

REPORTS AND ACTION PLANS OF THE UBC COMMISSIONS

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COMMISSION ON BUSINESS COOPERATION

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

The last meeting of the Commission on Business Cooperation was held in Turku in 2006. Afterwards selection took place of the host city for the year 2008. Two cities from Denmark (Næstved and Vordingborg) had kindly offered themselves and were elected as possible hosts for the UBC Business Commission meeting over the coming years. The chairmanship of the Commission on Business Cooperation has been awarded to Narva, a city in Estonia, where the meeting was to be held at the end of 2007. The meeting was cancelled, however, and the City of Narva kindly agreed to host the Commission's annual meeting in 2008. Unfortunately the Commission held no meeting in 2008.

In November 2008 the cities of Kiel and Kolding, jointly with the President of the UBC, the General Secretariat and the Committee Secretariat, launched an initiative to activate the Business Committee.

Following an application by the cities of Kiel (D), represented by Kiel Business Development Cooperation (KiWi), and Kolding (DK), represented by Business Kolding, on 13 March 2009 the Executive Board resolved as follows:

1. Kiel Business Development Corporation will take the chair of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation in 2010.
2. Business Kolding will take the chair of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation in 2011.
3. To prepare an action plan for the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation for 2010 to 2011, the City of Kiel will organise a meeting, combined with an international conference, in Kiel in June 2009. The costs will partly be covered by the UBC.

Immediately following the resolution, the Commission began to draw up a working programme for 2010 and 2011 and to plan the preparatory measures necessary for this.

These included the preparatory meeting of the Commission on 4 June 2009 in Kiel, which representatives of the following cities attended: Jyväskylä, Kaunas, Kiel, Kolding and Tampere. The representatives began by presenting their cities and their main current projects. The preliminary work programme was then discussed and expanded. In 2010 and 2011 the following central issues are due for consideration:

1. Initiation of targeted contacts with regions outside the Baltic, such as the Mediterranean.
2. Initiation of EU-supported projects of a business kind, such as the development of a plan for international business-location marketing.
3. Further development of the Science Parks Project, to ensure the effective exchange of experience and information, thus increasing the competitiveness of the Baltic Region.
4. Organisation of an international conference on the topic of science and technology parks, to exchange examples of good practice.
5. Questionnaire among the UBC Cities to identify the most interesting topics regarding the work of the commission.

Following the meeting, the representatives of the cities involved attended the "Meet in Kiel" event, making contact with more than 200 representatives of business, science, politics and administration in the course of an informal evening.

With the support of the UBC, and in combination with a meeting of the Business Committee, the Second Kiel International Strategy Meeting was held on 5 June 2009, the subject of which was "creative region." More than 50 international experts on business, science and politics discussed the future of their business location, their industry and commerce. The auditing and consulting-services organisation PricewaterhouseCoopers and the Hamburg Institute of International Economics presented a study entitled "Development Potential of Cities in the Baltic Region", based on the concept of the

“creative city”. The speeches by Professor Robert Hassink (Department of Geography, University of Kiel), Professor Rüdiger Soltwedel (Kiel Institute for the World Economy) and Professor Rainer W. Ernst (President of the Muthesius Academy of Fine Arts and Design) showed clearly that there is no “one-fits-all” system for strengthening the economic sustainability of the region. Rather, it is necessary to develop a strategy tailored specifically to the particular conditions of the location. This means a targeted link between scientific excellence and economic success, profile building, and active national and international positioning and marketing.

The central results of the International Strategy Meeting 2009 are as follows:

- Knowledge creation is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for effective and efficient knowledge transfer; this needs an additional sustained effort
- There must also be greater support and a greater effort to keep students in Schleswig-Holstein, in order to stop the heavy brain drain and to intensify entrepreneurship
- There must be greater support for start-ups and spin-offs from the university and the government
- Communication and cooperation between existing institutions and stakeholders must be established and maintained
- Clusters can play an important role in the region’s development, but public engagement is acceptable only up to a point and with finite duration; it is definitely the private sector which must take the lead - or there is no cluster at all

Next Meeting of UBC Commission on Business Cooperation is scheduled during the X General Conference of the UBC in Kristiansand, Norway.

Besides this, the programme of work undertaken by the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation in 2010 and 2011 envisages making contact with regions and partners from outside the Baltic region. The aim is to provide UBC member cities with detailed information on attractive business regions and to establish targeted contacts with them. In this context the first step was to establish direct contact between the Commission on Business Cooperation and the French region of the Côte d’Azur. During a trip to Nice, Cannes and Antibes (Sophia Antipolis Science Park) in May 2009 by the chairperson-elect of the Commission discussions took place with municipal and regional representatives, business-promotion organisations, companies and business multiples at local level.

With regard to collaboration in EU projects, the Commission has already stated it is ready to become a network partner in the planned EU “User-Driven Information” Project, to gain improved knowledge through active participation and to ensure that information is available to the UBC member cities.

Innovations are the engine of success in business; they enhance competitiveness and are indispensable for securing and strengthening a market position. But the rate of failure is alarmingly high: 25 to 40% of industrial goods and even 35 to 60% of consumer products fail! In addition, R&D budgets are decreasing, innovation cycles are becoming shorter, and the general risk of innovation is high. There is urgent need for action. One tool to counteract these trends efficiently and effectively is that of user-driven innovation. Referring to current literature, we understand this term to mean active participation by the future user in the development of products and services, including the central issues of market-orientated product identification, engineering, and design, both participative and empathic. A systematic integration may be carried out in many ways and may take place at many stages of the innovation process. Expertise in these methods and procedures is currently still scattered randomly across the region; there is a transparent structure. While big global companies have frequently integrated user-driven innovation successfully into their processes, entrepreneurs and SMEs have a backlog demand. This is where the “Centre for user-driven innovation” project will come in.

User-driven innovation is a process whose systematic implementation in existing company processes can considerably reduce the general risk of innovation. In particular SMEs, spin-offs and entrepreneurs do not normally have the infrastructure to implement new methods and procedures to increase their

competitiveness. Lüthje (2003) reports failure rates of product innovations of 25 to 40% of industrial goods and even 35 to 60% of consumer products. Gassmann et al. (2005) consider it therefore to be indispensable to introduce the external knowledge of users in an early stage, in order to increase the power of innovation. Today customers frequently limit their marketing research to surveys on products which have already been developed. If requisite changes are identified in this way, they can only be implemented after the event, if at all, and generally lead to delayed market launch.

It is the aim of the user-driven innovation project to establish and expand the available expertise in the region and finally to bundle it in a German-Danish Centre, which can offer well-founded services for SMEs and entrepreneurs of the region. Moreover, the centre will also be offering its services outside the region, to make the region more attractive for international enterprises.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

The Action Plan for 2010-2011 is based on the working programme agreed during the meeting of the Commission on Business Cooperation on 4 June 2009. It is due to be developed further at the meeting of the Commission during the General Conference in Kristiansand. The following measures are planned, subject to financial support by the UBC:

Systematic cooperation with partners in and outside BSR

In conformity with UBC strategy, and in particular with the section on “Systematic cooperation with partners in BSR, on European level and internationally”, a strategy will be developed, jointly with the Executive Board, for international UBC cooperative ventures. For this purpose the first stage will be to present the existing structures and organisations in the Baltic Region and Europe. The second step will be to identify potential key partner organisations. These will be proposed to the Executive Board as possible partners. A further step will be to define potential areas of targeted and long-term cooperation with the organisations concerned. Contact will be made with the selected partner organisations at local level, to evaluate the possibilities of targeted and long-term cooperation. The aim will be to conclude and successfully implement cooperation agreements.

Initial contacts already exist with the following organisations: Arco Latino, Region Cote d’Azur and Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. These contacts will be expanded and systematically developed without delay.

Science Parks

The Science Parks Project already begun will be continued with the aim of ensuring the effective exchange of experience and information, thus increasing the competitiveness of the Baltic Region. An international conference will also be organised on the topic of science and technology parks, to exchange examples of good practice. The conference will throw light on current issues and challenges, such as financing and marketing, as well as the consequences of technological change towards knowledge economies, and will develop solutions.

EU-supported projects

With regard to collaboration in EU projects, the Commission has already become a network partner in the planned EU “User-Driven Information” Project, to gain improved knowledge through active participation and to ensure that information is available to the UBC member cities. This partnership will be actively continued. Along with this, information about planned EU projects will be systematically gathered, processed and made available to the members of the UBC.

Plan for international business-location marketing

Global competition for export markets, capital and business locations make targeted profiling and national and international positioning of individual business locations within the UBC an absolute necessity. This is true particularly given the increasing mobility of workers and businesses, the

increasing internationalisation of the economy, and the increasing rapidity of structural change towards knowledge economies. With the involvement of further experts from business and science, recommendations for further action will be prepared and set out in writing, covering the following topics in particular:

- Drawing up a profile for a business location and science centre
- The linkage between scientific excellence and economic success
- Strategies for presenting a business location and science centre at national and international level
- What business promotion can and needs to do by way of directing enterprise.

Questionnaire to UBC Cities

The Commission on Business Cooperation only began active work again in 2008. It intends in future to identify and treat interesting and profitable topics, in order to achieve as large a participation within the UBC as possible. With this in mind, it is planning a survey of all member cities. The results will be assessed and set out in writing. From this survey it will be possible to draw conclusions about long-term work.

Wolfgang Schmidt
City of Kiel

Bjarke Wolmar
City of Kolding

COMMISSION ON CULTURE

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

The Commission on Culture elected a new board for the years 2008-2011 during the IX UBC General conference in Pärnu. The new board consists of the following members: Ms. Tarja Hautamäki (chairman, Vaasa, Finland), Ms. Agrita Ozola (Vice-chairman, Tukums, Latvia), Ms. Olga Cherkasova (St. Petersburg, Russia), Mr. Kim Dawartz (Næstved, Denmark), Mr. Björn Freidar Holmvik (Bergen, Norway) and Ms. Charlotte Lundkvist (Umeå, Sweden).

The old and the new board had a joint meeting in Cēsis, Latvia, 29th November - 1st December 2007. The commission was decided to be chaired by Vaasa and Turku, Finland, and Ms. Maarit Keto-Seppälä (Turku, Finland) was chosen to the secretary of the commission.

The new board had its first meeting in Rostock, Germany, 13-15 March 2008. One of the tasks of the meeting was to activate more German UBC cities in the work of the commission on culture.

The second board meeting of the year 2008 was held in Bergen 26-27 November. Ms. Magdalena Zakrzewska from Ars Baltica network participated also the meeting and some plans for joint meetings and changing information were made.

The city of Rēzekne, Latvia hosted the board meeting 16-18 April 2009. The city of Rēzekne gave a presentation on regional multifunctional centre and development possibilities of creative industries in eastern Latvia. On the way to Rēzekne the board visited the department of culture in Riga. Among other things Riga's plans to get the nomination to the European capital of culture and their wishes and hopes of the activities of UBC CoC were discussed about. Kristiansand, Norway hosted the board meeting 23rd September 2009.

The UBC Executive Board had a meeting in Jyväskylä, Finland 12-14 March. The chairperson of CoC participated the meeting. The chairmen of the Commission on Culture, Commission on Tourism and the Commission on Urban Planning met during the meeting and planned the content of the Workshop III How to make the Baltic Sea Region a more accessible and attractive realized in Kristiansand, Norway 24th September 2009.

The theme of the third Cultural Prize 2008 was “New Footsteps of Youth Culture”, which was announced in January 2008. The last application date was 31st August 2008. The decision was announced during the Annual Working Session in Bergen 27-29 November. The prize was awarded to Jyväskylä Live Music Association JELMU ry with a following motivation: Jyväskylä Live Music Association JELMU ry has influenced the cultural life of the city in a remarkable way and strengthened its identity and raised the awareness of cultural values of life. The activities of JELMU ry were considered as an example of good practice. A small award ceremony was organized in 18th December in Jyväskylä.

The theme of the Cultural Prize 2009 was changed to “Creative use of information”, which was announced in January 2009. The last application date was 31st August 2009. The board decided to give to the winner of the Cultural Prize also 300 euros to cover the travelling expenses, if the winner is taking part of the award ceremony in Kristiansand 25th September 2009.

The Vaasa Choir Festival was organized 14-18 May 2008 in cooperation with the commission on culture. The theme of the festival was Baltic choir music.

CoC supported FiSH 08 – Festival Im Stadhafen 18-20 April 2008 in Rostock by giving the festival the right to use the name of UBC Commission on Culture in this connection.

The Festival of the Baltic Cities was held for the third time in St. Petersburg 20-22 June 2008 in cooperation with the commission on culture. The chairperson of the Commission on Culture was invited as a speaker to the opening round-table discussion “Culture as a Universal Language in the Dialogue of Baltic Countries”. The fourth Festival of the Baltic Cities was organized 22-24 May 2009 in Daugavpils, Latvia. The representative of CoC was invited to participate the festival.

The Catalogue of the Cultural Institutions is available at www.ubc.net. The database of the Catalogue of the Cultural Institutions has been transferred from the server of the municipality of Gotland to the server of the city of Turku.

