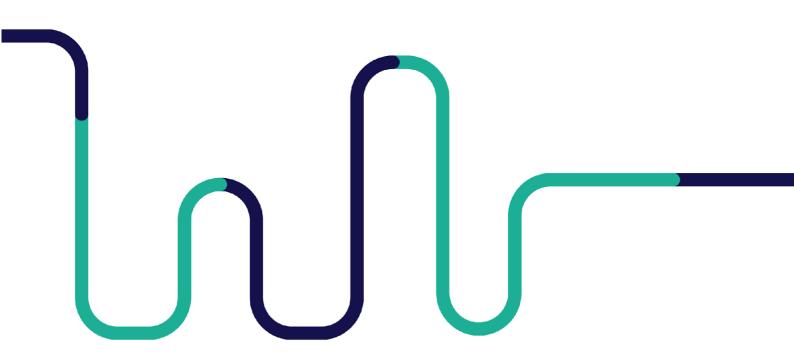# EUROPEAN URBAN INITIATIVE

EUI CAPACITY BUILDING EVENT

Smart & Sustainable: Powering up Estonian cities for the digital and green transition

Country-specific event

01-02 October 2025, Tallinn, Estonia

AGENDA

Timing	Content
Day 1 – 1st of October	
09.30 – 10.00	**Registration** Venue: Telliskivi Creative City (Telliskivi 60a/5, Tallinn)
10.00 – 10.30	**Welcome and introduction** (Plenary) The day is moderated by **Silver Tambur** **Opening speakers:** EUI video greetings **Edijs Ostrovskis**- DG REGIO TBC - Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture **Margot Roose** – City of Tallinn, Vice Mayor **Anneli Kährik** – EUI Urban Contact Point in Estonia
10.30 – 11.30	**SESSION 1 - Doing More with Less: Boosting Local Innovation Capacity** (Plenary) Moderated by: Helen Sooväli-Sepping (FinEst Centre for Smart Cities, TalTech)
	Presentation title: *Demystifying Innovation: What innovation really means for cities* **Speakers:** **Ralf-Martin Soe** and **Helen Sooväli-Sepping** (FinEst Centre for Smart Cities, TalTech) **Lauriana Sapienza** (Municipality of Castenaso, University of Bologna) - Town of fear. Simple toolkit to make towns safe **Timeframe**: 30 min
	Panel discussion: *Innovation journeys across European cities* **Panel members: Ralf-Martin Soe** (FinEst Centre), **Margot Roose** (Tallinn), **Lauriana Sapienza** (Castenaso, Italy) **Moderator: Helen Sooväli-Sepping** (FinEst Centre for Smart Cities, Taltech) **Timeframe**: 30 min
11.30 – 12.00	***Coffee break***
12.00 – 13.00	**SESSION 2 – Smart Cities in Action: Exploring Data, AI & Digital Twins in practice** (Plenary) Moderated by: **Külle Tärnov** (Taltech)
	Presentation title: *Innovating participation and public services with AI/ Digital Twins/mobile applications* **Speakers:** - **Pablo Macías Bou** (Coruna, Spain) – Accelerating Local Leadership by Open Computing and AI Technological Empowerment

	- **Pieter Bonnema**, (Heerlen, the Netherlands) – A digial solution for engaging citizens and companies in a small town context - **John Warren Tamor**, (Dublin, Ireland) - Innovation management of digital twin solutions in Tallinn and Dublin **Timeframe**: 30 min
	Panel discussion: *Do AI, digital twin, mobile apps really bring practical value?* **Panel members:** **Maris Ruus**, (Tori, Estonia), **Andres Maremäe** (Tallinn), **Pablo Macías Bou** (Coruna), **Pieter Bonnema** (Heerlen), **John Warren Tamor** (Dublin) **Moderator: Külle Tärnov** (FinEst Centre for Smart Cities, TalTech) **Timeframe**: 30 min
13.00 – 14.00	*Lunch*
14.00 – 14.30	**Deep Dive & Connect: Get more into the topics from the panels & case studies** (tables) Further exploring the case studies presented in session 1 and 2 and networking with participants and panellists Table discussions moderated by **Külle Tärnov** and **Helen Sooväli-Sepping**
14.30 – 14.45	**Introduction to the IdeasLab** incl. the explanation of the **IdeasLab** (interactive problem-solving workshop) approach and format; groups created and move to separate tables (Plenary) – Ian Graham
14.45 – 16.00	**IdeasLab PART1:** Identifying and analysing problems using the *Problem Tree* workshop method (groups, tables) – moderated by Ian Graham
16.00 – 16.30	*Coffee break and bus drive to the site visits*
16.30 – 18.00	**Site visits in Tallinn:** Lilleküla Circular Economy – Mustjõe 40 SoftAcademy – Akadeemia tee 3, SOC-315 + Akadeemia tee 14 FinEst Centre for Smart Cities – Ehitajate tee 5, U02-401 Pollinator highway and Pelgu community garden – Ehte 40 Participation HUB – Vabaduse väljak 10
18.00 – 18.30	*Bus drive from the site visits*
19.00 – 22.00	*Dinner* Venue: Kai resto (Mere pst 20c, Tallinn)

