

SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT PERSPECTIVES IN THE CO-OPERATION
BETWEEN THE EU AND EASTERN EUROPE

INTERVENTION BY MRS JANET HORSLEY
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Thank you Mr. President.

Minister, Deputy Lord Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am delighted to be here you today to address your Third General Conference. And may I congratulate you on this initiative of bringing together cities of the Baltic States to share experiences, learn from each other and develop common solutions. In the European community we have learned the values of such co-operation and the benefits which the experiences of others can bring.

What I would like to do briefly today is share some thoughts on the employment and social perspectives in Europe. I hope that they will contribute to your debate over the next 2 days.

Employment is high on the European Union agenda. Unemployment has been increasing at an alarming rate over the last 15 years. There are about 18 million people officially unemployed in the Union. But we can be fairly certain that these figures hide even greater numbers. We know that there are many more who do not register for work because they do not qualify for benefits or who are discouraged from doing so because of the unemployment situation. But Europe's problem should not just described as one of unemployment. In fact Europe has an employment problem.

Europe now has an employment rate of 58% compared to 65% in 1972. This at a time when the United States boasts an employment rate of 70% and Japan 78%. Europe has set itself a target of reducing unemployment to 5% by the year 2000. But to do this, Europe needs to create another 30 million jobs. Only then will it achieve an employment rate close to that of

the United States. And only raising employment levels will give Europe the economy it needs to provide a decent standard of living across the generations.

The question is: can we substantially increase employment? We have good reason to believe that we can. The underlying economic situation in the Union is now one of the best for many years. Let us look at a few facts:

- price stability is better than it has been for decades with inflation of only 3% a year in 1994-95 and 1996.

- profitability of capital is almost to the average of the 1960s. The share of wages in GDP is lower than in both the United States and Japan.

- the trade surplus with the rest of the world is around 1% of GDP. We are not losing jobs through external trade. On the contrary, external trade has brought recovery.

These facts give us grounds for modest optimism about the strength of the European economy. "The European economy is now better placed to grow and create jobs than it was 10 years ago. And the growth process is slowly getting under way. But growth, though absolutely essential is not enough. What is just as important is structural reform. We need to examine employment systems: the interplay of taxation, welfare, the organisation of training and education, regulation and other policies. Countries need to adapt structures and systems to broaden the concept of work and to integrate this with a real push for continuing training towards new skills, so that full employment and the full inclusion both men and women in work and society can become a realistic option.

The European social model needs to be changed if it is to be protected and sustained. It is based on old assumptions of mass production, job or skill stability, trading patterns, household and labour force structure. It needs to be redesigned to address change, and the speed of change, particularly in terms of technological progress, skill advancement, and equality of access and opportunity, if we are to enter the 21st century as a productive working society.

The workplace is changing fast. Trades Unions have the challenge of diversifying, and modernising, to deal with new situations, objectives and work patterns. And employers, in

order to remain productive and competitive, need to balance flexibility and stability, in terms of skills development and deployment, production systems, consumer choices, and matching labour and technology.

The creation of jobs needs to be at the forefront of our policies, but at the same time a high level of social protection needs to be maintained. Only through such an approach will a new European strategy emerge. This was recognised by Heads of State at the European Council at Essen in December 1994 and was later re-inforced in Cannes in June this year.

This employment strategy is being translated into multi-annual programmes by EU governments. In many cases the drawing up of these strategies is the first example of government's working inter-ministerially to formulate a coherent plan which embraces both employment and macro-economic policies. These plans are based on five key priorities:

- firstly : improving employment opportunities by promoting investment in vocational training. We need to re-inforce the message of lifelong learning in order to sustain life-long employability. Continuous training is fundamental to long-run competitiveness, to productivity and growth. But it needs investment, and it need the flexibility to design and deliver quickly and on different levels - local, enterprise, and sector.

