

## **Minutes**

### **Agenda of the meeting**

- Summary of the Questionnaire about the UBC Youthful Cities Commission
- Discussion about 4 aspects of the future of the Commission
  - o aims
  - o content / topics
  - o structure / organization of work
  - o communication

### **Summary of the discussion**

#### Aims

- One of the concerns: maybe cities are too small of an entity because they tend to be too locally focused (maybe we should be speaking about clusters of cities (whatever shift of the agenda it brings))
- Another concerns to respond to: many cities are now looking more into themselves and not as much externally, as they used to (because they are now facing different challenges that need to be addressed first)
- Young people should have a path to influence more European level. The YCC could be a channel because “youth participation” has always been a key word for the UBC
- The approach should move from political goals (addressing cities of the UBC) towards a more youth workers’-centered approach (and foster their cooperation between each other).
- It should not be the Commission that organizes projects. Instead, it should be the involved cities that run bi-, tri- and multilateral projects themselves (with the support of the commission at different stages). In order to achieve that, we can incorporate project idea generation and partner search sessions in the agenda of Commission’s meeting.
- One of the objectives could be looking at the agendas of other commissions and checking if issues they work with need to be consulted with young people. Building up on other commissions’ results in youth-related areas (for example, Safe Cities Commission’s project “Youth for Safer Youth”) together could be a way to work more efficiently.
- The Commission’s contact persons in the cities are often those directly involved in work with young people. It might be useful to have officials of higher administrative position (in the municipalities) to be involved.

### Content

- We can set a list of areas/topics in the action plan, yet we need to stay open for the opportunities that arise (for example, cooperation offers from external partners)
- The topics identified in 2005 and 2010 are still relevant (some of them more than the others). All topics mentioned in the questionnaire are equally important
- For obvious reasons we need to focus on digital youth work more than on physical now. How the cities are working during the pandemics is a topic for another exchange
- Youth participation is a tool, so it should be remembered at any time (regardless of what topic we are working on).

### Structure / organization of work

- Having more youth exchanges (as a regular practice) because that's really a way how you can have young people involved and maybe have an impact back locally
- There can be local events for young people addressing topics from the agenda of the Commission. Then there can be virtual events to discuss the results and future steps
- The draft guidelines of the new Erasmus program offer a new type of strategic projects that allow the partners to be pre-approved for all the upcoming exchanges. The Commission should look into it as one of the directions for further work.
- Development of Baltic Sea Youth Platform is in no way a threat to the Commission's work, as this work has always had a local focus. The platform is just another layer of information.
- Different from other commissions, YCC doesn't have a permanent secretariat in one of the cities. Therefore activities in the Commission fluctuate a lot, as we are overtaken by our direct duties. So, probably, instead of looking for a vice chair, we need to be looking for a city that has substantial resources to host a permanent secretariat for the Commission for the next 3 to 5 years (Erasmus+ solely won't provide sufficient funding for it).
- Having a permanent secretariat is crucial, if we plan to apply for strategic / long-term projects.

### Communication

- The Commission needs to find a way how to communicate (to the cities) the added value of young people's participation in the activities of the Commission (if it's just a couple of young people from the city a year)
- More attention should be paid to promotion of the Commission and its work (also among young people and, in particular, on social media)

- Experience stories from the involved cities could be one of the ways how to promote the Commission (for example, having thematic weeks dedicated to specific cities on Commission's social media)
- Young people (in a broader sense) are probably not the target group for the Commission's communication at this moment. Communication to the local young people could and should be done by involved youth worker from the cities. On the other hand, local youth councils and youth organizations can be reached out to (initially through experience exchange about what youth councils are doing in other countries, for example).
- The Commission will need to share all its events on the Baltic Sea Youth Platform in order to broaden young people's opportunities to interact with us and for us to learn something from them. We will need to figure out how to disseminate information in order for it not to circulate parallel.
- Another aspect is how to ensure that all UBC member cities are a part of the virtual Baltic Sea Youth Platform (in order that we collect all the things are going on in the region).

## **Next steps**

The participants of the meeting agreed that it is just a start of the discussion. The opinions mentioned above, even though shared by the participants of the meeting, haven't in any specific way been approved through any formal procedure (yet).

The next meeting is to be held online on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. It will focus mostly on external operations of YCC (youth representation in other UBC structures, partnerships etc.).

The conclusions of the questionnaire and both workshops will be presented to the Executive Board of the UBC during the online meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> October.

Another meeting of the Commission will be organized in the upcoming months to agree upon its action plan.