There is a flow of information about cultural events that take place around the Baltic Sea. The Ars Baltica Organising Committee has accepted the idea that the Ars Baltica website (www.ars-baltica.net) can be used for co-operation in this matter. Ars Baltica Secretariat has launched a section consisting of a database of cultural events in the sub-site called Cultural Map located in the section Around the Baltic to help you find out where to look for the detailed information on cultural events in particular countries around the Baltic Sea as well as in the member cities of UBC. Information to be put at the site is asked to be sent to Ms. Magdalena Zakrzewska-Duda ([magdalena.zakrzewska@nck.org.pl](mailto:magdalenazakrzewska@nck.org.pl)).

The Day of Culture is on 15th April in Lithuania and has been legalized 19th July 2006 by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. It is deeply related to the Pact of Peace established by Nicholas Roerich in 1929. The Commission on Culture has presented information about the Day of Culture to the UBC member cities. On behalf of the CoC Björn Holmvik gave a speech in a culture seminar organized by the Day of Culture initiative group in Vilnius 15th April 2009.

The 12th Annual Working Session was hosted by the city of Bergen 28-29 November 2008. The theme of the session was Art for Children – practice and theory. The session gathered together 46 participants. National culture seminar of the UBC member cities of Latvia was organized in Durbe manor house, Tukums, 25th January 2008. The theme of the seminar was Culture cooperation and development: local and regional aspects. All together 35 participants from four cities assisted the seminar. The board

members have been trying to invite the CoC contact persons of the UBC cities of their countries to national meetings with a little success.

UBC joined the ARCADE 2 -project (Awareness Raising on Culture and Education in Europe) as an associate which means that UBC would not have been requested any financial contribution to the project. The project was built around three pillars: research, awareness raising and training. Unfortunately the evaluation committee of the European Commission rejected the application on the second round.

Directrice Communication et Partenariats Mrs Katia Serres from Brussels welcomed guest(s) of honour from the Baltic Sea region at their Brussels Summer Festival. CoC informed the UBC cities about this possibility and warmly encouraged cities to propose Mrs. Serres some groups to perform during the festival.

CoC is looking for different ways to start cooperation with AER (Assembly of European Regions) Culture for health working group. Some preliminary thoughts of collaboration around the conference about culture and health in 2010 have been changed.

The Action Plan of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy contains a list of flagship projects. One of them is called Promote the cultural heritage and the unique landscapes. CoC has informed the UBC secretariat that CoC is interested in getting more information about the project and probably would like to join the project but not as a leader.

A presenting leaflet has been produced to make the Commission on Culture more well-known.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

1. The UBC Cultural Prize will recognize extraordinary achievement by artistic groups or associations working in the field of cultural activity in UBC member cities. The idea is that the Board invites the cities to candidate for that prize once a year and that the prize has a special theme each year. The theme of the Cultural Prize of the year 2010 is "Multicultural dialog". The theme of the year 2011 is open.

2. The traditional Annual Working Sessions initiated by the board or by the member cities will continue with focus on a special cultural field each year. The following cities are going to host the working session: Turku 22-25 October 2009, Umeå 2010 and Næstved 2011. The theme of the session in Turku will be "The Cultural Dimension of Baltic Cooperation – Developing Creative Industries". In Umeå the topic will be related how to use culture for urban planning. The theme of the session in Næstved is still open.

3. The Festival of Baltic Cities will be developed and better marketed. The Festival of Baltic Cities will be held in St Petersburg 2010 and 2011 in Turku. The main focus of the festival is drama.

4. The initiative of Kuntssi modern art museum of an art exhibition together with 5 other UBC cities will be examined.

5. CoC is supporting "The Day of Culture", which is deeply related to the Pact of Peace established by Nicholas Roerich in 1929 and held every year 15th April, by giving the right to use the name of UBC Commission on Culture in this connection.

6. Contacts with Les Rencontres, AER (Assembly of European Regions) Culture for health working group and other international networks on culture will be developed and kept alive.

7. CoC will take part in the conference of culture and health organized by AER.

8. The board will meet 2-3 times every year in different UBC cities and the local contact persons of UBC will be invited to the meetings. The first meeting in 2010 will be in Tallinn.
9. The present board is preparing the rules for the election of a new board in 2011.
10. The Catalogue of Cultural Institutions will be available at www.ubc.net.

Tarja Hautamäki
Chairperson of the Commission
City of Vaasa

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

1. Conference "What kind of guidance need the youngsters?"

On 9th October 2007 Commission on Education had a conference "What kind of guidance need the youngsters?" in Kärddla. Around 100 participants were present at the conference, most of them youngsters. The conference was built up in 4 parts: policy, expectations of youngsters, expectations of enterprisers and expectations of universities.

2. Annual Meeting of Commission on Education 2008

On 3rd April 2008 Commission on Education had the Annual Meeting in Stockholm. Representatives from UBC member cities and UBC Commission on Environment and Energy were invited. The meeting was content-rich and successful. The representatives from commissions on environment and energy informed about possible co-operation issues between the commissions.

Youngsters from Kärddla spoke about small towns: "Small town citizens – educated or uneducated people?". Where are our roots? What kind of culture do we have? What are our possibilities?

Mare Aasma from Kärddla conducted a brainstorm to find new ideas for next years. The main results were: youth involvement (arenas for exchange youth/ teachers, outdoor school, etc) and joint projects (non-formal education, projects for adults, CTE Catalogue, sustainable development, vocational education; nature- practical seminars, camps, etc).

Kurt Pettersson, who has been the chairman from the start, was elected to continue as chairman for two years. The new vice-chairman for two years is Mare Aasma from Kärddla. She has a long experience from education and has many good experiences.

3. Cooperation with other Commissions

Kairi Priit (Secretary, Kärddla) and Anders Olander (Norrtälje) represented Commission on Education on the Introduction Day Nordic Baltic Aalborg Commitments network on 6 February 2008 and UBC Commission on Environment meeting on 7-8 February 2008 in Tampere. A point about better cooperation between UBC commissions was important, because from that collaboration everyone can give a personal investment to sustainable development.

On 12-14 May 2008 Annely Veevo (Head of Commission Secretariat) represented Commission on Education in the Open Meeting of UBC Commission on Youth Issues in Tallinn.

4. Photo exhibition “My Friend in my City” in Rostock, Germany 17 January - 31 March 2008.

The Exhibition was shown in the building of the New Music School Carl Orff. The photos were also presented in Szczecin, Gdańsk, Malbork and Elbląg.

5. Partner in application to Baltic Sea Region in May 2008 – Baltic arena

The project was not approved, but a new application “ILTRAS” was made in April 2009.

6. Erken Laboratory Research School 8 June – 4 July 2008 and 15 June – 10 July

The goal of the research schools were to offer students between the age of 17-19 years from countries affected by the Baltic Sea to attend a “scientific monastery” to increase cultural exchange between the young people in the region and at the same time increase the interest for higher education and natural sciences. The students were offered a very good base in scientific education and a good atmosphere in a beautiful environment.

All students conducted a project work of about 100 hours, finished with a written scientific report, a presentation and a poster. In addition, the students took part in several social activities in order to get to know each other, Swedish and other cultures.

7. Small Town Inhabitants - Educated or Uneducated People?”

Can small town inhabitant be successful? Has small town inhabitant a chance to make success in the world? What is success? What makes a person successful? What does it a person need for success? What does it mean education by success? What kind of possibilities small town inhabitant has for self education? Is the "real life" only in big towns? - were the questions for the youth competition in the end of 2008 that was arranged by Commission on Education. First prize went to Karl Haljasmets (Tartu, Estonia), second prize to Elīna Ļitvinova (Saldus rajons, Latvia) and third prize to Maciej Mateusz Wencel (Gdynia, Poland).

More about Essays you can read on UBC website.

8. ANNUAL MEETING OF COMMISSION ON EDUCATION 3 April 2009

Topic: Youth Nature Schools and Centers around the Baltic Sea

Kurt Pettersson opened the meeting and presented the presidium, secretariat, budget and activities 2009, reports for 2008. The idea of a Network of Nature Schools and Centers was described by Anneli Veevo, Head of Commission Secretariat. Possibilities for cooperation with other commissions and the Project of Lake Viktoria was presented by Guldbrand Skjönberg, Commission on Environment and Kaia Jäppinen talked about cooperation with Youth Commission. The day finished with a Visit to the Nature House of Nõmme Youth House.

9. Qualified Vocational Education

A seminar was held in Norrtälje 21- 22 April 2009 with participation of 20 persons from cities in Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Lithuania. According to the points of view and experiences that were presented in the seminar the aim is to draw up a proposal/application to EU:s Leonardo da Vinci-programme with alignment on a TOI-Transfer of Innovation- project on the main theme “Develop vocational skill considering the labour markets needs. The seminar was partly financed by the education Commission and partly by SIDA in Sweden. UBC cities are welcomed to take part in this project.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

2010

Nature school network:

Initiating networking and preparing a joint project application. Elaborating an interactive programme for young people.

Qualified Vocational Education

During the autumn 2009 we will continue preparing an application to Leonardo da Vinci programme in the field of Qualified Vocational Education. The aim is to have an application ready in February 2010. We are searching for interested partners in the UBC area.

Erken Laboratory Research School

A Research School for 15-20 students of the age of 17-19 will take place at the Erken Laboratory. The laboratory is beautifully situated in the countryside of Norrtälje, Sweden, immediately on the shore of Lake Erken. The project is supported by the Swedish Institute.

2011

Nature schools network

A common project on outdoor education with exchange of staff and students will take place. We are effectuating an interactive programme for youth.

Qualified Vocational Education

A Leonardo da Vinci project in the field of Qualified Vocational Education is performed in the UBC area.

Erken Laboratory Research School

A Research School for 15-20 students of the age of 17-19 is run at the Erken Laboratory. The laboratory is beautifully situated in the countryside of Norrtälje, Sweden, immediately on the shore of Lake Erken.

Kurt Pettersson
Chairman of the Commission
City of Norrtälje

COMMISSION ON ENERGY

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

Commission meetings:

Kotka 21-22 November

The Board meeting in Kotka gathered 5 cities to discuss and to make plans for the future. Kotkan Energia invited the Commission to a study visit at their plant.

Friday the 14th of March the latest board meeting of the UBC Energy Commission was held. Unlike previous board meetings this meeting did not include any travelling. The meeting was a net-based meeting via Marratech. The UBC Energy Commission works actively with finding new ways to meet and to constantly try to reduce our carbon footprint. Having net-based board meetings is one of our ways. A virtual board meeting was held the 5 May. Yet again Marratech was used.

Tallinn, 30-31 October

A joint meeting with the Commission on Environment was held.

Upcoming commission meeting

The Energy Commission will hold a commission meeting in Kalmar, Sweden, the 17-18 September 2009. The meeting will be held in connection with the China Baltic Sea Business Forum.

Meetings of the Competence Board:

The Competence Board of the Energy Commission consists of Mr Gunnar Hovsenius and Mr Björn G Karlsson. The Competence Board has had two meetings since the last General conference. The first one was held the 29 August 2008, in Oskarshamn to discuss ideas and strategies for the commission. The second meeting was a brainstorming meeting the 27 May 2009.

Other commission's meetings:

Commission on Environment

The Energy Commission participated at the Commission on Environments meeting in Tampere, the 7-8 February 2008 focusing on "Visions of future of the Baltic Sea Region". The Energy Commission had an opportunity to present our work and to promote our upcoming projects. One of the projects we presented was the Power Edge Programme.

UBC Commission on Education

The UBC Energy Commission advocates cooperation between the commissions of the UBC. We have a close cooperation with the Commission on Environment and sustainable development and are glad to work with other commissions as well. On the 3 April the Commission on Education hold their annual meeting. The Energy Commission attended the meeting and made a speech.

Commission on Environment

The UBC Commission on Environment held a commission meeting in St Petersburg the 17-18 March 2009. The Energy Commission attended the commission meeting.

Bulletin texts

The Energy Commission has contributed to the UBC Bulletin and bought a spread in each UBC Environmental Bulletin.

Meetings attended by the Energy Commission:

Energy Forum in Oskarshamn 28 November

Member of the Energy Commission Board and Real Estate Manager for Örebro, Mats Brantsberg, was invited to the energy conference "Energy Forum" in Oskarshamn to talk about innovative solutions for public buildings. Örebro has been successful with EPC, Energy Performance Contracting.

ICLEI's European climate Conference, 2-4 April 2008

Mr Stefan Windh, Co-chairman of the UBC Energy Commission represented the UBC at the Rovigo 2008 Climate Conference and acted as chairperson. The Rovigo 2008 Climate Conference is part of a series of ICLEI Climate Conferences for local governments and their stakeholders. In Stockholm in 2006 the conference focus was on ambitious targets and exemplary actions of advanced communities. During 'A Future with Zero CO2 Emissions' ICLEI illustrated how cities and towns can become active in different sectors, to become zero carbon communities. The Rovigo ICLEI will explore climate protection in small and medium sized communities that are starting up in this important field. Several advanced local governments will share their experiences – showing how they have achieved results and identifying critical elements in the process.