- secondly: increasing the employment-intensity of growth. This is about initiatives which create the maximum number of jobs and meet new requirements including the environment and services linked to how people live. It brings in the small business and non-profit sectors in a big way.

There needs to be a broader, more sophisticated view of local development and local initiatives, of how the national and European levels can enable and nurture local economic development.

- thirdly: reducing non-wage labour costs. By reducing non-wage labour costs we can make a great impact, not only on bringing unskilled people back into the labour market, particularly the long term unemployed, by making them more attractive to employers, but in bringing unmet need - new entrepreneurial and social activity - to the market. Changes are needed in why and how employers decide to recruit people, especially the less-skilled;

- fourthly: improving the effectiveness of the labour market to help get people back into work. Most countries have up to now favoured passive measures like social protection, early retirement and other forms of income maintenance. A more active approach to fiscal policies would mean addressing the tax-wedge issue for the low-skilled.
- and finally: improving measures to help groups particularly hard hit by unemployment - here we are thinking particularly about young people, the long-term unemployed and older workers.

We believe that these structural changes can offer a way forward if undertaken with rigour. They can enable us to reorganise our re-employment measures, to bring new skills to the unemployed, more positive relationships between work and welfare, and the capacity for workers and companies to access training systematically and flexibly and bring the productivity growth and employment generation we need.

We are beginning to see across the Union, a real reform process in labour market policies and social security. It is designed to make these systems more active and sustainable. We can observe too, the importance of the collective bargaining system where Social Partners have made their contribution to price stability and economic performance. In Florence in October, the Social Partners agreed a joint declaration on employment to be put to the Madrid European Council next week. They have shown their willingness to work more closely together with governments for continued improvement aimed at increased investment and new jobs.

We will be looking to the European Council at Madrid to provide a clear mandate to Member States to take forward and develop their plans. The Union needs to build on this framework and focus on its more pressing priorities. Three areas in particular are uppermost in our minds: young people, the long-term unemployed and the promotion of equal opportunities for men and women.

First of all youth employment: at 22%, youth unemployment has been consistently twice as high as the adult unemployment rate for the last 10 years. We know that 10-20% of young people leave our education systems without even the most basic skills required by the market. The unqualified, unskilled young are the hardest hit by unemployment. They are often doomed to drift towards long-term unemployment. We need to ensure that every young

person has the support they need for entry into the labour market so that they do not get written off as unemployable.

Secondly we need to strengthen the measures and programmes aimed at fighting long-term unemployment. There should be more targeted policies which seek to prevent (he unemployed reaching the threshold of long-term unemployment.

Thirdly we should take further steps to secure equal opportunities in the labour market. Family life is changing beyond recognition: so too is working life. Most of (he growth in the labour force is being taken up by women. The policy debate about reconciling work and family life is all too often about how women can balance work and family life. It must become easier for women to fully participate in the labour market at all levels. Part-time work is one way of encouraging women into the labour market, but governments must ensure that it is underpinned by a firm commitment to equality of treatment. We must also ensure that they have the necessary opportunities and are given access to acquire and develop appropriate skills in order to progress in the labour market.

This debate is even more crucial as the size of the active population shrinks, Europe is ageing, it is facing radical demographic changes. Let us look at the facts:

The Union currently has a population of 350 million. And although this figure will grow slightly until the beginning of the next decade, after that it will begin to fall - the effect of falling birthrates, particularly in southern Europe. By the year 2020, the total will be no more than it is today. Over the next 25 years the number of young people will fall, by no less than 9 million. But that is not all. The active population - those between 16 and 65 - will also fall by 9 million. The overall effect of these two trends will be an increase in the size of the retired population by 18 million by the year 2020. The result will be a transfer of resources from the active generation to the retired generation on a scale not seen before. This will pose a fundamental challenge to the contract between the generations. Will the active population be prepared to fulfil the contract in terms of pensions and care for greater numbers of elderly people. And if the active population takes on that commitment, will they have any hope of improving their own economic situation? Or will all the new resource be consumed by retired people? We believe that the only sustainable way to meet this challenge is by increasing the overall level of employment. Only by raising employment levels will Europe achieve the economy it needs to provide a decent standard of living for all generations.

