

Empowering Neighbourhood Associations – Riga, Latvia



RĪGAS DOMES
PILSĒTAS ATTĪSTĪBAS DEPARTAMENTS



The Riga pilot focuses on finding solutions to improve the collaboration and trust between municipality and local neighbourhood community. This includes two steps: working on a neighbourhood project co-design system and developing a methodology for creating a local neighbourhood development strategy that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community.

WHY | Purpose

The Riga pilot is situated in the interconnected neighbourhoods of Grīziņkalns and Avoti, located in the historic centre protection zone of Riga. These neighbourhoods offer a mix of residential areas, range of educational facilities and recreational options.

One of the aims of this pilot project is to create an environment where neighbourhood associations can become partners (co-designers) alongside the municipalities. By providing more tools, methods and opportunities for greater independence, these associations can play more active roles in shaping the development and well-being of their neighbourhoods. By incorporating Public Interest Design (PID) approaches and community-led principles into the project activities, the Riga pilot aims to create a more inclusive, sustainable, and community-driven approach to territorial planning and development in the chosen neighbourhoods.

HOW | Field of Action

Bottom-up planning mechanisms to give residents a more significant role in decision-making processes regarding their neighbourhoods.

- Mapping local stakeholders to identify key actors and potential contributors to the development process.
- Facilitating networking between stakeholders to establish a strong and cohesive local partnership.
- Organising workshops for co-designing the local development strategy, ensuring the active involvement of community members.
- Conducting informative seminars to share knowledge and best practices among stakeholders.
- Encouraging the community to organise events to foster a sense of ownership and pride in the neighbourhood's development.

WHO | Actors

- Residents of Avoti and Grīziņkalns neighbourhoods
- NGOs - Avoti and Grīziņkalns Neighbourhood Resident Associations, Riga Neighbourhood Alliance
- City Council's Specialists

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"Everything we create profoundly shapes our societal function. Understanding PID offers a practical framework for crafting improved and pertinent responses to collective challenges in social, economic, political, cultural, and behavioural domains, facilitating public engagement in addressing their own issues and initiatives." - Villiams Kursītis-Vroblevskis



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We started the communication with local NGOs in July 2023, and the process is still ongoing. Main point of the first meeting was to find a middle ground between local communities needs and municipality interests. The plan is to continue the work and test the project co-design system (meeting in the beginning of July 2024 with neighbourhood associations) and in the second part of the year focus on developing a methodology, including a template, for creating neighbourhood development strategy.