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TALLINNA TEHNIKAÜLIKOOL

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***Optimum size of a local
government and public services:
merger or cooperation***

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- **European Charter of Local Self Government:**
- Local government is the right and ability of local authorities to organise and administrate most of the community life in their area of responsibility in compliance with law and in the interests of local people.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: opposition or cooperation

CITY
RURAL
MUNICIPALITY

POLITICAL
responsibility

Democracy
Reconciliation
Cooperation

SERVICING
responsibility

Organisation of
public services

WELLBEING OF
PEOPLE

**CONTROL and
SURVEILLANCE**
responsibility

Exercise of
public authority and
protection of rights

- Public administration, including local government authorities, is the lever with the help of which processes are directed (in public interests) in a democratic society.
- According to Section 3(7) of the Local Government Organisation Act, the responsibility of local governments is to provide public services under the most favourable terms.

Areas of cooperation for local governments

- planning
- education
- waste management
- public water supply and sewerage
- road network
- social welfare
- planning of leisure areas
- cemeteries

Factors hindering cooperation

- 1) The legal system contributes to competition between local government units;
- 2) The politicians of each rural municipality and city want to see that their local government unit is better than the others;
- 3) Council members are afraid of cooperation because they represent the interests of people (voters) of a smaller area and do not want cooperation with neighbouring municipalities or cities as well as with the centre of their own municipality;

Factors hindering cooperation

- 4) Local politicians have made promises regarding development of educational institutions in their village, small town, etc., which makes it difficult to develop a rational education network in the rural municipality, not to mention the respective cooperation with other local government units;
- 5) There are legal obstacles for example in organising public transport.

Does cooperation work?

A survey of the TUT came to a rather general conclusion that cooperation between the City of Tallinn and its neighbouring rural municipalities and cities, i.e. the functioning of the capital region, is modest, rather random not purposefully managed by the cities and rural municipalities; thus, it is ineffective.

- What would be the solution?

Cooperation or merger?