Energie-Cités, 9-11 April 2008

The UBC Energy Commission is an affiliated member to the network Energie-Cités. The network has over 150 members in 24 countries and represents more than 500 towns and cities. Energie-Cités is an association of European local authorities for the promotion of local sustainable energy policies. The

13th annual rendezvous of Energie-Cités, provide local authorities and political representatives with an opportunity to increase capacity building, discuss European policies and participate in the “Covenant of Mayors” initiative.

Mr Jan Westerberg from the board of the UBC Energy Commission attended this meeting and held a presentation about the UBC and the UBC Energy Commission.

Swedish Baltic Sea Day, 7 May 2008

The Baltic Sea Unit of The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency arranged a Swedish Baltic Sea Day in Stockholm. The theme of the Swedish Baltic Sea Day 2008 was “Neighbouring countries cooperation for a better environment”. About 200 delegates, among them the UBC Energy Commission, gathered and discussed how to work to save the Baltic Sea and the environment thereabouts.

Almedalsveckan, the ”politician’s week” 2008

The Baltic Sea Unit of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and Baltic Development Forum (BDF), organized in July, in cooperation with the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEEES), Södertörn University College an international seminar/workshop focusing on the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The programme brought together key politicians, civil servants, practitioners and high- level academic expertise in the areas of discussion.

One Small Step, 15-17 September 2008

The Nordic Sustainability, One Small Step, was held in Odense, Denmark. It was the 3rd Nordic Sustainability Conference and the 4th will be held in Turku, Finland early 2011. Among the speakers were Mats Brantsberg, Real Estate Manager of Örebro and also member of the Board of the UBC Energy Commission.

General Conference of BSSSC, 17-19 September 2008

The BSSSC, Baltic SeaStates Subregional Co-operation, held their 16th Annual General Conference in Kaunas, Lithuania. The UBC Energy Commission attended the conference.

Energisystemdagar LiU, 14-15 October 2008

The University of Linköping arranged a conference with workshops about sustainable industrial energy systems. One of the organizers was professor Björn G. Karlsson, member of the UBC Energy Commissions Competence Board. The Energy Commission attended this conference.

Can we save the Baltic Sea? Eutrophication in future climate – SMHI

Norrköping, 21 October 2008

SMHI, the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute, held a workshop regarding eutrophication. The aim of the workshop was to bring scientists and stakeholders together and to discuss the latest results of climate change impact studies. A vision of an advanced modelling tool for scenario simulations of the whole marine ecosystem that can underpin and inform management strategies to ensure water quality standards, biodiversity and fish stocks will be presented and discusses. The UBC Energy Commission attended the workshop.

Executive Board Meeting, Växjö, 29 October 2008

One part of the 53rd Executive Board meeting comprised annual reports of the UBC working Commissions. Another part was a meeting of the leaders of the Commissions. The Energy Commission led this meeting.

BDF Summit, 30 November – 2 December 2008

BDF, Baltic Development Forum arranged the BDF Summit in Copenhagen. The UBC Energy Commission attended this conference.

Helsingör

The Energy Commission attended the seminar “Creating a ‘Green Valley’ of Europe – Different Scenarios”. The meeting with Ministers of Foreign affairs was organized by Baltic Development Forum (BDF) in connection with the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Ministerial meeting.

Kaliningrad

The 10-11 June the workshop “Energizing the sustainable growth in the Region” was held in Kaliningrad, organized by Baltic Development Forum (BDF), Government of the Kaliningrad Region of Russia, Nordic Council of Ministers and BASREC. Eva Hjalmered from the Energy Commission was one of the speakers in the thematic session “Energy Efficiency on Municipal Level”. The Energy Commission took the opportunity to emphasize and advocate the local level in energy efficiency and reaching the climate goals.

Joint Energy and Climate Platform of BSR organisations

The Joint Energy and Climate Platform of Baltic Sea Region Organisations is a cooperation platform between Baltic Sea States Sub regional Co-operation (BSSSC); Baltic Development Forum (BDF); Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS); Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) Energy Commission; Baltic Islands Network (B7); Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions Baltic Sea Commission (CPMR BSC) Energy Working Group; and Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC). The work of the platform is a preparatory policy work prior to the upcoming UN Climate Conference. The Baltic Sea Region will be one of the focal points when the global subsequent of the Kyoto protocol will be put together. The decisive UN meeting will be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. The Joint Energy and Climate Platform of Baltic Sea Region Organisations has finalised its guiding principles and goals for the ongoing co-operation in a working document.

The UBC Energy Commission represents the UBC in the Joint Energy and Climate platform of Baltic Sea Region organisations. Representative of the Energy Commission is Stefan Windh.

Eva Hjalmered represented UBC at the JECP meeting, which was held the 3 June 2008. The network also met in conjunction to the BDF Summit a meeting of the Joint Energy and Climate and, the 2 December 2008.

The 24 February 2009 a meeting of the JECP was held in Stockholm, hosted by the Energy Commission. At the meeting it became official that the UBC Energy Commission will be the coordinator of the JECP-cooperation for the year 2009. The Energy Commission will synchronise the efforts and contributions before the UN’s Climate Summit, COP15, in Copenhagen in December. For the UBC and the Energy Commission this assignment is an opportunity to advocate the local level in international collaborations.

Project approval

The UBC Energy Commission can gladly announce that the LED application to the South Baltic Programme has been approved. The Energy Commission had an idea about testing LED-lights (Light Emitting Diodes) as a complement to traditional outdoor lighting. The UBC EC contacted the municipality of Kalmar, who offered to take lead. The Energy Commission will be responsible for information and dissemination. The project gathers 12 partners from Poland, Germany, Lithuania and Sweden, and researches what municipal outdoor environments are most suitable and most profitable to replace the traditional lighting with LED. The participating municipalities will test LED in different municipal environments and review how the inhabitants experience the new lighting. The project will last for three years and has a project budget of 2,396 MEUR and was approved by the South Baltic programme.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

The overall Aims and Goals of the Energy Commission

From a broad perspective break down the energy issues to a local level and point out a few focus areas where the energy commission can have great impact. We will look at the energy system issue rather than individual sources, and introduce this to the municipalities.

- To boil down the EU-level and national level energy issues to a local level
- To raise awareness about projects and to take practical use from experience exchanges in projects within the UBC network
- Promote municipalities to use great examples to get more energy efficient
- To bring science and university knowledge closer to the municipal/local level

Focus areas

- Reduction of greenhouse gases related to the energy sector
- Energy efficiency programs
- Higher self sufficiency and local energy production

Concrete goals for the year 2010

- JECF – a regional statement will be delivered
- Further development with the Commission on Environment and other commissions within the UBC network
- Disseminate the LED-project
- Start at least one new project
- Organize meetings with the Competence Board

Action Plan – an implementation

- Organizing commission meeting and workshops two times per year. This is a central arena where all cities are invited to give their input to the work of the commission.
- Interactive meetings and cooperation in order to reduce the carbon footprint
- Initiate and promote good project ideas
- Organize meeting with the competence board to narrow the gap between the university knowledge and the work in the municipalities
- Dissemination regarding Energy perspectives for the Baltic Sea Region

Stefan Windh
Chairman of the Commission
City of Oskarshamn

Eva Hjalmered
Head of Secretariat of the Commission
City of Oskarshamn

COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

Focus on the Environment and Sustainable Development of Baltic Sea cities

The environmental work of the UBC is organized at the Commission on Environment. The UBC is also running the large cross-sectoral action programme on sustainable development, the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities. This report of the UBC

activity report describes both the environmental and sustainable development work of the UBC. The main difference between these two is that environmental work concentrates on environmental issues only, whereas sustainable development aims at combining environmental, social and economic aspects of city development. Consequently, environmental work is mainly co-ordinated and lead at the cities by the environmental administration, whereas sustainable development work is often lead directly under the overall city leadership and is a joint effort of all sectoral administrations.

Implementation of the Agenda 21 Action Programme of UBC

The secretariat has been actively working as the Agenda 21 Secretariat for the implementation of the cross-sectoral Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities (approved in the General Conference in Klaipėda 2003). The program is being implemented under the supervision of the Executive Board. Based on contributions of several UBC commissions and networks, the implementation has proceeded extremely well and the programme is most likely reaching a high concrete impact on the ground, at UBC member cities. The programme activities target five thematic focus areas: Good governance and sustainable urban management, Sustainable use of energy and resources, Good living environment and nature protection, Sustainable economy and transport, and Social integration and health.

The programme has reached its volume goal up to over 16 MEUR including more than 25 projects. This funding is today committed by decisions and contracts of different partners and funding agencies towards the implementation of the projects and other program activities.

The programme assessment, the Baltic Cities Sustainable Development Survey 2004/2005, 2006/2007 has been completed and the last survey 2009 is in its final stage. The answering rate has been high and reflects the interest and commitment of UBC members and provides an excellent basis for analysis. Results of the surveys show that a lot of development steps have been taken among the UBC member cities and our Baltic Sea region is therefore clearly one of the forerunner regions globally. The programme activities and the surveys also support strongly and give valuable data for the European policy development on urban sustainability. Experiences of several projects have been used for the development of the Thematic Strategy for the Urban Environment within the 6th Environmental Action Plan of the European Union, and UBC is seen as a key player, a forerunner network and an appreciated partner in the development of the Baltic Sea Region as an important part of Europe.

UBC Commission on Environment Actions

The UBC Commission on Environment, co-chaired by Mr. Mikko Jokinen, Turku, and Mr. Guldbrand Skjönberg, Nacka, has worked very actively during the whole reporting period. They are assisted by the Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat (renamed Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat in February 2007) that is being generously hosted by the City of Turku, where it is located by the decisions of the UBC and the City of Turku for the whole Action Programme period 2004-2009. Mr Guldbrand Skjönberg is functioning as co-chairman of UBC Environment Commission for the last year as he has been retired in 2009. He has been functioning as co-chairman since 2000.

The basic resources provided by the host city and the UBC combined with the successful project funding have enabled the secretariat to carry on a strong coordination role with a current staff number of 12 full-time professionals (Finnish-Swedish-Polish-Russian-German). The secretariat is now located in the so called Baltic Sea House in the old centre of Turku.

The commission has achieved a lot in different policy, networking, capacity-building and information activities. However, the most important resource of the commission are the active UBC member cities who contribute with their knowledge, experiences, motivation and strong involvement for the mutual benefit. The basic activities of the Commission on Environment have during the reporting period included several excellent thematic seminar/workshop-type meetings with. These were during the reporting period organised in Tampere Finland, in March 2008 and in Tallinn in October 2009 and in St Petersburg. In these commission meetings a broad participation taken place both in terms of participants (appr. 60 – 80 per Commission meeting including several other UBC Commissions) and also in the

activity level as the main focus in the last Commission meetings has been on the drafting on a new UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015. In connection to the Baltic Cities Sustainable Development Survey 2009 the personnel of the Environmental Commission was in contact with all UBC member cities in order to check up contact information and possibility for participation in the survey. This has been much appreciated among the contact persons in the UBC member cities.

The commission has continued the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award scheme and has developed further UBC's good practice work. The prize winning award 2009 will be published at the UBC General Conference in Kristiansand, September 2007. The website has been totally up-dated and contact databases maintained. The newly opened UBC Good Practice Database is working to better serve and collect information, data, good practises etc. from projects, meetings and UBC member cities. More than 350 Good Practice cases are already listed in the database (see www.ubcwheel.eu).

Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin has been developed and thematic editions on Practical Tools and Methods for cities 2/2007, Vision for the Future 1/2008, Innovative Sustainable Thinking 2/2008 and Active Stakeholder Involvement 1/2009 have been published. Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin has an edition of 2500 copies and it receives a high interest from member cities and partner organisations. The electronically version of the Environmental Bulletin is more and more requested. UBC Commission on Energy has own pages in the Environmental Bulletin during year 2008 and 2009. New posters and material has been produced depending on the need and events where UBC Commission on Environment has participated. The Commission website has been further developed and changed into www.ubc-environment.net. Analyses on how to improve the network services have been carried out and there will be further improvements in this area in the near future.

European Union Policy co-operation on environment and sustainable development

In line with the working principles of the UBC, the Commission on Environment has also contributed strongly to Baltic Sea Regional and European policy cooperation processes on cities' environmental governance and sustainable urban development. The commission has represented the UBC at the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (Baltic 21), Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM) and European Sustainable Cities and towns Campaign and at European expert and working groups such as in EMAS revision.

The main focus during the last two year period has been on the development and communication process of the new EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. This strategy goes hand in hand with the new UBC Strategy and UBC Sustainability Action Programme and therefore there has been a need to combine the development of both processes simultaneously.

During the reporting period the European Sustainable Cities and towns Campaign is continuing in planning and arranging large scale Urban Sustainability Conferences. Despite The 5th European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns was held in 21-24 March 2007 in Seville and will be followed by the 6th Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns in Dunkerque, France in 20 – 21 May 2010.

