

**ACTIVITY REPORT**  
**CULTURAL CITIES COMMISSION (CCC) / RŪTA STEPANOVAITĒ**  
**2018-2019**

**1. General description**

Chair from April 2018 Rūta Stepanovaitė, Kaunas (LT)

Former Chairman October 2017-April 2018 Gediminas Banaitis, Kaunas (LT)

Vice Chairman Radosław Krajewicz, Chojnice (PL)

Steering Committee: Rūta Stepanovaitė (LT), Külli Hansen (EE), Jaana Simula (FI), Czesław Zdrojewski (PL), Radosław Krajewicz (PL), Iveta Ķelpe (LV).

Members of the Commission: 54 representatives from 10 countries.

**Aims & Goals**

The Commission aims to work strategically and across borders with central national and international bodies dealing with policy making for sustainable and inclusive development within the Baltic Sea strategy and EU 2020 strategy. The Cultural Cities Commission intends to be voice for culture on a local level in order to have cultural matters addressed and taken into account on a local level in all policies for local level development in a regional, national and international context.

**In order to realize this vision four objectives have been developed:**

1. Network-based cultural cooperation;
2. Professionalization of the cultural field;
3. Strategic partnerships;
4. Research.

## **2. Activity 2018-2019**

### **New management:**

Since the beginning of the year Chairs of the Commission have changed twice. The former Chairman Gediminas Banaitis (Kaunas City Municipality Division of Culture) was replaced by Rūta Stepanovaitė (Kaunas City Municipality Budget Office Kaunas Artists' House). The Vice Chairman Radosław Krajewicz will assume the position afterwards.

In April/May the CCC formed a Steering Committee. Currently the Committee is composed of 6 members/cities' representatives from Lithuania, Estonia, Finland and Poland. The Committee is open to new members (up to 2 vacancies).

*By the end of 2018 the Steering Committee will have been formed completely and proceed to working actively and consistently.*

### **Meetings:**

1 meeting of Chair and Vice Chairman was held in Kaunas, Lithuania in May. The current situation, possibilities and challenges, together with further activities of the Commission were discussed. Both Chair and Vice Chairman attended the international European Capital of Culture Forum.

2 online conferences of the new Steering Committee were held in May. The work agenda was based on discussing further possible direction of activities of the CCC.

Kaunas hosted 1 meeting of Lithuanian member cities of UBC: Palanga, Tauragė, Panevėžys and Gargždai (Klaipėda district municipality). The meeting was held by the Vice-president of UBC and Kaunas City Councillor Mantas Jurgutis together with the Deputy Head of Foreign Relations Division of Kaunas City Municipal Administration Lina Duobaitė. During the event, the new Chair of

the UBC Cultural Cities Commission was introduced. Moreover, the collaboration, coordination, knowledge development strategies between partner cities were discussed.

By the end of 2018, the CCC members of a Steering Committee would gather for the meeting. The meeting would be a smaller scale event replacing an annual the CCC meeting.

*In 2019 at least 1 live meeting of the Steering Committee should be held and at least up to 9 online conferences should be organized. The annual meeting of the CCC should be started to plan as early as possible. Further meetings should be held with an aim to provide the attendees with specific professional skills, also to encourage certain and tangible cooperation between the members of the Commission.*

**Communication:**

In order to know the needs of current members of the Commission, a questionnaire has been prepared. The survey was conducted between May and August 2018. About 20% of the members answered the questions. The same survey should be repeated and accomplished by the end of the year. In order to foster better cooperation, the information gathered through the questionnaire will be made accessible online to all members of the CCC.

The Commission has proceeded managing the CCC Facebook platform during the year (<https://www.facebook.com/ubcccc/>). Since the beginning of the year, the number of followers increased by 24%, although the total number remains rather small.

*In 2019 the activities of the CCC should be based more on the actual needs of the members. The Facebook platform should be advertised more and gain up to 300% followers during the year. A consistent communication strategy should be developed. In order to maintain regular communication between the Steering Committee members and the members of the Commission, a*

*monthly newsletter should be prepared. This could serve as a platform to member cities to exchange the information about their activities and the activities of the Commission.*

**Cooperation:**

The cooperation of the Commission with strategic partner ARS BALTICA has been established through collaborating in the “ARS BALTICA Creative Dialogue (ABCD)” project. This is a two-year (2017-2019) project with activities being set in 10 different cities of the BSR. The closest event will take place on 7 November, 2018 at Kaunas Artists’ House.

The ABCD intends to gather creative and cultural practitioners, provide space for discussion in an open environment and create synergies for and with the participating partners. The format intends to highlight crosssectorial links and allow policy-makers to follow the debates and share their perspectives on the impact of culture and cultural practice. The underlying understanding is that culture is an essential driver for sustainability. The main ambition is to contribute actively to the integration of the cultural landscape into the Baltic Sea Region by bringing innovative cultural players together and establish a forum for continuous exchange.

*The activities of the ABCD project will continue actively in 2019.*