Day 2 – 02 October 2025	
09.00 – 9.30	**Registration**
9.30 – 10.30	**SESSION 3 – Leveraging innovative tools to enhance energy efficiency and manage urban green spaces** Moderated by: Markus Annilo (City of Tallinn)
	Presentation title: *Smart & Sustainable: How cities go green with digital innovation* **Speakers:** - **Agnieszka Polak, Krakow** (Poland) The efficient and effective management of green areas - *Ari Saine, Oulu (Finland)* **Timeframe**: 30 min
	Presentation title: *Smart & Sustainable: Greening Estonian Cities through Digital Solutions* **Panelists:** - **Mark-Emil Talivere,** Test in Tallinn - **Ainar Sepnik,** Municipality of Viru-Nigula - **Raimond Tamm**, City of Tartu - **Marek Tooming,** Utilitas **Timeframe**: 30 min
10.30 – 11.00	**Reflection on all we've heard so far: case studies roundtables** (in groups on tables) Further exploring the case studies presented in session 3 **Timeframe:** 30 min table discussions moderated by Markus Annilo
11.00 – 11.30	*Coffee break*
11.30 – 12.30	**IdeasLab PART 3:** developing ideas to tackle the problems identified in PART 2 (groups) – moderated by Ian Graham
12.30 – 13.30	*Lunch*
13.30 – 14.15	**Ideas Marketplace** – moderated by Ian Graham Semi-structured exchange and discussion between groups on their ideas
14.15 – 15.00	**From Ideas to Action and Wrap-up** (Plenary) **Presentation title**: *Funding innovation through transnational collaborations: City-to-City exchanges, Peer Review, Innovative Action* **Speaker:** *Anneli Kährik, UCP Estonia* **Timeframe**: 10 min
	Presentation title: *Saku Municipality`s Peer Review experiences* **Speakers: Kerli Laur** and **Stiina Vard** **Timeframe**: 10 min
	Presentation title: *Tallinn's experiences with City-to-City exchanges* **Speakers: Mariliis Niinemägi** **Timeframe**: 10 min

1) Lilleküla Circular Economy Center

Estonia's first circular economy centre has opened in Lilleküla, combining a modern waste station with repair workshops, a reuse room, and a bicycle service point. The centre promotes reuse, repair, and recycling in line with Tallinn's Circular Economy Development Plan and also pilots the country's first self-service waste station with online booking.

2) SoftAcademy

SoftAcademy (Akadeemia tee 14; presentation indoors at TalTech suggested, followed by a walk around the courtyards of Akadeemia Street buildings, depending on TalTech's room capacity)
SoftAcademy is a neighbourhood-based renovation project involving four apartment buildings on Akadeemia Street in Mustamäe. It is not only about refurbishing individual houses but takes a holistic approach, upgrading both the buildings and their surrounding courtyards to create a fresh, modern look for the entire neighbourhood. The project brings together housing associations and their residents with experts from the city, district administrations, and the private sector to determine the best solutions for local people – visually, physically, and in terms of energy efficiency. The result is a model that can be applied by housing cooperatives across Estonia, improving quality of life while reducing the ecological footprint of renovation. The project is funded by the EUI.

3) Pollinator highway and Pelgu community garden

After the replacement of outdated high-voltage overhead lines with underground cables, the freed-up corridor was transformed into a linear park, offering residents recreational opportunities while supporting urban biodiversity. As the name suggests, Putukaväil ("Pollinator Highway") is used to test various methods for creating and maintaining pollinator-friendly and species-rich habitats. In the future, the green corridor will stretch 14 kilometres through six city districts.

Completed in 2024, Pelgu Community Garden is an innovative Tallinn community garden that provides residents with modern opportunities to grow food plants, spend free time, and organise community events and outdoor learning sessions. Pelgu Garden is part of Pollinator Highway and is one of 50 community gardens in Tallinn.

4) Participation HUB

The Participation HUB is an exhibition and co-creation space that opens to Tallinn's urban environment. Innovative digital tools installed in the space make it possible to present complex urban planning processes more vividly than before, creating better conditions for high-quality discussion and spatial decision-making. One of the components of the digital twin is 3D and data visualisation. During the visit, different solutions will be presented to showcase how Tallinn has used and tested digital twin technologies.

5) Visit to the FinEst Centre for Smart Cities

Several smart city solutions developed by researchers in cooperation with cities are now available for wider deployment. These include tools for citizen well-being diagnostics, smart energy resource management for microgrids (DsxOS), bathing water quality monitoring, CitySense for urban data insights, and innovative approaches to reusing old buildings. In 2025, new opportunities will also open up for developing additional urban solutions, creating a strong basis for collaboration with cities interested in testing and adopting these innovations.