



# End-user Approach to Development of Business Ecosystems in Wood-Based Building Sector

The research project in a nutshell

## Background

The information needs regarding the end-user approach in the business ecosystems of wood-framed multi-storey construction (WMC) connects with the goals of: increasing the competitiveness of Finnish companies, finding new market possibilities, improving the inclusion of end-users, improving the vitality of municipalities and promoting the well-being of citizens. Development and transfer of knowledge and skills between the actors involved in the WMC business ecosystems (i.e. the developer, designers, architects, municipality, end-users, etc.) is a key focus of the KäPy project. The project develops approaches that business ecosystem actors in the field of WMC can use to improve their business skills.

In the centre of our research project is a diverse set of Finnish companies, in which wood construction has a large or increasing role, as well as their clients (i.e. their customers and end-users). In addition, the project investigates the role of municipalities, especially the civil servants and decision-makers responsible for zoning and land use planning, within the WMC ecosystem.

## Aims

One of the main aims of the project is to describe and analyse the functioning of business ecosystems in WMC projects: how does a WMC<sup>1</sup> project form and evolve, what are the roles of the project actors and how does their cooperation work. This analysis also includes how the construction project actors collect information about the needs of the future residents, and how they utilize this information to improve project efficiency and to meet the needs of the future residents.

Another aim of the project is to gain new information about the needs and expectations of the end-users towards WMC living, and to understand how these needs and expectations influence the end-users' housing selection. Likewise, the aim is to also study the perceptions of municipalities regarding zoning and building WMC projects, as well as their assumptions of the expectations residents have towards WMC. The final aim of the project is to compare the results of this project with the results from similar research conducted in Sweden, Austria and Canada.

## Schedule, execution and funding

The project runs for 3 years (09/2016 – 08/2019). The project consists of two work packages that are implemented in parallel. WP1 consists of three WMC case-projects, in which the project partners have initial or ongoing business. WP2 maps both the motives and the methods that the municipalities use while promoting wood-based sustainable development and housing, as well as the expectations that the residents have towards sustainable construction and housing. The civil servants and residents of the case-project municipalities are of special interest.

The project is led by the University of Helsinki. The key partners include the University of Vaasa and the partnering companies (see below), as well as HOAS (The Foundation for Student Housing in the Helsinki Region). In addition, Linköping University (Sweden), University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (Boku, Austria) and University of British Columbia (UBC, Canada) act as collaborating universities.

The project budget is 378 000 €. The project is funded by Business Finland (formerly Tekes), University of Helsinki, and the following partnering companies: Lapwall Oy, HTJ Oy, Westas Group Oy, PUUSTA Innovations Oy, Upwood design Oy, Dasos Capital Oy and Lämpöpuuyhdistys ry.

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<sup>1</sup> In this context the WMC term includes wood-based/hybrid multi-storey buildings or similar multi-apartment solutions.