

## **ACTIVITY REPORT**

### **YOUTHFUL CITIES COMMISSION**

**November 2021 – October 2023**

#### **1. General description**

Chair: Dmitrijs Zverevs, Riga (LV)

Vice-chair: Aistė Valadkienė, Klaipėda (LT)

Secretariat: Education, Culture and Sports Department of Riga City Council (K.Valdemara Street 5, Riga, LV-1010, Latvia)

The Commission strives to be a platform for experience exchange and cooperation between the cities and professionals on quality youth work and youth participation.

#### **2. Meetings/seminars/conferences**

##### ***In-person meeting in Riga, 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022***

Number of participants: 16 participants (civil servants and young people)

Since it was the first in-person meeting of the Commission since break-out of Covid in 2020, it was largely dedicated to discussions about future of the Commission (based on the outcomes series of online workshops held in 2020 and 2021). In addition, participants explored wide range of youth work practice examples. Among those, Klaipėda – European Youth Capital 2021 and community youth work in Riga.

##### ***Online meeting, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022***

Number of participants: 8 (civil servants)

During the online meeting one of the ideas created in May was elaborated and the concept of Youthful Cities Commission's thematic clusters was finalised. Elections for the vacation position of the vice-chair was held and the city of Klaipėda was elected.

##### ***Online Commission's promo event, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023***

Number of participants: 23 (civil servants and youth workers)

The aim of the promo event was to inform UBC member cities currently not involved in the work of the Commission about the priorities of the Commission, its projects and to introduce the concept of the thematic clusters.

##### ***Kick-off meetings of the thematic clusters, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023***

Number of participants: 12 (civil servants and youth workers)

Three thematic clusters have been set: "Youth Participation", "Youth Spaces" and "International Youth Work".

The clusters were meant to grow into platforms for cooperation on regular basis for youth workers and policy officers interested in specific areas of youth work and youth-related policies. Their key instruments would be exchange of experience and joint projects.

The clusters didn't attract expected number of interested practitioners, so they will be re-launched in autumn 2023.

***Informal meeting in Klaipeda (hybrid), 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023***

Number of participants: 9 (civil servants)

In spring 2023 UBC cities from 4 BSR countries submitted an Erasmus+ application to have a youth conference back-to-back with the UBC General Conference in Palanga. The meeting brought together the project partners and other interested parties to discuss the preparation process for the conference. The launch of the thematic clusters and lessons learned were also discussed.

***Partnership building events for Erasmus+ calls, 1<sup>st</sup> February & 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022***

Number of participants: 30+ (civil servants, youth workers and youth leaders)

Since several cities involved in the Commission had previously shared about their challenges to find partners for implementation of international projects in the youth field, the Commission organised 2 online partnership building events where stakeholder could meet, discuss their project ideas and find partners for joint applications. Since events were open also for NGOs, several unlikely partnerships started as a result (initiated projects continued without further involvement of the Commission).

### **3. Projects**

***Baltic Sea Youth Platform (February 2020 – December 2022)***

The project jointly developed by UBC, Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC), Euroregion Baltic and a range of youth organisations improve the political impact of youth on Baltic Sea policymaking and develop tools for better knowledge transfer.

It is partly thanks to this project that young people are now an integral part of EUSBR Annual Forum and several other high-level events in the region.

One of the legacies of the project – Baltic Sea Youth Forum – a participatory structure under the supervision of CBSS that ensures representation of the voice of the youth of the region at the top-level political events of the BSR.

Commission has also supported implementation of the following projects in which the member cities are official partners:

***(RE)PRESENT (September 2020 – January 2023)***

This Erasmus+ project brought together youth workers, pedagogical staff and civil servants from Kolding, Kiel and Riga for an intense training on youth participation. The project particularly focused on ways and tools for meaningful involvement of less active and marginalised youth in different settings (school, community, city, country).

***Youthful Baltic (July 2023 – December 2023)***

The project led by the city of Palanga will bring together young people from 4 UBC countries to discuss problems that are on the agenda of this year's UBC General Conference.

Young people will discuss among themselves and later share their thoughts and concerns on the topics with cities' officials during the General Conference.

### **4. Cooperation with other organisations**

During the last 2 years, cooperation with CBSS Secretariat has outgrown the format of separate projects and has developed into a regular exchange of information and promotion of opportunities for participation

of young people. It has been the case also during the preparations for the EUSBR Annual Forum 2023 to be held in Riga.

## **5. Other activities**

During these two years, the Commission has worked closely with Brussels Antenna of the UBC. This cooperation has given us an opportunity to share with the involved cities information about funding and participation opportunities. We have worked closely on development of some of the projects (for example, YUPAD (focused on participatory budgets) which results will be presented during the General Conference).

With the support of the Antenna, the Commission was involved in UBC-hosted workshop at EU Macro-Regional Strategy Week 2022 and shared on youth participation frameworks and opportunities in the BSR.

Youthful Cities Commission is also proud to be involved in the Advisory Board of the Learning Cities Commission which gives a lot of opportunities for creation of synergies between the Commissions.

Dmitrijs Zverevs  
Chairman, UBC Youthful Cities Commission