Main Projects of the UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat

- **Managing Urban Europe -25** (MUE-25), Developing cities' environmental managements systems to address the whole functional urban area. Partners: EnvCom, ICLEI, UNEP etc (altogether 24 partners, inc. 15 cities), 2005-08. 2.9 MEUR - DG Environment, Finnish Ministry of Environment + other funders.
- **SUSTAINMENT** (Integrated solutions for the sustainability management in the Baltic Cities), Partners: EnvCom, Baltic University programme, 12 partner cities in the Baltic Sea Region, 2006-2007. 1.4 MEUR – BSR INTERREG III B Neighbourhood programme, TACIS, Finnish Ministry of Environment.
- **LVRLAC – UBC co-operation**, facilitating sustainable development in the Lake Victoria Region through Local Authority Action. Phase I and II, and a new phase III started, - Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

- **MATRUSCHKA** – Integrated Management System for Russian Cities. Partners: EnvCom, 8 partner cities and Åbo Akademi University, 2007–2009. Funded by BSR INTERREG IIIB Neighbourhood Programme TACIS on 0,7 MEUR.
- **We choose life – Youth Against HIV/AIDS** – UBC EnvCom partner in the project coordinated by WHO Healthy Cities Network. 4 Russian cities involved and several expert organizations. TACIS funding 40000 €.
- **SUITS** – Sustainable Indicators and Target Setting. Nordic Council of Ministers. UBC and Association of Municipalities in Nordic and Baltic Countries as partners. 64000 € budget
- **CHAMP** – Combating Climate Change. LIFE+ funded project including Finland, Germany, Hungary and Italy. 2009 – 2011. Total 2.1 MEUR.
- **NEW BRIDGES** – Strengthening Quality of Life through improved Management of Urban Rural Interaction. BSR INTERREG IV B Neighbourhood programme. 12 partners and 13 Associated partners. 2009 – 2011. 2,8 MEUR.
- **BaltCICA** – Climate Change: Impact, Costs and Adaptation in the Baltic Sea Region. UBC Env-Com partner in the project. BSR INTERREG IV B Neighbourhood programme. 2009 – 2011. 120000 €.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - SEPTEMBER 2011

Starting point – challenges of Baltic Cities

Today, the UBC is extremely well placed to tackle the urgent environmental challenges that the Baltic Cities are facing. At the same time, we also have very good possibilities to contribute to sustainable development at our region and we want to be a preferred partner in different tasks, projects and events. The past years of UBC's environmental work and the highly successful implementation of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities, have taken us to the point where we have both an explicit responsibility and a potential to make an impact, if we so want to.

As mentioned before, good information basis for our work is provided by the Baltic Cities Sustainable Development Survey 2004/2005, 2006/2007 and 2009, where a clear majority of the UBC member contributed. According to the survey, especially hard challenges are for example climate change, excessive use of natural resources, wealth gaps and demographic changes. Dominance of private car over public transport remains also strong as ever. However, according to the survey, there are also promising sustainable development trends and commitments in the cities. The state of the Baltic Sea and increasing effects of Climate change are perhaps two of the main challenges to work on with during the upcoming years. We also know that several of our cities will face challenges with these issues and will need all the assistance that can be mobilised. As a regional city network we have all the possibilities to act together and be efficient.

The mission of the UBC Commission on Environment is to tackle those challenges by all the means provided by our efficient network through sharing of problems, information and knowledge, approaches and solutions. In order to work more effectively we must improve our performance in all the fields and have clear goals and targets for our activities. From knowledge based analyses, technical solutions, improved political planning and decision making processes to improved information and dissemination strategies. As one important task the UBC Commission will continue to develop and put into practise its Communication Strategy in order to improve actions and performances for the benefit of our member cities. This is a task for the whole UBC network and all levels of the UBC organisation are needed in order to improve these internal and external practices.

The potentiality of our network to support our member cities in treating the challenges is good and it is at the moment also fairly well mobilised. The highly successful Agenda 21 Action Programme with is already committed total project budget of appr. 16 MEUR provides an excellent framework of action to address the challenges in practice. Plans and activities for the new UBC Sustainability Action Period

2010 – 2015 have already taken place and ambitious goals have been listed. Work practices and methods will be evaluated and new services for our UBC members will occur. In the communication in connection to the development of the UBC Sustainability Action Programme a need to more exact tailor made actions have been foreseen. The UBC and the UBC Commission on Environment has to develop the working methods in order to support our UBC member cities more efficiently. This will be one of our main tasks during the upcoming years!

Activities – the network service

Success, good service and a strong network can only be maintained through continuous development and improvements of all the activities among those involved in the activities. Interaction and good communication is one of the key elements of continuing development and improvement. The development of Baltic Sea cities has been long and successful. Starting from Agenda 21 activities, continuing to sustainable development processes and now more closely focusing on sustainability management in cities! The network service of the UBC Commission on Environment is a combination of projects, regular meetings and workshops, information work and policy liaison with other organisations, environmental and sustainable development policy processes and policy-makers. Such policy-makers include Baltic Sea Regional actors like national ministries of the environment and foreign affairs, Nordic Council of Ministers, European Environment Agency, Baltic 21 and HELCOM, as well as the European Union – especially European Commission DG Environment and DG Region.

The UBC Commission on Environment builds its activities on principles of stable continuing development. For us it is important that the whole region develops in a balanced way and this work will be coordinated with the support and guidance of the UBC Strategy and UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 and hopefully implemented as much as possible as actions connected to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In order to do this, the following activities will be carried out:

- Meetings and workshops of the commission twice a year – providing opportunity to discuss and plan projects and other activities as well as for direct learning and sharing. In addition other supporting activities will take place such as the Nordic Baltic Aalborg Commitment Network meetings. The Commission meeting are hopefully arranged together with other UBC Commissions. UBC EnvCom in planning a large scale top level conference in January 2011 in Turku called “The Nordic Sustainability Conference in the Baltic Sea Region” with approximately 700 participants from all over the Baltic Sea Region.
- Projects addressing the challenges in Baltic Cities and implementing the thematic goals of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme – the commission is involved in several large co-operation projects during the period and will continue to create development projects supporting our member cities.
- Capacity-building – organising opportunities for the cities to up-date their knowledge and competencies on environmental policies, practices and legislation, communicating different target groups and organisational setup, strengthening efficient Sustainability Management..
- Information services – publishing Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin, further development and updating of the UBC Good Practice database on sustainable development issues in the Baltic Cities and partner organisations. Improving the UBC web-services on environment and sustainable development.
- Good Practice work – the successful good practice promotion and exchange will be continued by the environmental award scheme, web-site and other information services. Improve our surveys and find more use of the work put into the collection of data by liaison activities with other similar activities with Universities, evaluating and supporting sustainable development.

Resources

The Commission on Environment has an effective secretariat with good resources, located in the City of Turku. The secretariat has an international staff of 12 full-time professionals. The purpose of the secretariat is to serve the commission and to manage and co-ordinate the implementation of the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015. The activities and services of the UBC Commission on

Environment are closely tied to funding possibilities and the secretariat is therefore put under pressure of the EU funding programmes.

However, the most important resource of the commission is the active UBC member cities who contribute with their knowledge, experiences and strong involvement for mutual benefit. The best motivation for the secretariat and staff is therefore the motivation and positive spirit we meet among the UBC member cities.

Evaluation

UBC's environmental and sustainable development services will be evaluated and improved. These evaluations are extremely valuable as they provide our city network with information on development trends, possible problems and good practises all important for a balanced and dynamic development of the Baltic Sea Region.

Action Programme for 2010-2015

UBC Commission on Environment and its Secretariat will actively support the network in implementing UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015.

Björn Grönholm
Head of Secretariat of the Commission
City of Turku

COMMISSION ON GENDER EQUALITY

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

Activities

Since the IX General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities, held in Pärnu, Estonia between 27 September – 28 September 2007, the Commission on Gender Equality has further consolidated its network, launched a project, and organised a working meeting which contained cooperation with invited representatives from other commissions as well as invited speakers from a project focusing on rehabilitation of female victims of trafficking and prostitution.

One of the main aims of the Commission on Gender Equality during the reported period was to create a board and working groups. As a result, the structuring and composition of the commission has been part of the commission's activities. A board will be elected in September 2009.

The Commission have also developed contacts with other commissions, such as the Commission on Health and Social Affairs. Gender equality is promoted by developing cooperative structures for networking and the exchange of experiences and practical knowledge. The Commission have researched experiences of gender equality work in the member cities.

The main focus of the commission's work has been to produce a report. The report offers a framework that provides the basis for the development of gender equal societies. The report shows the conditions for social change to happen, and can be used as a way for cities to adapt to, and support, the objectives of gender equality. The report also presents examples of good practices of gender equality work from some of the member cities, and by using examples from different countries it allows for flexibility and creativity in fulfilling the objectives of gender equality. The report will be presented at the X general conference in Kristiansand September 2009.

The commission has prepared a questionnaire that is to be distributed and collected in connection with the X general conference in Kristiansand September 2009. The result will be used in monitoring and evaluation of the development of gender equality in the UBC.

The Commission on Gender Equality have expressed opinions and statements on the Baltic Sea Strategy, the UBC Strategy and the UBC Social Charter.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

The general goal of the commission on Gender Equality is to achieve gender equality with a specific focus on:

- Labour market issues
- Social planning, urban planning and planning work
- Combating prostitution and trafficking

The goals of the Commission on Gender Equality are as follows:

- To disseminate knowledge about issues of gender equality. The commission will further the awareness-raising within the field of gender equality and the strategy of gender mainstreaming. The commission will disseminate knowledge about the work which is being done in the UBC-area by spreading examples of good practices. The main tool for this work is the report. The report will be distributed across the UBC.
- Collecting, analysing and following up the questionnaire handed out to the all participants on the general conference.
- The Commission will continue to collect examples of good practices. Experience-based knowledge accumulated through exchanges within the UBC-network can inspire member-cities to move forward and apply knowledge in practice.
- Promoting municipalities to apply the examples of good practices to move forward in the work for gender equality.
- To strengthen the mutual exchange of experiences of good practices within the UBC.
- Strengthening the cooperation with other commissions. Developing further cooperation with the Commission on Health and Social Affairs.

Aurora Moberg
Chairperson of the Commission
City of Umeå

Helene Brewer
Coordinator of the Commission
City of Umeå

COMMISSION ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

After having a important meeting with Gdynia, Poland in June 2008, we decided to initiate further work in the commission, through activities in a core group. Gdynia has had the position of co-chair in the commission.

The core group has consisted of Kristiansand, Gdynia, Karlskrona and Tartu. In addition, efforts have been made to involve former active members of the commission. The decision to work intensively in a core group, was taken on the basis of past experiences. It has been very difficult to commit members to activities in the commission.

The core group had a strategy meeting in Växjö in October 2008. Two representatives from Karlskrona, the representatives from Gdynia, Tartu and Kristiansand were present. The chairman of the Commission on Youth Issues was also invited to promote collaboration across commissions. At this meeting, the parties committed themselves to take responsibility for different topics relevant to one of our four workshops during the General Conference in Kristiansand in September 2009.

The participants agreed that the commission should focus its activities around the preparation for this. All agreed that there would not be capacity left for anything beyond this. This is why there has been no systematic work with other aspects of the Action Plan 2008-2009 after this agreement.

Responsibility for planning and implementation of the workshop IV: "To make the Baltic Sea Region a safe and more secure place" was formally conferred on the Commission only after the board meeting held in Växjö. The task has been solved in interaction with the Commission on Education and the Commission on Gender Equality. The Commission on Youth Issues has also been a key partner in the planning of the General Conference.

The commission has, in the autumn of 2008 and spring of 2009, been represented at commission meetings of both the Commission on Gender Equality and the Commission on Youth Issues. This has been related to the planning of the conference and the development of common themes and issues. The cooperation with the other commissions has been fruitful. Areas for future collaboration have also been discussed, as it is believed that networking across the commissions is very important for developing the position of the health and social field in the UBC.

As agreed in Växjö, a meeting was called in Kristiansand in early March 2009. A preliminary program for workshop 4 was to be completed. Just before this meeting, Karlskrona informed that they chose to withdraw their involvement in the commission, due to many other major challenges in the community. At the same time the commissions co-chair Gdynia, announced that they were forced to resign from the position because of heavy workloads and the difficult economic situation. It was not possible to conduct the meeting as planned.

From the critical point in March/April, when it became clear that also the core group was not able to function as a working unit of the commission, it was necessary to seek a stronger cooperation with other commissions to ensure completion of the workshop IV.

This has been the main priority leading up to the General Conference in September. It follows from this that the commission in this situation has not been able to make a decision regarding the revision of the Action Plan 2008-2009.

It is therefore the unrevised version that is present before the meeting in Kristiansand in September. At this meeting it is necessary to discuss how the Commission on Health and Social Affairs can be operated in the future.

The work in the commission has been very challenging. We have learned that it has been difficult to create an interest and binding commitment to the health and social area. Practice has shown that the financial situation and the amount of urgent issues in health and social administration in the member cities, affect their ability to participate and be involved in the commission's work.

