

Minutes

Agenda of the meeting

- Follow-up of the 1st workshop
- How to make young people's voice heard better within the UBC?
- How to make young people's voice heard better in the region?
- What's next?

Summary of the discussion

HOW TO MAKE YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICE HEARD BETTER WITHIN THE UBC?

UBC Youth Board

Before opening the floor for discussion about having a Youth Board as a self-governing body within the UBC or as a part of the UBC Executive Board, we need to launch the Youth Board within the UBC Youthful Cities Commission (further on – YCC) and test how it works.

At some point in time YCC Youth Board could have one or two formal representatives within the UBC Executive Board and eventually - representatives at the other UBC Commissions.

Participants of the meeting agreed that having the YCC Youth Board first would be more practical because:

- it wouldn't make as much pressure to the YCC to find representatives among young people, as it would be in case of instantly searching and selecting youth representatives for the Executive Board and other Commissions,
- successful operation of the YCC Youth Board would be a good-enough proof for the UBC Executive Board and other Commissions that formal presence of young people would provide an added value.

Many questions still need to be discussed, for instance:

- How do we elect members of the YCC Youth Board?
- How big in terms of number of people the YCC Youth Board should be?
- How many people per city/country can become members of the YCC Youth Board?

Cooperation between YCC and other Commissions

From practical experience it is known that other Commissions already have topics related to young people their agenda, therefore it would be useful to properly explore what other Commissions are doing and identify issues we can cooperate on.

Having joint meetings with other Commissions would provide an opportunity to:

- raise their awareness of the work of the YCC;
- encourage higher level of young people's involvement in the work of other Commissions.

HOW TO MAKE YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICE HEARD BETTER IN THE REGION?

External cooperation

[Baltic Sea Youth Platform](#) (BSYP) is one of the most visible partnerships already established. This partnership started as the Erasmus+ project between the UBC, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), The Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSC), Euroregion Baltic, Lietuvos jaunimo organizacijų taryba (LIJOT) and Erasmus Student Network in Finland (ESN Finland) early this year.

Within the BSYP a Youth Declaration was designed by region's young people (during the online Baltic Sea Youth Camp). The Youth Declaration was presented at the Annual Forum of the European Union's Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR).

This Erasmus+ project will be active until end of 2022. Hopefully, after the end of the project funding for BSYP will be secured by CBSS and there will be permanent office of BSYP directly connected to CBSS.

[ACTER](#) is the online platform that has a potential to become a "new version of Facebook" for cooperation - it is a platform for individuals and organizations such as municipalities to engage and collaborate internationally. ACTER is intended (among other) to operate as an online dimension of the BSYP.

Covid-19 has served as a catalyst that helped many people to start using and appreciating digital solutions. Taking into consideration current circumstances, it is most likely that many processes in the upcoming years will continue in online form rather than physical. Therefore, it is a right time to introduce such platforms.

The YCC could support ACTER by encouraging every member city of the UBC to be active on the platform (with an ambition to exceed the borders of the Baltic Sea Region). The platform will be successful, only if as many people and organizations as possible become part of the platform and start collaborating there from the very beginning.

ACTER is not ready to be launched among the UBC member cities yet because there are still some features to be improved, so that the users would be willing to use it.

Participants of the meeting agreed that the information about the platform correlates greatly with what was discussed during the YCC future workshop held on 8th October – the idea of YCC cities working together on bigger and smaller mutual projects. The platform could be an environment where this work is happening. It could also be used as a support instrument for physical meetings.

Visibility of young people and youth affairs around the Baltic Sea Region

During the workshop, the following questions were raised:

- How do we make ourselves visible?
- To whom we want to become visible?

Attendees shared their views and ideas on this topic:

- As we (the UBC and the UBC YCC) are organization of municipalities, we should consider what does each municipality gain from us (YCC) in order to become visible to municipality's youth.
- YCC might create flyers, banners, posters, social media posts or something else that can be localized and used by youth workers to reveal to young people benefits for youth to be active, benefits to be involved in international work, benefits for municipalities if they have active young citizens being involved locally or internationally. Social campaigns (for instance on Facebook) could be run.
- The YCC should become more closely related to what the UBC is doing, otherwise previously there was almost no interconnections between keywords and topics used on the levels of YCC and UBC. We need to identify common topics with other Commissions in order to be able to cooperate with them.

WHAT'S NEXT?

An online YCC meeting is seen as a way forward to make decisions related to the further work of the YCC:

- The chairing city of the YCC will provide materials (minutes of workshops held on 8th and 22nd October) for member cities to discuss in advance within their municipalities, so that during online meeting we could have in-depth discussion and reflection from wider range of cities.
- Since it is in our interest to reach both representatives of the municipalities and young people, a separate meeting for young people could take place before the meeting of civil servants. If necessary, another meeting for young people could be run after the Commission's meeting.
- More responsibility should be put on the civil servants and youth-workers of the involved cities: if the cities want something to happen within the YCC, they need to get engaged and need to contribute. Otherwise the YCC can't guess what they want, expect and what we can do together. If there remain only few young people from the whole region participating in our events, we must question ourselves – do we even need the YCC?