Many of the employment and social issues which the Union is facing will also be relevant to the central and eastern European countries. That is why we are keen to work with you, not just with finance through the Structural Funds and transnational projects. But also with expertise and experience, through PHARE, TACIS and the LEDA programmes. We hope that access to our experiences and problems will help in the formulation of your policies and programmes. We hope that you will continue to build on the strong networks which you have in place so that you can work together on areas of common interest and concern.

We firmly believe that it is in the interests of Europe to co-operate and collaborate, particularly in the exchange of good practice. As we prepare to extend the frontiers of the Union and look to enlargement, we hope that the Union will gain not only in size, but also in strength.

Thank you.

THE ROLE OF THE CITIES IN SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY – STATUS AND PERSPECTIVES IN THE CITY OF AARHUS

Mr Lis Petersen, Alderman for Social Affairs, Aarhus

First I would like to thank you for the invitation to participate in this conference concerning social and employment policy.

One of the major problems in Denmark today - and thus also in Aarhus Municipality is the high unemployment rate.

With its 277,000 inhabitants Aarhus is a big municipality which among others is characterized by low income groups moving into the city. It is primarily students, refugees/immigrants and people with an income based on public support who have an urgent need for housing. This

fact combined with the fact that many high and medium income groups move to the surrounding municipalities contributes to a constant unemployment.

The labour force in Arhus Municipality consists of approx. 135,000 employed people.

Of these 50,000 are employed in the public sector.

23,000 are employed within trade, restaurants and hotels.

19,000 are employed in the manufacturing industry.

14,000 are employed in the banking and insurance sector.

The remaining groups of professionals are employing the last about 29.000.

Briefly these many figures show that the service sector - that is trade, transport, insurance and services constitute about 80 %!

The traditional manufacturing activities, industry, etc. is less important.

If we look at the number of unemployed in the Municipality, the figures show that hi 1995 there are about 23,000 full-time unemployed in Arhus.

There are approx. 16,000 unemployed who have an unemployment insurance and 7,000 who receive ordinary public support. Besides, there are approximately 8,100 people receiving public support who are in an employment or rehabilitation programme. Add to this that there a number of insured unemployed in employment programmes (About two thousand).

Fortunately, there has been a fall in unemployment compared to 1994, but the problem is still there are too many unemployed.

Several unemployed in Arhus are in danger of being marginalized in relation to the labour market.

It may be difficult to identify the actual persons, but there are however a number of factors the probability of marginalization:

In this connection the period unemployment is the essential factor to the individual person.

The longer the period of unemployment - the more difficult it is to come back to the labour market.

Age and education are other factors.

If you are over 50 years old, or have a low or no education, the possibility of finding jobs is also very slight.

If you are a member of the refugee/immigrant group that may also cause problems in relation to the labour market, because of language barriers.

In that connection it can be mentioned that Arhus at the moment has 16,744 foreign citizens in the municipality. Which corresponds to 6% of the population in the municipality. 10 years ago the foreign citizens constituted only 2.8 %.

Arhus Municipality has separately found that a special refugee and immigrant policy was necessary. The efforts will concentrate on integration of the refugees and the immigrants in the social life on equal terms with the other citizens in the municipality.

The efforts will primarily be based on: employment - language teaching, and the housing question, where we will try to avoid ghettos.

Finally a handicap or a reduced ability to work also may exclude people from getting a permanent relationship to the labour market.

Here it is important to make specially targeted efforts. Recently, I have submitted a recommendation to the City Council to extend the number of what we call "protected jobs" in the municipality for partially disabled people.

