Project Description

The Objective – a problem-driven approach seeking solutions for redesigning an intensive traffic junction in the heart of the city by transforming the corridors of passers-by into an attractive human-scale public space for being, consuming and doing business. This is to provide a smooth connection between the main street on the East-West axis and the urban waterfront with harbour area in the North of the city by creating clean, environmentally sound, safe and user-friendly urban atmosphere for pedestrians and cyclers, combined with public transport and car traffic.

The Strategy – the urban renewal project looks for cross-practice architectural, landscape and design ideas combined with smart engineering and technological solutions in two phases:

I Phase – 1) knowledge generation by conducting small-scale multidisciplinary research projects, e.g. a quantitative survey and in-depth qualitative study on business actors’ dispositions towards spatial transformation of the area, transport and mobility analysis, modelling pedestrian behaviour. 2) Urban Forums I, II with invited participants representing various interest groups of academics, professionals, institutions and businesses to discuss the prospects of the spatial transformation in mixed workshops; web-based public forum for the collection of ideas (http://peatanav.ee/motle-kaasa). 3) Architectural competition within the frame of the ‘Estonian Republic 100’ architecture programme ‘Good public space’.

II Phase – partial or full reconstruction of the area by 2020

Expected Outcomes – creating quality public space of symbolic value by enlarging the scale of urban practices and strengthening citizen identity; producing positive image and enhancing city’s competitive advantage as a place for living and a tourist destination.

Assessment at the Current Phase

Advantages – production of new knowledge by multiple early phase research bringing together various disciplinary expertise; interdisciplinary research initiatives (sociology - architecture); open discussions between experts and interest groups; PR communication, presence in media.

Shortages and Challenges – research on citizens’ dispositions absent; low-scale incorporation of citizens into discussions – a space for the advancement of complex research and participation culture; implementation of the project could be postponed for scarce resources and conflicting interest - a space for advancing negotiation culture.