Developing relations through direct meetings between people and the systematic development of experience and knowledge is a precondition for the development of fruitful international cooperation in this field.

Lars Dahlen
Chairman of the Commission
City of Kristiansand

Hilde Engenes
Coordinator of the Commission
City of Kristiansand

COMMISSION ON INFORMATION SOCIETY

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

Final activities of the IS COM project Challenge of eCitizen

An Interreg IIC project “*Challenge of eCitizen: Promoting eGovernment Actions in European Cities*”, prepared and coordinated by the Baltic Institute of Finland in the framework of the IS COM, was launched in January 2005. Several UBC member cities participated in the project, as well as the cities of Sheffield, Bologna and Trento. This three-year project was designed to support innovative on-going local eGovernment actions and strategies.

The project activities were focused to facilitate development and piloting of innovative and advanced outputs including eManagement systems for city administrations, online public services for citizens with web-based, mobile and smart card applications as well as new eParticipation services with interactive consultative applications. As a cross-cutting issue, awareness of citizens on eGovernment actions was raised through implementation of information distribution strategies and local campaigns as well as publishing studies and reports on eGovernment actions in Europe and key results of the project components. Capacities and knowledge of local policy-makers, officials and experts on design and management of local eGovernment actions were enhanced through extensive training and consultancies. A follow-up strategy to ensure sustainability of the project results in the partner cities was developed. The project evaluation was carried out by the Finnish consulting firm NetEffect Ltd. The project ended in December 2007, and the final seminar was held in Vaasa on 22 November 2007.

The eCitizen project was regarded as one of the most successful projects among hundreds of Interreg IIC projects implemented during the EU 2001-2007 programming period. eCitizen was selected as one of four Interreg IIC projects presented as a good Interreg IIC project example in the Interreg IVC programme’s kickoff conference in Lisbon in September 2007. The eCitizen project was also featured as one of the model projects in the final Interreg IIC programme publication published at the end of 2007. Furthermore, the eCitizen project manager at the Baltic Institute of Finland has been frequently invited to major European eGovernment conferences to present eCitizen as a case of European cooperation on eGovernment, most recently to the Irish eGovernment Awards conference in Dublin in September 2008, and before that, to a large eGovernment conference in London in March 2008. These events have provided excellent promotion opportunities also for UBC and IS COM.

Preparation of eCitizen follow-up projects was started already during the final stages of eCitizen. IS COM has provided the overall framework for preparation processes.

Final seminar of the IS COM project Challenge of eCitizen in Vaasa on 22 November 2007

The final seminar of eCitizen was arranged in Vaasa, Finland on 22 November 2007. The seminar offered a possibility to discuss the results achieved in the project in four thematic areas: eManagement, eService, eParticipation and awareness raising. The seminar provided an excellent chance to discuss the questions still facing eGovernment development with project partners and other eGovernment experts. The seminar gathered 50 participants.

Preparation of the project “eCitizen II - Towards Citizen-centred eGovernment in European Cities and Regions”

Already during the final year of the Challenge of eCitizen project, all the partner cities expressed their strong interest and commitment to continue the successful cooperation. Preparation of the follow-up project eCitizen II was launched by the lead partner, the Baltic Institute of Finland and IS COM in the first preparation seminar in Brussels on 11 December 2007.

The follow-up project builds upon the knowledge and experience gathered from the eCitizen project. Challenge of eCitizen covered all key topics of eGovernment development, including eManagement, eParticipation tools and methods as well as eServices including smart cards and mobile services. This gave the partners an excellent framework to discuss and learn from the experiences in fields of eGovernment implementation. Based on the gained experiences and discussions on the future of eGovernment, efficient interaction and communication between citizens and local administration proved to be a crucial success factor in local eGovernment development for all involved cities. As a result, eParticipation was selected as one of the focus areas in the follow-up project development.

Preparation of the follow-up project was carried out together with the Baltic Institute of Finland, IS COM and the core partner cities since the closure of the Challenge of eCitizen. A call for new partner candidates was distributed Europe-wide, and a very high number of interested partner candidates applied to the eCitizen II project. The final Europe-wide consortium of partners - 11 cities and regional authorities - comprises a variety of European expertise and public administration environments in developing information society policies, strategies and practical actions. All the partners share the common challenge – how to utilize better the developed eParticipation tools in accelerating the eGovernment, improving involvement of citizens in local decision-making to provide high-quality public services as well as preparing for the future challenges. The follow-up project is focused to optimize the piloting experiences in the Challenge of eCitizen project by enhancing intensive direct collaboration, peer learning, efficient exchange and dissemination of the accumulated knowledge and good practices between more advanced and less experienced public administrations throughout Europe.

The first eCitizen II preparation/IS COM seminar in Brussels on 11 December 2007

The objectives and activities of the follow-up project were the topics discussed in the first preparatory seminar of eCitizen II in Brussels on 11 December 2007. Seminar was co-organized by IS COM and the eCitizen project. Potential financing programmes were introduced, as well as the eParticipation initiative of the EU Commission. The seminar programme also included presentations of the role and activities of IS COM, the current trends in eGovernment development in IS COM chair city, St. Petersburg, and naturally the results of the eCitizen project. The seminar ended with a discussion session of the current eCitizen partners, where a true think-tank on the future cooperation took place. As a conclusion, the planning of eCitizen II got a good start in Brussels, and potential new partners were also invited to the discussion. The seminar gathered some 20 participants from the UBC member cities, as well as from other European cities.

The second eCitizen II preparation/IS COM seminar in Helsinki on 7-8 May 2008

To further support the preparation of the follow-up project for eCitizen, eCitizen II, the second preparation seminar was organised in Helsinki on 7-8 May 2008. The main goal of the seminar was to discuss the objectives and activities of the new project and to strengthen the partnership of eCitizen II.

Besides expert presentations on eParticipation and social media, as well as on Interreg IVC financing programme, the seminar included a lot of time for discussion to ensure that potential partners could contribute to the preparation. Some 35 participants from as many as 15 European countries took part in the seminar. Various UBC member cities participated in the seminar. The seminar was co-organised by the Baltic Institute of Finland and IS COM.

The third eCitizen II preparation/IS COM seminar in Brussels on 10 December 2008

The eventual eCitizen II project partners gathered in the final joint preparation seminar in Brussels on 10 December 2008. The project work plan, budget and application procedures were main topics of the seminar. 19 representatives of the 11 project partner organizations attended the seminar.

eCitizen II application for the second call of Interreg IVC programme, 30 January 2009

The application for the second application round of the EU's Interreg IVC financing programme was submitted by the lead partner, the Baltic Institute of Finland, on 30 January 2009. The financing decision is expected in early November 2009.

Preparation of Envisage project

Partners of Challenge of eCitizen have also initiated other cooperation ideas based on the established network and IS COM. One example of such initiatives was a project proposal Envisage – European Visualisation of Arguments that was prepared for the eParticipation call of the European Commission in August 2008 as joint effort of City of Sheffield, City of Tampere, City of Tartu and the Baltic Institute of Finland. This initiative demonstrated how interregional projects produce sustainable results also in the form of established partnerships, which are often as valuable outputs from the projects as the actual deliverables, enabling the partners to benefit from collaboration even after the actual project is closed. Although the Envisage project proposal received very high evaluation marks, they were not quite close enough for the project to be approved for eParticipation programme financing.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

IS COM objectives

The UBC Commission on Information Society (IS COM) aims at promoting and accelerating development of information society in the UBC member cities by facilitating exchange and dissemination of experiences, information, best practices and successful applications of technical innovations acquired in local information society activities. The goal is to enhance knowledge and capacities of the local authorities responsible for information society issues to design, develop and manage innovative information society policies and activities. The IS COM activities will follow and support the guidelines, strategies and general objectives set out in the EU i2010 initiative and various regional and national e-initiatives promoting the Information Society development in the Baltic Sea Region. The IS COM is chaired by the City of St. Petersburg.

IS COM activities 2010-2011

1. Implementation of the eCitizen II project
2. Elaboration of new IS COM project ideas

- special project preparation workshops and networking events
- potential project themes:
 - o utilisation of social media in public online services and eParticipation
 - o macro-regional ICT clustering in BSR (supporting the EU BSR Strategy)
 - o government-to-business services for SMEs
- 3. Launching and implementation of new IS COM projects (1-2 projects in 2010-2011)
- 4. IS COM annual meetings in 2010 and 2011

Esa Kokkonen
Coordinator of the Commission
City of Tampere

COMMISSION ON SPORT

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

I. UBC Commission on Sport Social Campaign “Always Active”

With the ageing process of European society progressing and consequently physical fitness and functional capacity of Europeans naturally decreasing, the UBC Commission on Sport launched the Social Campaign entitled “Always Active”. The objective of the campaign was to prevent physical mobility restrictions originating from advanced age as well as to counteract consequent social exclusion. The campaign has targeted at promoting an active lifestyle as a factor enhancing health and functional capacity as well as at stressing the importance of healthy ageing process. It should be stressed here that the above mentioned targets were in line with the priorities of the World Health Organisation.

Within the “Always Active” Social Campaign, the UBC Commission on Sport realised the following activities:

1. 2007 UBC Commission on Sport Grant Session “Always Active”

In the year 2007 the UBC Commission on Sport allocated grants of the total amount of 5 000 EUR. “Always Active” grants were awarded for those projects which encouraged elderly people to keep physically active and increased their functional capacity as well as promoted sport as a way of preventing various illnesses. As usual the Commission’s grants were addressed exclusively to UBC member cities.

No.	Name of Sporting Events	Organiser	Date	Granted Amount
1.	“Nature Route in the Town Wood”	Chojnice (Poland)	23 June 2007	1000 EUR
2.	“Save points – win health”	Karlskrona (Sweden)	1 June – 30 September 2007	1000 EUR
3.	“Physical activity of elderly people”	Panevėžys (Lithuania)	June – October 2007	1000 EUR

4.	“The Islands of health”	Šiauliai (Lithuania)	1 August – 30 November 2007	1000 EUR
5.	“Gym at home!”	Turku (Finland)	October 2007	1000 EUR

2. 2008 UBC Commission on Sport Grant Session: “Sport for All Generations”

In 2008 the UBC Commission on Sport continued to promote sport as a health-enhancing factor which simultaneously counteracts social exclusion and isolation. Within the 2008 grant session the Commission on Sport allocated grants of the total amount of 3 000 EUR for projects which integrated all the generations in their attempts to keep physically and mentally active as well as fit. Social and generation integration was thus one of the most important values of the awarded projects. As usual the Commission’s grants were addressed exclusively to UBC member cities.

No.	Name of Sporting Events	Organiser	Date	Granted Amount
1.	Sport for All Generations	Liepāja (Latvia)	May-August 2008	1000 EUR
2.	Physical Activity – for both Young and Elderly People	Panevėžys (Lithuania)	April 1 – October 31, 2008	1000 EUR
3.	Voru Town 1784-metre Run	Võru (Estonia)	August 21, 2008	1000 EUR

In the years 1996-2008 the UBC Commission on Sport granted 39,775 € for the organisation of 57 projects in which approximately 34,000 sportsmen participated.

3. International Conference “Always Active”

It was the UBC Commission on Sport intention to promote a positive relationship between physical activity and health which is crucial for functional capacity as well as mobile independence of elderly people. In order to meet the a/m target the Commission organised an international conference “Always Active” which was addressed mainly to people involved in work with elderly people and institutions/organisations established to encourage these people to keep (physically and mentally) active.

Held in Gdynia (Poland) on 4-5 June 2009, the conference was organised in cooperation with the City of Gdynia and Senior Activity Centre in Gdynia. It gathered speakers from six European countries who presented best practices from their cities as well as innovative projects concerning active lifestyle among elderly people.

The conference started with a presentation made by the President of German Federation of Sports Medicine on the topic of healthy lifestyle and its importance for future physical mobility. Next Scandinavian speakers introduced various projects implemented to help elderly people remain active as well as to encourage them to do sports at home.

Participants in “Always Active” conference were also offered an opportunity to see in practice various activities realised by the City of Gdynia in order to encourage elderly people to remain physically and mentally active even in their advanced age and retirement years.

II. UBC Commission on Sport Co-operation with other Organizations:

- **The Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association** – WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Health in the Baltic Region. It coordinates and promotes the goals of Healthy Cities operations in the region. Its aim is to improve public health through healthy diet and physical activity.

- **Finnish Rugby Federation** – the Commission established cooperation with the President of this organisation. Finnish Rugby Federation associates rugby clubs of Finland and is a member of European Rugby Federation.
- **Estonian Rugby Federation** – it aims at preventing drug abuse among school children by offering them sports activities and other after school activities. It encourages a healthy life style by playing rugby.
- **Rugby Club Arka Gdynia** - organises a number of events which are meant to propagate rugby both in Gdynia as well as in the region.
- **Senior Activity Centre in Gdynia** – is involved in the work for the benefit of the elderly people, attempts to promote mental and physical activity among this age group.

