

## Staying cool or firing up? “Turbocharging” SDG progress through citizens engagement in the North and South

Networking event and Tallinn Mayor’s reception at the Open Government Partnership summit in Tallinn, 5 September 2023

### Practical information

In this networking event, Open Government Partnership local members and other special guests are invited to meet with political leaders from Tallinn and other European cities, as well as international experts, to **discuss the importance of local action to “turbocharge” the implementation of the SDGs through citizen engagement**. The event is organised by [Tallinn’s Sustainability Governance Peer Learning Hub](#), one of Tallinn European Green Capital 2023 flagship projects, in the lead up to the [United Nations’ SDG Summit](#) to be held in New York on 18-18 September 2023. The goal is to highlight the important role played by local and regional governments in making the UN Sustainable Development Goals a reality on the ground, including through open government and citizen engagement.

### Time

5 September 2023, 17.00 -19.15 local Time (GMT+2) – Registration from 16.30

### Venues and draft programme (changes possible)

*Venue:* Tallinn Teachers’ House: <https://opetajatemaja.ee/en/> , <https://opetajatemaja.ee/en/conatct>. Address Town Hall Square 14 (Raekoja plats 14)

16:30-17:00: Registration and welcome coffee

17:00-17:10: Welcome words, Mr. Mihhail Kõlvart, Mayor of Tallinn

17:10-18:15 (ca): Panel discussion on how to accelerate progress on the SDGs through citizens engagement.

Panellists:

- Mr. Mihhail Kõlvart, Mayor of Tallinn (Estonia)
- Ms. Jelena Drenjanin, Chair of the Congress Governance Committee of the Council of Europe, Member of Huddinge Municipal Assembly (Sweden)
- Ms. Miren Martiarena Barkaiztegi, Open Government Director, Basque Government (Spain)
- Ms. Sarah Lister, Head of Governance, UNDP
- Ms. Åsa Ström Hildestrand, Senior Project Manager for the Agenda 2030, Nordregio
- *Mr. Christian Specht, Lord Mayor of the City of Mannheim (Germany) – TBC*

Moderator: Raphaël Pouyé, Open Government and Democratic Innovations Expert, Paris (France)

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18:15-19:15: Networking and cocktail reception in the Tallinn Old Town Hall

*Venue:* Tallinn Old Town Hall (Raekoda) <https://raekoda.tallinn.ee/en/>. Address Town Hall Square 1 (Raekoja plats 1) – just across the square from Teachers House.

### Registration

The event is **by invitation only** and requires **pre-registration**. Each VIP invitee has the opportunity to bring one more guest, subject to availability of space (a “first-come-first-served” policy will apply to plus one guests). **Please register for the event using the below link by 24 August at the latest.**

[REGISTRATION FORM](#)

In case of any questions please address Ms Stina Heikkilä [Stina.Heikkila@tallinnlv.ee](mailto:Stina.Heikkila@tallinnlv.ee)

## Context and background

On 18-19 September 2023, world leaders will gather at the [SDG Summit](#) in New York for the mid-point review of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the implementation of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Summit is expected to adopt a political declaration that will provide a roadmap for putting the world back on track to achieve the SDGs by their 2030 deadline.

The Summit will be informed by the [2023 Global Sustainable Development Report](#) (GSDR 2023) prepared by an independent group of scientists and the [2023 Special Edition of the SDG Progress Report](#) by the Secretary-General.

Both of these reports, released in advanced draft form for the High-Level Political Forum in July 2023, deliver dire messages as the world approaches the half-way point of the 2030 Agenda and struggles to rebuild in the aftermath (or in the midst) of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The 2023 Special Edition SDG Progress Report states that: “It’s time to sound the alarm. At the mid-way point on our way to 2030, the SDGs are in deep trouble”.**

With regard to cities (SDG 11), according to 2022 data from 1507 cities in 126 countries, only 51.6% of the world’s urban population has convenient access to public transport, with considerable variations across regions and, on average, open public spaces account for a meagre 3.2% of urban land globally, about four times less than the share of land in streets. The average Municipal Solid Waste managed in controlled facilities in cities was 55% in 2022, while uncollected waste is the source of plastic pollution, Greenhouse gas emissions, and sources of incubation for infection.

**In this light, the SDG progress report underlines the need to “turbocharge” implementation of the SDGs.**

This is where we come to the topic of governance. We believe that to accelerate progress, governments everywhere need to put more focus on the relationship between WHAT we want to achieve and HOW we achieve it.

**That is why, as part of the [European Green Capital year 2023](#), the city of Tallinn launched its [flagship project on Sustainability Governance](#).** After all, it is estimated that over 65% of the SDG targets won’t be achieved without local and regional governments’ active contribution. Tallinn’s long-term strategy Tallinn 2035 is fully aligned with the SDGs and the city has issued guidelines to align all plans and activities with SDGs.

**The Open Government Partnership (OGP) has been actively promoting SDG implementation since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda**, as expressed in the [Joint Declaration](#) on Open Government for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda and the OGP reinforce similar messages giving greater visibility to the role of transparency, civic participation, accountable public institutions, and technological innovation as enablers of sustainable development for just and peaceful societies to thrive. In addition, several of its local government partners are further frontrunners when it comes to localising the SDGs and applying open government principles.

## Objectives of the event

- Share good practices and results from frontrunner cities and regions from around the world working on SDG localisation and ways to strengthen governance, including open government and citizens participation for achieving the goals.
- Highlight key messages from local leaders in the leadup to the SDG Summit in September 2023 regarding the role of cities and regions in turbocharging implementation of SDGs.