

Tallinn, Estonia

Project city profile

City description

Tallinn is located on the shore of the Baltic Sea, in the north-eastern part of the Baltic region. It is the capital and economic center of Estonia, responsible for over half of the country's GDP, and also ranked as a Global City. One-third of the Estonian population lives in Tallinn. The City is managed by the City Council (elected by the citizens every four years) and the City Government. Tallinn has 8 districts which consist of subdistricts where neighborhood associations play a key role to help improve the quality of life in the community.

In addition to its long history as a seaport and capital, the City has recently developed a strong information technology sector. Other important economic sectors include the light, textile, and food industries, as well as the service and public sector. As an international city, Tallinn is a member of 14 international organizations and contact networks including the Hanseatic movement, EUROCITIES, INTA, and POLIS. Tallinn is a university city attracting thousands of Estonian and international students. In 2011, Tallinn was awarded the European Capital of Culture.

The Port of Tallinn is one of the biggest ports in the Baltic region. Tallinn's Old Town is a tourist magnetic and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Tallinn attracts more than three million foreign visitors each year.

Sustainability profile

In 2009, Tallinn signed the Covenant of Mayors and has accordingly pledged to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2020. To achieve this goal, Tallinn established its "Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2011-2021," which includes the Covenant of Mayors targets as well as a 20% increase in energy efficiency and 20% of energy consumption to be covered by renewables. The "Tallinn Environmental Strategy of 2030 seeks to reduce CO₂ emissions by 40% in comparison to 2007 levels. The "Tallinn Environmental Protection Action Plan 2013-2018" set sectoral measures and actions to achieve these objectives.



Facts & Figures

Population / Land area
435,000 / 159 km²

Municipal budget
€ 529 million

Mayor
Mr. Edgar Savisaar

Partner city
Halifax, Canada

Website
www.tallinn.ee

Renewable energy in district heating has been prioritized by the City of Tallinn, with 42% coming from renewable energy in 2014. A waste incineration plant has been built, which processes roughly 20% of household waste and produces energy for district heating. Significant changes have taken place in Tallinn's waste management due to the improvement of waste sorting and utilization. Tallinn Energy Agency, founded in 2013, coordinates energy cooperation between municipal authorities, is responsible for reports on the implementation of the Covenant of Mayors, and works actively to increase public awareness of energy and emissions.

In January 2013 Tallinn introduced free public transport for all registered residents of the city to encourage modal shift from cars to public transport, maintain clean air and reduce noise levels in the city center, and increase urban space. Additionally, public transport has been given priority on the roads and highways and park-and-ride facilities have been established in the city. There are annual city clean-up events organized every spring and Tallinn participates in European Mobility Week by organizing Car Free Days and other events.

Public transportation in Tallinn

Tallinn City Government has made developing accessible and safe public transportation a main priority. To increase passenger usage and satisfaction, Tallinn has worked to make trams and buses more attractive. From 2011-2013, in addition to purchasing 75 new buses, the City made serious strides. Using the money received from sales of CO₂ emission quotas, 10 environmentally friendly buses and 20 new trams were acquired; half of the city's tram track networks were reconstructed; and numerous tram depots and stops were renovated.

About 40% of Tallinn's public transportation vehicles have low emissions levels. An additional 20 diesel buses and 24 hybrid buses, which comply with European Union standards, will be added by the end of 2015. Construction of new tram lines is being extended to the Airport by the end of 2017. Tallinn is also planning on building a new central terminal to improve various transportation options.

ELMO, carsharing with electric vehicles

In order to reduce the increase in car ownership and CO₂ emissions from automobiles, the National Government of Estonia and the City of Tallinn introduced a national electro-mobility program called ELMO. Financed through selling CO₂ quotas to the car company Mitsubishi, the City purchased 1,165 full electric passenger cars for the city and country, including 504 iMiEVs for social workers. ELMO Rent allows citizens to use or rent an electric car for as long as needed. The program also built 163 quick charging stations around the country. Parking is free in the city center for all ELMO electric vehicles.

Project Team

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Improving bicycle infrastructure

The goal of Tallinn is to increase the share of bikeways and bicycle paths in the city. Tallinn is currently planning to build 40 km of new bikeways in the city using additional structural aid from the European Union. The establishment of several connections is planned for 2015–2020 to expand the network of bicycle paths and footpaths in Tallinn.

The main goal is to bring all existing cycle paths together into one safe network. Tallinn's goal is to connect the bikeways with those of neighboring municipalities to create an extensive regional network. To inform citizens and market the program, Tallinn's city website has extensive interactive bike maps to assist citizens in planning their route.

"Fix the Facade"

In order to reduce CO₂ emissions, Tallinn found that the most efficient way was to focus on reconstructing and renovating existing buildings. The City's project, "Fix the Facade," aims at helping apartment associations to renovate their buildings and homes to be more energy efficient, specifically through insulation of facades and roofs, replacement of windows and doors, and replacement or reconstruction of heating and ventilation systems. "Fix the Facade" then provides grant support for about 10% of the amount of the renovation. From 2015-2020 the City hopes to update 400 apartment buildings, with the assistance of the European Union Cohesion Fund. The result is a decrease in CO₂ emissions by 90,000 tons by 2020. The City of Tallinn has also ensured that all new buildings are designed and built according to energy-efficient building standards and concepts.

Thematic areas and goals

Resilience and adaptation

As a maritime city, Tallinn places significant importance on coastal management and adaptation. To this end, Tallinn is working to integrate the EU Adaptation Strategy and the Estonia Adaptation Plan into their operation. As a result of climate change, major anticipated impacts include changes to sea surface and inland water temperatures, increase in sea levels, and a possible never-before-seen permanent ice cover over the Baltic Sea.



ELMO car sharing vehicles and charging stations
Copyright Stockholm Environmental Institute



Tallinn's interactive map of bike paths taken from their website,
<http://kaart.tallinn.ee/>



Tallinn gives priority to public transportation in traffic
Copyright the City of Tallinn

Goals: Tallinn is interested in exploring low-impact development (LID) and green infrastructure projects within an urban setting. Municipal staff has acknowledged the challenges in moving forward with “shovel-ready” projects, but they are also willing to explore how challenges could be overcome and what partnerships could be beneficial. One additional feature that is being explored between Tallinn and its partner city Halifax is an exchange visit between students from the two cities to work collaboratively on each of the respective LID projects. Tallinn is interested in the cross-pollination of ideas, increased replicability of projects, and opportunities for documentation of lessons learned.

Low-carbon development

Tallinn is working to reduce CO₂ emissions through an increase in energy efficiency and use of renewable energy. The City needs to improve the energy efficiency of municipal buildings and promote similar actions in businesses and among residents, as well as renovate the district heating network. Tallinn is looking forward to developing related actions based on what it can learn from other cities in the exchange.

Goals: With regards to a transition to a low-carbon community, Tallinn placed a great deal of emphasis on highlighting its free public transit system and the benefits and challenges in switching from a user-pay transit system to one that is free for all residents and how to integrate active transportation as the next element in changing modal share away from cars. Tallinn hopes it can share its experience with e-governance with other local governments in the exchange. The partner city of Tallinn, Halifax, was fascinated by the breadth and depth of what electronic services were available to Tallinn residents and how having these services, available electronically, have freed up internal resources for other programming and projects.



Tallinn at sunset taken during the Second Working Meeting, October 2015

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