III. UBC Commission on Sport Website

The UBC Commission on Sport regularly updates its website so that it contains topical information about the Commission, its actions and undertakings.

ACTION PLAN 2010 – 2011

The general objective of the UBC Commission on Sport is to promote sport and sporting activities as tools for making the Baltic Sea Region more attractive and accessible as well as for increasing fitness, health and social integration of the Baltic Sea citizens.

The UBC Commission on Sport objectives for the years 2010-2011 are as follows:

- to develop cooperation with international organizations and other UBC Commissions within the area of sport
- to strengthen links among sports clubs, associations and institutions in order to create the Baltic Sport Network
- to promote sports events and sports exchange in and outside the Baltic Sea Region
- to increase the involvement of UBC member cities in actions promoting sport and healthy lifestyle on the national and international levels
- to encourage UBC member cities to actively promote active lifestyle habits especially among young people
- to stimulate UBC member cities, especially those engaged in the works of UBC Commission on Sport, to formulate policies stressing the importance of sport and recommending physical activity at all stages of life
- to raise awareness of the physical activity as an important element of healthy lifestyle among all age groups
- to launch a series of actions / a campaign / targeted at youngsters to stimulate them to do sports and treat physical activity as an attractive way of spending leisure time
- to organize the UBC Commission on Sport annual meetings
- to announce grant allocation sessions.

Joanna Leman
Coordinator of the Commission
City of Gdynia

Beata Łęgowska
Chairperson of the Commission
City of Gdynia

COMMISSION ON TOURISM

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

The Commission on Tourism was established in 1996 to promote tourism in the Baltic Sea Region. The Commission has focused on information exchange, education, promotion and development of sustainable tourism around the Baltic Sea Region. Mr Ryszard Zdrojewski, Koszalin, Poland holds the function of the Chairman since 1.10.2005.

The purpose of the Commission on Tourism is:

- integration of the Baltic Sea Region communities through better understanding each other, exchange of tourist information and support of the tourist traffic;
- better coordination of tourism in the Baltic Sea Region through creation of cooperation network between the cities; development of interpersonal relationships and use of the Internet;
- promotion of active and healthy lifestyle in which tourism plays a significant role;
- permanent development of the tourist infrastructure through initiation of projects based on the European Union programmes;

The main activities of the UBC Commission on Tourism in the said period were:

- **Like in the previous years, there were numerous articles and newsletters provided by the CoT Secretariat to the UBC Bulletin.**
- **Publishing of the second edition of the catalogue: “Baltic Sea Region – perfect tourism zone”.**

6000 copies of the catalogue were printed out in 2008 (second edition). The contents, graphics design and editing were taken care of by the Secretariat of Commission on Tourism. Most of the member cities of UBC are covered by the catalogue, as well as their most interesting places for tourists, including the surrounding areas. The catalogue contains a lot of colourful, interesting pictures and maps showing location of the cities, too. There are contact details to the centres of tourism information located in each city, all the details are easily accessible. The catalogue is now available for download in pdf format at the UBC web site: www.ubc.net and the Baltic Info web site - www.e-baltic.eu

- **The UBC Commission on Tourism Annual Meeting, on 26-29 September 2007 in Pärnu, Estonia**

On 26-29 September 2007 the Annual UBC CoT meeting was held in Pärnu, Estonia. The meeting was devoted to the debate on the Commission's work during the last year, as well as to present the actions planned for the next year.

The sessions were chaired by Mr Ryszard Zdrojewski, CoT Chairman. At the beginning all participants shortly introduced themselves and their cities. The presentation made by Mr Ryszard Zdrojewski pertained to the CoT activities report for the last year. He presented the report from Commission's working meeting held in March 2007 in Palanga, the adopted new Commission's objectives and the projects on tourism that had been commenced at that time. The participants presented the achievements in tourism of the cities represented by them. Furthermore, the problems hampering the development of tourism, as well as actions and projects taken up, were presented. Questions were asked and some issues were being discussed on the ongoing basis. Mr Ryszard Zdrojewski also presented accomplishment of new projects. He also announced continuation and development of those projects in the years to come, and publication of the UBC member cities information tourist centres catalogue financed by the Commission.

The Commission is of the opinion that UBC while representing its member cities should take a lead in implementing high quality standards and should set a good example for other cities located on the Baltic Sea. The appeal authors are convinced that clean and safe beaches are one of the most important factors having impact on development of tourism in the Baltic Sea Region.

• **The UBC Commission on Tourism Working Meeting on 3-5 April 2008 in Gdańsk, Poland**

The meeting was divided into two key parts: „Challenges & opportunities of tourism in BSR” and „Towards sustainable tourism in BSR”. Also, the CoT internal matters were touched upon (discussions, voting, etc.) The meeting was attended by 27 participants, including representatives from 16 Member Cities, as well as invited guests from governments, international organizations and universities. At the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Paweł Zaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, presented some general info about the UBC. Ms. Agnieszka Pomaska, Deputy Chair of Gdańsk City Council, presented the project of the bicycle paths in Gdańsk. The Pomeranian Regional Strategy of Tourism Development (2004-2013) was presented by Ms. Marta Chełkowska, director of Tourism Department, Pomeranian Marshall Office in Gdańsk. Dr Jacek Podhorski-Piotrowski, Faculty of Economics, University of Gdansk presented examples of tourism good practices in the Pomeranian Region. The main issues of the presentation were: social and economic view on tourism, promotion of Poland, tourist products, promotion of Pomerania, the importance of amber for the region, institutions connected with amber. The presentation on the South Baltic Programme 2007-2013 followed. In the second part of the meeting (“Towards sustainable tourism in BSR”), the presentation on the “BSR – Perfect Tourism Zone” project by the CoT Chairman Zdrojewski was the main focus. Prof. Dr Wilhelm Steingrube from University of Greifswald presented the main parts, structure and objectives of AGORA 2.0 project. Dr Marcin Wołek referred to the idea of Regiobike project that connected sustainable tourism & sustainable transportation. Participants of the meeting decided to continue the “BSR – Perfect Tourism Zone” project and to take part in 2 projects: the AGORA 2.0 and Regiobike.

• **The UBC Commission on Tourism Annual Meeting, on 9-10 October 2008 in Szczecin, Poland**

The meeting was attended by 19 participants representing 9 member cities of the UBC from Poland, Germany, Latvia, and Sweden. The main focus of the meeting’s first part was “Cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region in the field of tourism”. The following ppts were presented at this part:

- 1) “A Baltic neopolis in the cross-border region” by Mrs Ewa Kurjata, Head of International Relations of Mayor’s Cabinet, Szczecin, Poland;
- 2) ”Multimodal aspects of mobility in the cross-border area (tourism sector)” by Mr Dariusz Dołgoszyja, Head of City Planning Office, Szczecin, Poland;
- 3) "United in Diversity" - an excellent example of Danish-Polish-Swedish cross-border cooperation in the South Baltic Programme by Mr Czesław Zdrojewski, Director of Association of Communes and Districts of Middle Pomerania, Koszalin, Poland. The main outputs of this project would be the bike route to go from Poland through Germany, Denmark and Sweden.
- 4) “Westpomeranian sailing route” by Mrs E. Mitura was an example of Polish-German cooperation;
- 5) Underwater “Tauchgondole” by Mr Peter Siemann – referred to the innovative way to enjoy underwater life without getting wet.

The second part was devoted to the “EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region”. The main core of this issue was presented by Mrs Betina Meliss of University of Greifswald (Germany), AGORA Project Manager. The participants looked for ideas concerning: the future challenges for tourism in the BSR area, solving problems of tourism in the BSR, how can EU support the development of the BSR. The opportunities of promotion tourism in the Internet were also touched upon. The plan of UBC CoT activities in 2008-2009 was presented, and the 2009 Action Plan for the Commission was discussed as well.

- **The UBC Commission on Tourism Working Meeting, on 16-18 April 2009 in Liepāja**

Chaired by CoT Chairman Zdrojewski, under the main theme: “How to make the Baltic Sea Region more accessible and attractive”, Liepāja welcomed participants from: Kaunas, Cēsis, Riga, Jēkabpils, Palanga, Tukums, Pärnu, Gragždai, Koszalin and Szczecin. The meeting started with the presentation by Ms. Ewa Kurjata, Szczecin Municipality, CoT co-chair, and was devoted to “Baltic Sea Region branding and its significance for the UBC. The leading theme of the presentation was that UBC needs to position itself in the BSR. There is a need to think over cities’ international policies and how they should focus their work in the UBC. The CoT cities were invited to join the **Task Force to prepare the UBC Member City Marketing Guideline**.

Mr. Zdrojewski presented the Heritage Tourism for increased BSR Identity project Agora 2.0 under Interreg IV B. Two of the project objectives are to improve conditions of the BSR tourism and support SMEs to cope with future challenges, such as: globalization, demographic transition and climate change, and to generate new innovative ideas for BSR tourism development. Among the problems to be addressed by the project one can find: diversity of the BSR tourism market, lack of innovation and creativity of the sector, distance between political and tourism actors, the need for more sustainable products, poor accessibility of tourism stakeholders to relevant market research.

The X General Conference workshop procedures and brainstorming activity followed. The following questions were worked out during the meeting:

1. How can UBC lobby for better accessibility and reducing the travel time in the region? (accessibility)
2. How to develop a comprehensive travel info system or new technologies to be exchanged in the BSR to secure better attractiveness? (new technologies to support attractiveness)
3. How to brand the BSR and its identity? (attractiveness)
4. How to support the multi-modal transportation system development in the BSR? (accessibility / new technologies)
5. How to use modern technologies to make the BSR a better tourist destination? (new technologies).

The second session, chaired by Ms. Ewa Kurjata, mainly concerned internal matters of the Commission. The co-chair covered the CoT competition procedures. The gathering adopted the idea of the competition, its schedule and prizes, as well as jury. The following cities were selected to sit on the jury: Trelleborg, Szczecin, Pärnu, Cēsis and Kaunas. Mr. Zdrojewski also presented the overall budget of the Commission and the action plan for 2009.

- **The UBC Executive Board Meeting, on 13th March 2009 in Jyväskylä, Finland**

On 29 October 2008 in Växjö the Executive Board agreed that the main theme of the X UBC General Conference in Kristiansand would be: “The role of the cities in implementing the new Baltic Sea Strategy”. The Board suggested to hold, within the conference, four thematic workshops which would correspond with the main theme. The workshop “How to make the Baltic Sea Region more accessible and attractive” is one among them. Following Commissions have been appointed as responsible for preparation: Com on Transportation (Gdynia), Com on Urban Planning (Helsinki), Com on Youth Issues (Kalmar), Com on Culture (Vaasa), Com on Sport (Gdynia) and Com on Tourism (Koszalin) – as the workshop Moderator.

During the 54th meeting of the UBC Executive Board in Jyväskylä, Finland, on 13th March – Mr Ryszard Zdrojewski, Chairman, after discussions with Tarja Hautamäki, Chairperson of the Commission on Culture and Sirpa Kallio, Chairperson of the Commission on Urban Planning, presented the concept of the workshop “How to make the Baltic Sea Region more accessible and attractive”. The organisers of the workshop - 6 commissions then worked out a concept of the workshop and prepared an action plan. They had agreed that the presentations should not be too long in order to have time for discussions and formulating the final conclusions, which was going to be published in post-conference report and would be available at the UBC website.

The theme "To make the Baltic Sea Region more accessible and attractive" brings questions: how to do it, by what means, how to measure it, how to finance it. The workshop should try to find answers to these questions.

Before the General Conference the Commissions should discuss the presentations and prepare the draft of final conclusion. (According to the findings of the Liepāja meeting in April, it was stated that each Commission should present the draft and the main points of the presentation via Internet in order to elaborate CoT final position in Kristiansand).

- **The UBC Commission on Tourism competition on the best tourist destination, idea or project developed by the UBC member cities in 2009.**

Taking the initiative to spur the UBC member cities on to activities in the field of sustainable tourism, the UBC Commission on Tourism put on the table a concrete proposal. The UBC CoT wished to fit in with its activities into the UBC's mainstream, namely "How to make the BSR more accessible and attractive". Having said that, the CoT announced the tourist field competition for the Baltic cities in 2009.

The objective was to identify and to promote the best tourist product, destination, event, idea or project developed by the Baltic cities, as well as to promote the Baltic Sea Region as a tourist destination.

The CoT welcomes those projects, ideas, tourist destinations, etc. which in particular :

1. promote the BSR as tourist destination
2. promote UBC as an international NGO
3. strengthen regional links among tourist organisations
4. are innovative in your own area but have wider regional or cross-border impact
5. promote sustainable tourism in the Baltic Sea Region.

The award will be provided from the budget of the Commission. The prizes shall be granted to the first three best applications from the final ranking list. The winner will receive 2,000 Euro and the other 2 best projects will receive 1,500 Euro and 1,000 Euro respectively.

The prizes were agreed upon during the Commission on Tourism meeting related to the competition in Liepāja 2009.