It is important to mention that the municipality has the overall responsibility for the people who are not insured through an unemployment insurance and who are not members of an unemployment fund, while the responsibility for employment of the unemployed who have an unemployment insurance is distributed on several cooperation partners. Besides the municipality these are: the Unemployment Office, the Unemployment Funds and the County. This means that the responsibility for these special efforts in Denmark are decentralized or placed with the regions.

The overall rules and regulations are laid down centrally, by the government and the ministries, but the responsibility for the planning and the implementation of the efforts is placed at the local level.

This means that the efforts to a higher extent can be adapted to the needs of the unemployed and to the local political situation.

It is thus the task of the municipality, as far as possible, to plan and set the priority for the efforts which are considered relevant, and which at the same time take an optimum exploitation of the financial resources into account.

It is therefore possible for the municipality to set the priorities to the advantage of the weakest

groups.

At the same time this means that the political responsibility can be placed, as the responsibility for the local grants is placed with the City Council. A democratic control, so to speak!

The goal of the social policy is - through a redistribution of the resources in society - to help the weakest people so that they will be able to support themselves, either through a job or through education.

However, this does not mean that we can solve all the social problems, but we can support the individual considerably by giving he or she the necessary resources for he or she to choose and at the same time assume the responsibility for his or her own life.

To the unemployed the fact of being kept out of the labour market means that there is a risk that they unwillingly are maintained in the role of passive recipients of public support, with prospects of a lowered standard of living and life quality.

To society in general, unemployment means that many people's productive resources are not utilized, and that the public funds are charged with heavy expenditures on support. This is not politically acceptable!

About 2 years ago, Arhus City Council therefore set up a special employment committee, who should elaborate an employment action plan for all the unemployed in the municipality, both those having an unemployment insurance and those who were not insured but received public support. !

In March 1995, the employment committee, which included representatives from the trade unions, the business community and the public authorities published their result in the form of a concrete action plan for the overall efforts to be made in order to reduce unemployment in the municipality.

The action plan contains a number of concrete initiatives having the following goals: (overhead 1).

The concrete initiatives are focusing on the efforts seen in relation to the general unemployment and in relation to the efforts to be made for the individual unemployed person. Compared to the general unemployment it can be noted that in Arhus only about 1700 job openings can be expected annually in the form of new jobs in connection with the progress within different branches.

The fact that some people who are already employed choose to leave their job implies that 4-5,000 new job openings will arise each year.

Most of the job openings, however, take place because some of the already employed people change their jobs. The number of job openings is here 38,000 annually.

The job openings are particularly found within the public sector, in the sector of social affairs, the health sector, the educational sector, and the public administration.

It is important that these job openings on the labour market - totally about 45,000 filled by the unemployed.

It goes without saying that this demands a lot of further training and upgrading of the unemployed people, if it shall be possible for them to enter into these job openings.

The most essential tools in relation to the efforts to be made for the individual person is:

1. Advice/clarification and establishment of an individual action plan. These are very important tools as they are based on the needs and wishes of the individual person.

One unemployed person is different from another. Everybody should be evaluated individually.

2. Education and job training, which in a concrete way is adapted to the different target groups. Job training is vital, as this is the way the unemployed person in practice acquires or maintains a competence which can be used on the labour market.

Job training is therefore one of the main tools in the efforts to help the unemployed.

As regards the effort to help the group of unemployed people receiving public support a general decision has been taken by Arhus Municipality - about among because of financial limits - that the resources in relation to this group mainly shall be utilized on the weakest people, so that these will get better possibilities of entering the labour market.

The following goals have been set up for the efforts to be made in order to activate this group of unemployed (overhead 2):

The goals imply among others that lower priority is given to the efforts to be made for the unemployed who don't have special problems in relation to the labour market, but who for instance only receive public support temporarily, while they are waiting for admission to an educational institute. This group of people, who have an educational background, doesn't have any special needs for support, besides the financial support.

