist



Head of Communication Unit



Event Organizer



IT Platform Support



Data Protection Specialist



Journalist



Communication Specialist x 2



Marketing and Materials Designer

What changed as a result

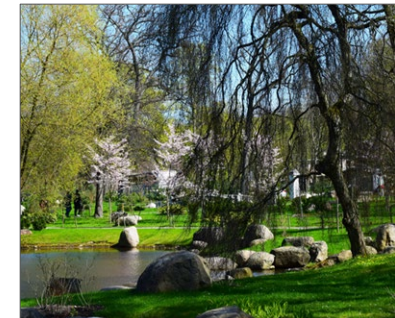
For the City

Shared purpose – consensus culture and focus on the common good

- **Shared purpose** – consensus culture and focus on the common good
- **Institutional learning** – cooperation across departments, breaking silos
- **Credibility – trust** increased as all proposals were taken seriously
- **Accountability – transparency** and follow-up proved critical
- A **repeatable** model – citizens' assemblies could continue

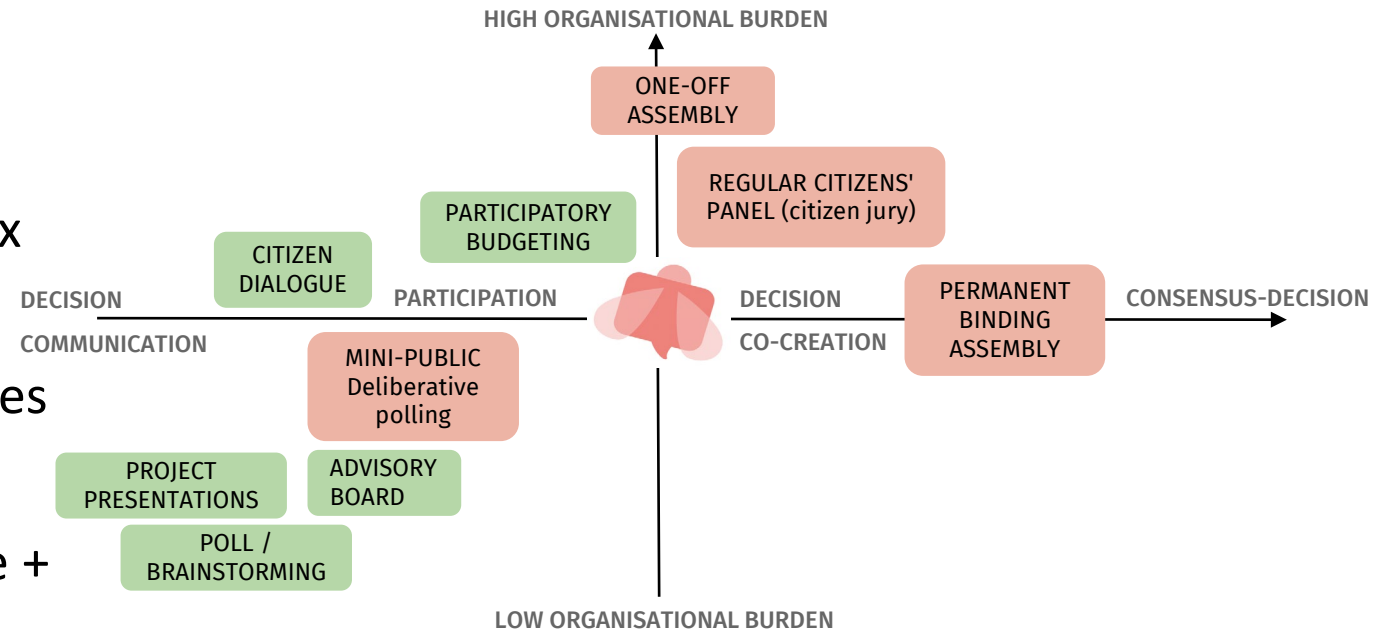
For citizens

- **Empowered citizens** – stronger climate knowledge and confidence to engage
- **Growing trust** – surveys show increased belief in influence and government
- **Inclusion** – voices of underrepresented groups were heard



Key Lessons

- **Deliberation works** – effective for complex climate challenges
- **Diversity gives legitimacy** – balanced voices lead to fair outcomes
- **Structure matters** – knowledge + dialogue + consensus = strong proposals
- **Implementation builds trust** – follow-up turns participation into credibility
- **A repeatable model** – can be used again at city or district level



Thank you for your attention!



<https://onlineexpo.com/en/rahvakogu/>



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