- **"Collection of Good Practices on Sustainable Tourism", within the frame of the project EcoRegion (Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013) led by Greifswald University.**

The EcoRegion project has the ambition to identify practices that might be relevant for potential users of the EcoRegion good practice database. At the end, it will be the user to decide on the relevance of the practice and on whether it actually is a "good" practice or not.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

CoT activities planned for the period of 2010-2011:

1. to keep a rule of two CoT meetings per year; a Spring (working) meeting and an Autumn (annual) meeting;
2. to keep publishing articles and newsletters on sustainable tourism (and other topics) in the UBC bulletins;
3. to create and maintain an Internet service related to the „BSR – the perfect tourism zone” project, and regularly update the CoT 's homepage on the project;
4. to announce a new edition of the competition on tourism in the BSR;
5. to make more effective exchange of experiences in the field of sustainable tourism (case studies, strategies) - to elaborate UBC Member City Marketing Guideline;
6. to help the UBC member cities to take more active part in the Commission's work;
7. to increase the awareness and knowledge of the range of Commission's activity (leaflets, newsletters, etc.);

8. to build and consolidate a network of people working in the field of tourism;
9. to build up/ strengthen the cooperation between various UBC Commissions in gaining the BSR cities' aims;
10. to support the activities, ideas, initiatives aiming at developing tourism awareness;
11. to work together with other member cities on the EU projects concerning the development of tourism and infrastructure of the BSR cities;
12. to continue the accomplishment of former EU projects and ideas and initiate new ones, in particular:
 - Interreg IV B, Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013, to continue co-operation within the project of "Agora 2.0" with other partners (following up the granting of the funds);
 - Interreg IV B, Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013, continuous update, further collection of good practices ("Collection of Good Practices on Sustainable Tourism") within the frame of the "EcoRegion" project;
 - South Baltic Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013, „MeWa - a cross-border network of local airports in the South Baltic area”
 - South Baltic Cross-border Co-operation Programme 2007-2013, Motor/bike guidebook around BSR;

Ryszard Zdrojewski
Chairman of the Commission
City of Koszalin

COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

INITIATIVES OF UBC COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION

GRANT SESSIONS

In the period between October 2007 and September 2009 the Commission on Transportation organised 3 grant competitions:

1. ROAD SAFETY CONTEST

In November 2007 the Commission on Transportation organised a competition entitled "Road Safety Contest" in which three equal prizes of 1,000 euro were awarded. The aim of the competition was to raise children's awareness of road safety issues, to improve knowledge of road signs as well as to improve the ability to foresee dangers on the road and assess difficult situations. Primary schools from the Baltic Sea region participated in the contest. The competition task consisted in presenting the most interesting, complex and original project on road safety education for children aged 7-12.

Three best projects have been sent by primary schools from:

1. Chojnice (Poland) - Primary School No 3 - Road Safety Programme
2. Gdynia (Poland) - Primary School No 21 - Education and prevention project "Live safely"
3. Klaipėda (Lithuania) - Klaipėda's 'Gilijos' Primary School - Project on Road Safety

2. BIKE TO SCHOOL

In October 2008 the Commission on Transportation organised a “Bike to school” grant competition. The objectives of this grant session were to promote bicycle as a means of transport and encourage children to cycle to school, teach safe cycling, reduce traffic congestion and speed in the school area as well as reduce parking problems around schools.

Primary schools from the Baltic Sea region participated in the contest. The competition task included presenting the most complex and original project that encouraged children to cycle to school.

The winners of the competition were:

1. Tallinn (Estonia) – Merivalja School (2000 euro)
2. Gdynia (Poland) – Primary School No. 35 (1000 euro)
3. Kaliningrad (Russia) – Primary School No. 19 (1000 euro)
4. Võru (Estonia) – Võru Kesklinna Gümnaasium (1000 euro)

3. CAR-FREE DAY

In May 2009 the UBC Commission on Transportation announced the Car-Free Day Grant Competition. The world Car-Free Day is held annually on 22nd September. The aim of this competition was to raise awareness of the local communities about transport issues, to encourage as many inhabitants as possible to use alternative modes of transport and to promote sustainable urban mobility. The main winner of the competition was the Town Hall of Słupsk, Poland (2000 euro).

Other 3 best projects were awarded a grant of 1500 euro each:

1. Liepāja City Council, Latvia
2. Gdynia City Hall, Poland
3. Panevėžys City Municipality, Lithuania

EUROPEAN ROAD SAFETY CHARTER

The Commission on Transportation has sent an application form of the UBC to join the European Road Safety Charter. UBC has been accepted as the signatory of the charter. More than 1300 institutions have signed this charter so far. ERSC is an undertaking of Directorate-General for Energy and Transport of the European Commission. The main goal of this Charter is halving the number of traffic fatalities by 2010. The Charter includes 10 general principles referring to road safety prevention measures and a concrete commitment which a signing organisation is obliged to fulfil within the consecutive three years. The commitments could include, for example road safety campaigns, publication of road safety information, provision of driving courses for employees, elaboration of a road safety plan or improvement of the infrastructure etc.

A signatory of the ERSC will have an opportunity to share its best ideas and practices in the road safety field with other institutions all over Europe.

UBC Commitment

Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) will aim to raise awareness of road safety issues and inform its members of the European Road Safety Charter in the Baltic Sea Region. The final aim of these activities will be to raise awareness of all traffic participants: pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. Therefore within 3 years UBC is going to take the following measures:

- Presenting articles on road safety on the UBC Commission on Transportation website as well as in the Baltic Cities Bulletin published by the Union of the Baltic Cities twice a year - circulation 6000 copies.
- Including the presentation of the European Road Safety Charter as well as traffic safety issues in the annual meetings and seminars of the UBC Commission on Transportation and producing road safety leaflets (1000 copies)
- Awarding the best projects on road safety implemented by NGOs or other institutions of UBC member cities by organising two grant competitions: 'Road Safety Contest' and 'Bike to School'. The aim of

these competitions is to raise children's awareness of road safety issues, improving knowledge of road signs, improving the ability to foresee dangers on the road and assess difficult situations as well as improving the children knowledge about the rules of safe cycling on the streets.

UBC COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION WEBSITE

The Commission's website is constantly updated. It contains all relevant information concerning transport issues. The website serves as a source of information which includes links to international organisations dealing with transport. The website provides its visitors with automatically updated EU transport news from EurActiv portal.

SUPPORT OF TRANSPORT-RELATED PROJECTS

The Commission on Transportation has supported institutions preparing transport-related projects by signing the letters of support: 1) ABC project – aiming to increase the role of bicycles in the transport modal split, 2) CARMA – aiming to develop concepts for raising the image of cycling. The Commission has also cooperated in organisation of the preparatory workshop (PRIMULA project).

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

In the coming years 2010-2011 Commission on Transportation will deal with transport-related issues connected with public transport, cycling, mobility management as well as with the road safety. The planned activities include:

- presenting articles on road safety on the Commission on Transportation website as well as in the Baltic Cities Bulletin,
- including the presentation of the European Road Safety Charter as well as traffic safety issues in the annual meetings or seminars of the Commission on Transportation,
- awarding the best projects on road safety implemented by NGOs or other institutions of UBC member cities by organising two grant competitions: 'Road Safety Contest' and 'Bike to School',
- assistance with preparation and realisation of projects on sustainable transport, which have asked for support:
 - 1) CARMA project prepared by the Traffic and Public Transport Authority in Göteborg within the Intelligent Energy programme STEER (co-organisation of one seminar on marketing and promotion of cycling),
 - 2) Sustainable Travel and Transports with Mobility Management in South Baltic Region prepared by the Energy Agency for Southeast Sweden (co-organisation of one of the workshops),
- assistance with preparation and realisation of projects on sustainable transport, which will ask for support in the years 2010-2011
- organisation of a grant competition concerning transport issues,
- assisting cities (practical and knowledge transfer) with organising transport-related events,
- updating the website of the TransCom as an information source for the Commission members,
- organisation of the Annual Meeting of the Commission on Transportation,
- co-operation with UBC Commissions on Environment and Tourism.

Zygmunt Zmuda-Trzebiatowski
Chairman of the Commission
City of Gdynia

COMMISSION ON URBAN PLANNING

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

The Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) Commission on Urban Planning (CUP) started its work in 1999. During the followed years the CUP has built a network of urban planners coming from a large number of cities around the Baltic Sea.

The main activities of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning (CUP) during the period between September 2007 and September 2009 have concentrated on continuation and strengthening the cooperation within the Commission's network and organising two annual seminars.

COMMISSION ON URBAN PLANNING SEMINARS 2007-2009

The Kotka Seminar October 3rd-6th, 2007

The Commission on Urban Planning had a seminar and annual meeting in Kotka between October 3rd and 6th, 2007. The seminar theme was City Identity and the theme was approached from different points of view by lectures by researchers from the Helsinki University of Technology. The lectures were about city identity building and branding and about cities inhabitants' experiences of good urban life. Again it was stated that a city's image and atmosphere is made by its inhabitants while planners' and administration's task is to create opportunities for urban life and culture.

The seminar participants had a chance to get acquainted with City of Kotka as a maritime city with rich culture of forestry, paper mills, harbour life and international connections. An impressive experience was a visit to Sunila paper mill and housing area designed by famous architect Alvar Aalto in the 1930's. Kotka was also seen as a city of parks and green nature, where the presence of the sea can be felt everywhere.

The seminar workshops had two themes, one about developing the original Kotka Port to the Harbour of Culture, and another about developing a suburban area Karhula and its neighbouring commercial area Jumalniemi. Four different workgroups worked intensively with these questions producing good proposals for future planning. Our hosts, the city planners of Kotka, were happy with the results of the workshops and said they got plenty of good new ideas for future development of their strategically important planning projects. The seminar participants especially appreciated the excellent organisation of the seminar and hospitality of the host city Kotka.

The annual meeting of the CUP focused on future activities of the Commission. The Commission aimed to apply for financing for a project about Sustainable and Attractive Cities and was seeking interested cities to become project partners.

The Aarhus seminar April 23rd – 26th, 2008

The seminar theme in Aarhus was Future City Life. The theme was connected to the current overall theme of the CUP, namely "Sustainable and Attractive Cities" and an ongoing discussion of the development of ideals and visions for sustainable and attractive cities as an overall theme, with a special focus on how to create good living environments.

During the seminar there were interesting lectures by Danish urban planners and architects. Also, the seminar participants had a chance to get to know current urban development projects of Aarhus during a good and educational sightseeing around the city. One of the projects we learned about is the ongoing relocation of the industrial harbour to a new location and the transformation of the former harbour area into a new urban quarter with housing, educational institutions and other city functions. Very interesting

was also the city's effort to transform one of the country's largest social housing estates Gellerup from a problematic "ghetto" to an attractive modern neighbourhood with lots to offer its' own multi-cultural inhabitants as well as the citizens from other parts of Aarhus.

During the seminar there were workshops about current urban planning problems in Aarhus, in the former freight railway station area "Godsbanen" and in the Midtkraft, a part of the industrial harbour area which used to house the power plant of Aarhus but now hosts many film and modern media companies.

The Turku seminar October 24th-27th, 2008

The Turku seminar combined urban planning and culture under the theme "Cultural Planning – Urban DNA". Turku will be the European Capital of Culture in 2011 together with Tallinn, and the seminar participants were told how the city is preparing itself for this big task.

The Turku seminar was the 10th Anniversary seminar of the Commission on Urban Planning. The first seminar was in Malmo in October 1998 during a heavy storm, but this time even the sunny and warm autumn weather highlighted the seminar. Also the seminar workshops were a little different than usually. They consisted of getting to know the city with excursions and of analysing the different features of our host town. Turku was seen as a city of contrasts: old and new, low and high, urban and close to nature. The conclusion of the workshops was that these contrasts could be the city's strong points also for the Cultural Capital project, and the attractiveness of the city could be emphasised with rather small tricks: removing cars from the market square in the city centre, increasing the recreational use of the river Aura and using the old university town's "sleeping resource", namely students, to bring new urban life to the city.

The Gdańsk seminar April 2nd- 4th, 2009

The Gdańsk seminar theme "Baltic Towers – Contribution to the City and the Community" is a burning question around the Baltic Sea Region, as many cities are trying to find their identity and at the same time find ways to accommodate future growth and avoid further urban sprawl. One possibility is efficient and dense development and redevelopment in the inner city. High rise buildings may be a solution, but a complex one, as they also evoke difficult questions about transformation of landscape, design, safety, transport and car parking as well as physical, social, economic and environmental impacts. A demand for high rise buildings is also connected to global economy – the higher the stock exchange rates are, the stronger is the demand on high rise buildings.

In this seminar the Commission on Urban Planning tried a new method of approaching the theme by sending a questionnaire to the members of the UBC network, and although the number of answers was limited, the answers were interesting. It is clear that high rise buildings are a "hot" issue in many bigger cities, but the approach to the question varies a lot from eagerness to carefulness.