Consequently, the municipality's activation of the people receiving public support, aged between 18 and 24, is now organized in relation to clearly defined target groups (overhead 3):

The target group 1 consists of young people who have a special need for employment and educational support. It has therefore been decided that they should have access to all kind of activating offers, they should e.g. try different jobs as part of an employment project, stay at a production school, participate in advisory courses, day high school programmes etc.

The target group 2 has the resources and first of all they can make use of the availability of job training offers with private employers, because their job wishes and plans typically require some practical qualifications.

Finally people from the target group 3, who typically have a high school diploma or an equivalent diploma will immediately be offered a job in the municipality's service section for elderly people. If they do not accept this job, no public support will be paid.

Typically they will be offered a cleaning job in the homes of some of the pensioners in the municipality.

This project "cleaning service" started in December 1994, and until the 20 October 1995 a total of 2,160 people have been referred to this project.

Experiences show that almost 40 % of all the people referred never started. They simply found another way of supporting themselves.

At the same time it must be noted that the young people who actually started on the cleaning work, to a high extent, were satisfied - and the pensioners have also expressed their satisfaction with the extra service which they got.

This summer we have had a project "Keep the city clean" where young people from the same target group of students were referred to clean the streets and the squares.

The project started as several citizens applied to the municipality stating that the standard of cleanness in the streets and at the open spaces in Arhus Municipality was too low. At the end of the project, on 31 October 95, experiences showed that about 20% never started, as they found another basis of support. Besides, there was constantly a large number of people who quit their job.

This confirms our experiences with this target group of students, waiting to be admitted to a high education and who only need to be supported temporarily.

The tendency and the perspective is thus that we in the organization of both the social-political and the employment efforts, in relation to the fight against unemployment, have judged rightly when we operate with efforts to be made in relation to clearly defined target groups.

However, it must be emphasized that the result of such a categorization of different target groups never must be that individual considerations are not made when job offers are planned for the unemployed.

THE INTEGRATION OF THE EU PROMOTIONAL INSTRUMENTS
INTO THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE UBC COMMISSION
ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS AS A NECESSITY AND OPPORTUNITY

Mr Arno Poker, Mayor of the City of Rostock

Dear Chairman!

Ladies and gentlemen!

I am very glad to have the opportunity to make some remarks on the important topic "Social Affairs".

On the 2nd General meeting of the UBC, in September 1993 in Svetlogorsk has been decided to include the Hanseatic City of Rostock more into the Commission on Social Affairs.

Rostock, together with the Hanseatic City of Lübeck holds the presidency of the Commission on Social Affairs.

Since that time, two years have passed by, a lot has been done.

Important activities were the two workshops on local labour market development and employment creation organized in 1994 and 1995, as well as the implementation of a UBC contact and co-ordination office in June 1994.

The UBC office concentrates on the preparation of international labour market projects in the Baltic Sea region. One of its first tasks was to launch a questionnaire to the member cities in order to get data on the labour market situation and to learn about the needs for projects. Furthermore, an important development within the UBC happened in these two years. The UBC itself as organization has continued strengthening and developing its structures. After being founded in 1991 with 45 cities, the number of member cities increased up to 58 Baltic cities.

At the 1st of January 1995 of Sweden, Finland and Austria became members of the European Union, and with the associated status of the Baltic states and Poland, the social and economic framework conditions have changed positively for the Baltic Sea region.

This has also been proved by the extension and change of the promotional instruments for this region.

However, we also have to notice negative tendencies.

The EU member states did not succeed in finding effective means to reduce the high rate of unemployment - and there we have the main target of the Commission on Social Affairs.

To reduce unemployment, to increase employment and to reduce this way social problems - these are the main fields of activity for the Commission on Social Affairs.

In solving these problems the UBC will ever have to integrate closely the promotional opportunities of other international organizations and institutions, especially those of the EU.

The Contract of Maastricht stipulates a social Europe, a social Union.

This does not mean the immediate adaptation of the national social and labour legislations.

