



To UBC Member Cities

**SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF UBC STRATEGY 2010 – 2015**

Dear friends,

The UBC Executive Board discussed in Tallinn the implementation of the Strategy 2010-2015, adopted in Kristiansand. Members of the Board stressed the need to take speedy measures on this key issue.

Therefore, concrete measures linked to Strategy implementation should be extensively discussed and decided – on basis good preparation - in the forthcoming UBC Executive Board to be held in Lahti, Finland on 11 March 2011.

However, several processes can be started without further delay. Some of these depend on the action by the President, the General Secretariat, Commissions or others who have been assigned different tasks.

Some key tasks of the Strategy require, however, from the very beginning active participation by representatives of the member cities. With this communication, we seek for your contribution in following two tasks:

**A: Promoting expert exchanges between member cities**

Member cities of UBC have a great wealth of best practices and workable solutions to problems in all sectors of city work. By introducing colleagues from different member cities to each others and by organising a platform for a more systematic exchange programme between cities could be a very practical and tangible contribution of UBC network to its member cities development and to the cooperation and cohesion in Baltic Sea Region.

The Kristiansand Congress requested the Executive Board to prepare, in close cooperation with the Commissions, to work out concrete plan for such a city expert programme between UBC member cities, including a practical mechanism for its implementation, either internally or in cooperation with some other organisation. The medium to long-term goal should be a broadly-based, extensive exchange programme of experts in various activity sectors between member cities.

The first task is to collect experiences from cities which have been implementing such exchanges. Among these is the City of Jyväskylä, which has promised to report on their practices in the field of expert exchange between cities.

We need now views and proposals of as many member cities as possible to work out a functional and practical system of exchange.

Also, there is a need to set up a task force to prepare such an expert exchange system. It should be comprised of representatives nominated by member cities and chaired by a person nominated by the President.



### **Questions and request to member cities:**

- Have you practiced expert exchange between your city and other cities? With which cities, when and how many persons have participated? How long have the experts stayed in the other city?
- How has it been organised and funded? Do you have funds for such activity in city budget? How have the costs been shared between sending and receiving city? Has the person herself/himself paid any part of the costs?
- Have you been seeking/receiving external funding for these exchanges? From which sources?
- What have been your experiences? Biggest problems?
- Do you have proposals about how to organise an exchange programme between UBC member cities?

And finally:

- Is your city ready to nominate a person into a task force to prepare this issue? Please send her/his contact information. The task force could start its work in the beginning of 2011 by exchange of e-mails, maybe a videoconference and could meet for example in connection of the Lahti Executive Board 11 March 2011.

### **B: Raising of public profile and visibility of UBC – Communications and Marketing Strategy**

UBC is still relatively little known both among cities, decision makers, and especially among the general public. This despite its successful activities since 1991. We have to improve our communication and marketing both within the region, in Brussels as well as in the wider world.

The General Conference decided that a new Communication and Marketing strategy shall be prepared. It shall evaluate current practices, define target audiences internally and externally and take into account possibilities offered by internet and the new electronic and social media, cooperation with member cities and other partners, possible high-profile events and initiatives etc.

A task force consisting of communication and marketing specialists of member cities and maybe of some professional media professionals should be created to work out a draft proposal for this new Strategy.

### **Request to member cities:**

- Please nominate a media/marketing professional who would be your city's representative in a task force to prepare the new UBC Communications and Marketing strategy.
- Send suggestions and proposals about how to improve UBC's visibility internally in cities, within the region and in the wider world.



The President will be asked to nominate the chairperson of the Task Force, which should start its work as soon as possible first by e-mail exchanges and then meet in the context of the Lahti Board meeting 11 March 2011.

A media/communications specialist could be invited as a resource person/rapporteur of the Task force. If you have a proposal about such a person/company, please send your suggestions!

Dear friends,

The real test of any strategy lies in its implementation. UBC has achieved a lot, and can in the future achieve even more – for the benefit of its members and the whole region.

Participation of member cities has always been the strength of UBC. We have now to take joint action to implement the Strategy we have adopted in Kristiansand.

I do hope that you all give some time and attention to these questions and send your response to the Secretary General at your earliest convenience so we can move on with practical work.

Yours sincerely,

01.12.2010 in Turku, the European Capital of Culture 2011

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