During the seminar there were once again very interesting presentations about high rise buildings, how they fit in their environment and how different are the policies of urban planning in the Baltic Cities. We saw and heard controversial examples from Aarhus, Rostock, Malmö, Gdynia, Riga, Tallinn and Helsinki. On the first day also local inhabitants expressed their thoughts about high rise buildings with opinions alike every city with high rise plans.

Like the Commission on Urban Planning seminars always, also in Gdańsk an essential part of the seminar was workshops about a concrete plan to build high rise buildings in Wrzeszcz, a vivid but somewhat confusing commercial centre close to the centre of Gdańsk. The Gdańsk Development Agency got many new ideas and perspectives to continue its work on developing this area from the workshops' results.

The Linköping seminar September 9th -12th, 2009

The Linköping seminar was already the 20th seminar of the Commission on Urban Planning. The seminar theme was Sustainable Urban Growth, a subject that is of great importance to all urban planners everywhere. It involved social, economic and environmental aspects. The seminar theme was reflected in the lectures and in the workshops. The Linköping City Planning Department had invited to the seminar several interesting lecturers who are experts in the field of sustainable development. There were presentations about sustainable green cities and on sustainable transport systems. The seminar programme included examples of sustainable urban planning in practice, namely Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm and Viikki in Helsinki. Also, Linköping planners described their work aimed at making the city more compact and densely built. It was also interesting to get to know how new development areas are being planned to get optimal effect from rapid and frequent public transport routes, and how cycling is promoted in these new areas in Linköping.

Both the seminar workshops concentrated on the question of how Linköping can be built more densely and compact in a sustainable and attractive way. One of the workshops created a vision of how to link up the present city centre on the west side of the river Stångån with a new area for city centre extension on the east side of the river. The other workshop posed the question of how to physically connect the University to a housing district which is isolated from the University and from the rest of the city. The annual meeting theme was the coming UBC General Conference and the commission's contribution to the question of how to make the Baltic Sea region more attractive and accessible.

Other CUP Projects in 2007-2009

Visual Cities was a project run by Mr Lars-Goran Boström from Umeå, Sweden. The project aimed to find new methods of presenting urban plans to the public by using 3D-visualizing computer programmes and the internet. There were approx. 10 partner cities in the project. The Visual Cities Project enabled urban planners around the Baltic Sea Region - and possibly even further - to present their ideas in an easy-to-understand way and wake conversation with city inhabitants.

The Steering Committee of the Commission on Urban Planning worked hard during winter 2007 -2008 for applying financing for the Visual Cities and the Sustainable and Attractive Cities projects. The different URBACT programmes were studied and an application for URBACT was written, but due to rules about leading partners and participating cities of the URBACT programme, the URBACT application failed. Also, new Interreg BSR financing programmes were studied, and finally in spring 2008 the Commission on Urban Planning formed a project application to the Interreg BSR combining the Visual Cities and the Sustainable and Attractive Cities working packages. The main goals in the Visual Cities Project were to create methods and strategies for sustainable management of 3D GIS data, visualization of the planning process and creating a planning platform, giving sustainable and attractive BSR cities good quality of life. Unfortunately also the Interreg application failed.

Changes in the CUP Steering Committee

Some changes in the CUP Steering Committee were announced in the Aarhus seminar in April 2008. Gvido Princis from Riga, Jonas Jakaitis from Vilnius and Gunilla Kronvall from Malmö resigned from the membership of the Steering Committee due to getting ahead on their careers. Instead, Mrs Mara Liepa-Zemesa from Riga joined the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee of the Commission on Urban Planning has altogether 5 members: Mrs Mara Liepa-Zemesa from Riga, Mr Marek Karzyński from Gdynia, Mr Niels-Peter Mohr from Aarhus, Mr Lars-Goran Boström from Umea and Mrs Sirpa Kallio from Helsinki as the chairman of the Commission. During the report season the CUP Steering Committee has had meetings planning the coming seminars in Aarhus, Gdańsk and Linköping and a number of telephone meetings.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

Seminars in 2010

The Commission on Urban Planning will have its next seminar and annual meeting in Tampere, Finland, in April 2010. In Tampere the seminar theme is connected to the development of old industrial areas in the inner city. The aim of the Commission on Urban Planning is to continue sharing information and experiences of important urban planning issues. With high standard lectures the members of the CUP network have a chance to study different themes in an open-minded atmosphere together with colleagues around the Baltic Sea.

“Sustainable and Attractive Baltic Cities”

In the coming years, the goal of the Commission will be to increase the capability for us as urban planners to find ways and methods that can promote a development towards sustainable cities and also at the same time to develop them as attractive cities. The goal is approached from different aspects:

- Create attractive cities and regions through sustainability.
- Define the elements of sustainability in the context of urban planning. (Economical, Ecological and Social sustainability)
- Develop the ways urban planners are working with sustainability in urban planning.
- Evaluate the situation of today for the partner cities and find out what is needed in that specific city to be “sustainable and attractive”

It seems that there still is not enough knowledge among the UBC planners what “sustainable development” really is, and there is a wide spread in the opinions of what it could be. The Commission on Urban Planning will therefore keep on with the task of increasing the knowledge level and the professional skills among the UBC CUP group within the field of sustainable urban development. The methods to be used are combinations of following elements of activities:

- Lectures on “burning questions of today” from well qualified persons – ”the best ones”
- Presentations of “Best practice examples” in the field of sustainable urban development.
- Workshops, dealing with qualified planning situations.
- The lectures and examples will deal with all three dimensions of sustainability: Economy, Ecology and Social factors.

Possible future seminar themes

- Democratic planning processes for sustainable city development
- Using new tools for Visualisation, like Google Earth or/and Microsoft Virtual as examples of modern tools for public participation
- How to put the citizens in focus – “Europe for Citizens”
- How to create attractiveness through sustainability
- What are the elements (factors) of attractiveness for a city
- Quality of life – what requirements for that can be made possible by urban planning, and how
- Social aspects on urban planning
 - o Integration
 - o Segregation
 - o Safety and security in public space – and in other parts of the society
- Making new attractive sustainable areas out of brown field areas
- Sustainability as a way to attractiveness and competitiveness for cities
- The effects on/from climate change
- Economic sustainability in city (urban) planning - how will that influence planning results and processes.

It is possible for the Commission to also have additional partners of other kind than only the UBC cities. These could be Universities, national institutions, other European cities etc. It is important that the partners in future projects are actively participating because of joint interests, not only because they are members of a certain organisation, like UBC.

Among the CUP cities a clear interest to continue the cooperation and also to develop it further has been expressed. New partners to the cooperation are also of interest and welcome.

Sirpa Kallio
Chairperson of the Commission
City of Helsinki

COMMISSION ON YOUTH ISSUES

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2009

Organizational change within the Commission on Youth Issues.

From January 1st 2008, city of Kalmar has handed over the chair of the Commission on Youth Issues to the city of Tallinn. The new chair person for the Commission is Kaia Jäppinen who is the deputy mayor of Tallinn. The vice chair of the Commission is held by Birgitta Elfström who is the deputy mayor of Kalmar. The secretariat and administration of the Commission are still located in the city of Kalmar. Since city of Tallinn took over the chair of the Commission, the youth representatives within the Commission have also changed. The youth representatives are members of the Commission for two years then the city elects new youth representatives.

Commission meetings during the period October 2007 – September 2009.

Commission meeting in city of Tallinn 12-14 May 2008.

30 people from 12 different cities attended the open Commission meeting in Tallinn, Estonia. The new chairmen of the Commission, Kaia Jäppinen opened the meeting. The focus of the meeting was the future of the Commission and how the Commission could become a better platform for future development of new projects. During the meeting all participants got the opportunity to present their local youth policies and youth work.

During the first part of the meeting participants also got the chance to get some more information about the background and history of the Commission since 1997. This information was presented by the former chairman Charlotte Gustafsson. The participants also got a report from the youth conference in Pärnu and the outcome of the conference “Book of Possibilities”. During the first part of the meeting, information about the progress of the project “Different History – Common Future” was also given.

Commission meeting in city of Kristiansand 15-17 September 2008.

The Commission held its second meeting in the city of Kristiansand and it was a closed meeting for the core group of the Commission. During the meeting about 15 people took part and the main focus was the upcoming new youth conference in September 2009. The aim was also to meet with different youth representatives from Kristiansand to find a way for cooperation during the youth conference 2009, and with representatives from the Commission on Health and Social Affairs on same purpose.

Common commission meeting in city of Kalmar with Commission on Gender and Commission on Health and Social Affairs 23-24 April 2009

In April 2009 the Commission on Gender held an open Commission meeting in the city of Kalmar. During the meeting representatives from Commission on Youth Issues and Commission on Health and

Social Affairs also took part. The purpose of the meeting was to give information about the activities within the different commissions and also to talk about possibilities of cooperation in the future. During the meeting around 10 people from 5 different countries took part.

Commission meeting in city of Riga 14-15 April 2009

The Commission meeting in Riga was an open Commission meeting. There were 30 people from 12 different cities participating. The first day of the meeting had two different parts, during first part each city got the opportunity to present their youth information and counseling work connected to EVS (European Voluntary Service) and the second part was an open idea market and partner search. During the second part of the meeting a lot of new and good ideas for new projects came up and some connections were made. The second day of the meeting focused on EVS and how we can develop different information sources on it – info stands were made during the group work, which can be used in every city.

Activities done in cooperation with EU project “Different History – Common Future”

The common EU project that was initiated within the Commission has now reached its final year. During the first 2 years of the project we have carried out tolerance trips, NGO meetings and EVS seminars. During the first part of the project we have also organized one big youth conference with around 120 participants. The conference was done in cooperation with the UBC general conference.

European Voluntary Service (EVS) promotion seminar in city of Tallinn 14-15 May 2008.

In connection with the open Commission meeting that took place in city of Tallinn there was also an EVS seminar organized within the EU project “Different History Common Future”. The focus of the seminar was on benefits for local organizations that are hosting volunteers. During the seminar the participants got the opportunity to hear about experiences from former volunteers as well as from current volunteers. During the seminar the city of Kalmar presented their experiences on hosting volunteers within the municipal organization and what benefits there are for the city and for the local youth.

Tolerance trip into the Danish-German border region 8-12 October 2008

Between the 8th and the 12th of October the Commission on Youth Issues in cooperation with the EU project “Different History – Common Future” carried out its, cultural diversity and tolerance with local minority groups.

NGO seminar in the city of Kolding 29th October – 1st November 2008

Between the 29th of October and 1st of November the Commission on Youth Issues together with the EU project “Different History – Common Future” arranged NGO meeting in the city of Kolding, Denmark. During the meeting there were two different themes discussed - “outdoor activity for youth” and “how to work with prevention of sexual diseases” among young people. There were 16 NGO's and organizations participating and sharing ideas and working methods.

NGO tolerance trip 22-25 April 2009

Between the 22nd until the 25th of April the Commission on Youth Issues in cooperation with the EU project “Different History – Common Future” carried out its third tolerance trip. The target group for the tolerance trip was NGO's working with integration and minority questions on local level. During the trip 26 people from different organizations took part. During the trip the group got the opportunity to experience and meet different minority groups and listen to their situation today on the Danish – German border. The group also discussed questions such as historical influences, cultural diversity and tolerance with different minority groups.

Youth Conference “Bridges over the Sea” in Kristiansand Norway 22-25 September 2009

In September 2009 it is time for the fourth youth conference to take place in the city of Kristiansand. The interest for the conference has been big and there will be over 150 people participating. The focus of the conference is the Baltic Sea Strategy from a youth perspective. The conference will be divided

into seven different workshops that among other things will focus on Baltic Sea environment, attractive region, accessible region and tolerance theme.

European voluntary service (EVS) volunteer at the secretariat in the city of Kalmar

In June 2008 the Commission on Youth Issues secretariat in Kalmar sent in a new application for hosting a new EVS-volunteer (financed by the EU European Voluntary Service programme) at the secretariat in Kalmar. In February 2009 Heili Johanson from city of Tallinn came to Kalmar to support and help the secretariat with the Commission work and with the planning of the upcoming youth conference. Having a volunteer within the organization is very useful. It helps us see things from new perspective and it helps us to find new ways of working, not to mention all technical help. Heili will stay in Kalmar until November 2009.

Information spreading

Commission on Youth Issues has renewed its web-page during summer 2009, look at www.ubc-youth.org and is issuing newsletter twice a year starting from 2009.

ACTION PLAN 2010 - 2011

- Open Commission meetings will continue twice a year focusing every time on one area of the youth work, cities will present their practices and suggestions or conclusions made will be as outcome presented later on the web-page.
- New projects will be started during this period – one focusing on camping and training activities for youth and youth workers and another focusing on introducing youth opinions in Baltic Sea Region gathered during the conferences, promoting dialogue between youth and decision makers and at the same time introducing Commission work and youth work in Baltic Sea Region in general.
- Communication with the cities: newsletters and up to date web page.
- Joint competitions for young people in partner cities in different areas (photo, literature etc).
- Search for the new vice chair for the Commission.
- Moving secretariat of the Commission from Kalmar to Tallinn.

Kaia Jäppinen
Chairperson of the Commission
City of Tallinn