Working on the principle of respect for the historically developed social and labour systems in the different countries, the objective is a gradual and permanent adjustment of the systems on the basis of voluntariness.

In doing so, the EU has to restrict itself to framework conditions and minimum standards.

This way, a minimum level is fixed, not allowed to be undercut. However, the members are free in developing a social policy going beyond these standards.

This way protected it is guaranteed that existing rights are not reduced. The EU complies this fundamental objective by support.

The UBC has to include this support into its activities and to use them for the project work of the Commission on Social Affairs in order to tackle unemployment and to develop employment.

One of the tasks of the European structural policy is to contribute to the economic and social cohesion. Special aids are given to structural less developed regions. Every year, billions are flowing out of the Structural Funds of the EU in order to support the economic restructuring, to promote investments and to create jobs.

With an average unemployment rate of 12 per cent, this concerns all of us. The financial means of the Structural Funds were considerably increased for the years up to 1999 to stabilize the labour market.

At the same time, the most important instrument of the social policy of the Community, the European Social Fund (ESF), has been newly guided to stabilize the labour market, too. But the EU itself has only limited competences in this field, the competence for the labour market policy belongs to the member states themselves.

Labour market policy, labour registration, part-time jobs, collective agreements and others remain in the competence of the member states.

The grants from the Structural Funds are accorded to the principle of additional acting. Money from Brussels is given to complete funds from the EU member states. The national and regional authorities decide which projects they will support.

Within the framework of local initiatives to safeguard jobs and tackle unemployment, the UBC member cities are dependent on the close contact to and the support of the national authorities in designing projects and getting support by means of the Structural Funds, especially from the European Social Fund.

The European Social Fund gives priority to the following:

- Vocational integration of long-term unemployed by temporarily limited employment grants,
- Training, vocational further education and retraining,
- Vocational advising,
- Creation of new training and employment structures,
- Equal opportunities for women and men,
- Studies on development of the labour market,
- Strengthening of the staff in research, science and technology,
- Establishment of links between training institutions and the economy.

It is possible to combine grants from the European Social Fund and from other Structural Funds.

The combination of EU, national and local funds is necessary in a way that they have a stronger impact on the labour market in the communities and regions.

In addition, another target must be to use these funds for transnational projects which include the Baltic countries of eastern Europe into the activities of the Commission on Social Affairs. Even if the promotional legislation does not yet allow to do so, our organization has to work politically in this direction to achieve it.

Another opportunity to achieve this objective consists in the multiple EU initiatives and programmes.

The extension of the EU and the new tasks resulting from the policy of openness of the eastern countries led to a series of contracts in the field of commerce, co-operation and partnership.

The inclusion of the eastern European countries into the promotional system of the EU is despite of some overlapping programmes as PHARE/TACIS, OUVERTURE and INTERREG II very often still too complicated.

From the 1 st of January 1996, the Baltic Sea region will benefit from the Baltic Co-operation Fund that contains an amount of 5 million ECU.

The 2nd Workshop on Employment Development, organized by the Commission on Social Affairs 1995 in Rostock, was oriented towards transnational co-operation and concrete common projects, being this a main task of the UBC Office on Social Affairs in Rostock.

The integration of eastern European partners into the projects was a somehow difficult topic during the discussions.

The western European participants have shown a great readiness to implement co-operation links with the eastern European partner cities.

Due to the difficult political and economic situation in their countries, the eastern European communities have shown a certain restraint concerning definite statements on the development of projects.

The Rostock office will act as our mutual agent and consultant for transnational labour market projects within the UBC.

We intend to offer the following services:

- information on concrete co-operation demands within the communities I
- design of common projects and partner contacts,
- assistance in the preparation of projects,
- information on current labour market projects between UBC member cities.

The specific and objective oriented project work should be developed by reinforced target group activities, mainly for women, youngsters, long-term unemployed, and in connection with existing networks.

At the same time, the co-operation with other organizations, institutions or partners outside the UBC will be made possible.

We must succeed in linking the multiple promotional instruments of the EU with the community tasks within the frame work of common projects in favour of the social and economic stabilization.

For the period remaining until the 4th General Conference of the UBC, I wish success to all of us and especially for our activities on Social Affairs.

Thank you for your attention.

PERSPECTIVES IN THE COOPERATION AMONG CITIES ON SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Mr Algirdas Premenckas Head of Economic and Social Development Department, Klaipeda
on behalf of
Mr Vytenis Zabukas Deputy Mayor of the City of Klaipeda

Klaipeda, Lithuania's third largest city, has a population of 203.800. Its active work force consists of 122.900 persons, or 60.6% of the total population.

During the last nine months of 1995 Klaipeda's Labour Exchange has received 9.684 applications;

5.063 or 52.3% from women;

7.552 or 78% of the workers.

During the last nine months of 1995 there has been an increase of 3.660 in the number of unemployed, which represents of 60.6% over the same period of time in 1994. The total number of unemployed citizens registering in the I and III quarters was 3.782 and 3.156 respectively. The greatest monthly increase was in March when 1.416 registered, while the lowest was in July with 848 registrations.

The unemployment level on the first of October was 3.6%.

While having reached this decrease in the level of unemployment, the search for available jobs has been actively pursued this year. Contacts with employers have been increased despite the fact that their interest has decreased. We are striving to have job vacancies filled more quickly, thereby shortening the vacancy time. The Labour Exchange is compiling a comprehensive list of local employers, providing frequent updates. We keep in touch with more than 500 enterprises and organizations. The information brochure for employers is constantly being revised in order to keep them informed of the services provided by the Labour Exchange. We realize that the availability of jobs does not match the demand for jobs. The greatest need for professional preparation, to increase the workers' qualifications, is in the upgrading of foreign languages, computer skills, business management, commerce, jurists, interpreters, and systems programming.

The biggest demand for skilled workers is for complex welders, joiners, carpenters, builders, electricians, and communications

specialists.

The Labour Exchange of Lithuania has set two goals for 1995:

- decreasing the workers' time of unemployment;
- speeding-up the time to fill job vacancies. We plan to do the following in order to realize our goals:
 - to formulate and implement an active occupation policy for workers.
 - to improve the organization of work and implement a system of employee estimation and planning.
 - to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the efforts of the work market's partners, first in the cooperation with employers in their role of solving the problems of unemployment.

On February 1993 an agreement of cooperation was signed between the Swedish National Work Market Board and the Ministry of Social Security and Work of the Republic of Lithuania. Its purpose is to share the many years of Swedish experience in the field of work market management and to adapt aspects of the organization and its methods of work. One of the most important outcomes of this agreement was the formation of a model exchange which formed the basis of Klaipeda's Labour Exchange.

According to decision Nr. 104-94/95 of the Swedish crones were allocated for the cooperative work between the Labour Exchange of Lithuania and the Swedish National Work Market's Board. The collaboration project was signed on February, 1995 and includes 5 programmes:

- A. continuation of the foundation of a model exchange in Klaipeda;
- B. training of personnel;
- C. foundation of a methods centre and preparation of consultants;
- D. expansion of a works market prognosis;
- E. computerization the Labour Exchange's activities and analysis of data.

Implementation the project was begun in March, 1995 and will continue for 2 years.

The State Authority's institutions usually delegate authority to local governments in matters concerning social security, but there is a lack of confidence in their ability to regulate it. There is doubt in the ability of the local government's social security ability to establish priorities in a wide array of the State's social security programmes (e.g. compensations for

heating costs for families on a low income). This interferes with the development of the social security system at the local government level because personnel is prevented from working directly with the people.

Nowadays the Municipality implements policy delegated by the State, in the field of social security as follows:

1. Disbursement of the State's grants and payments.
2. Approving compensations and privilege services.
3. Assignment of care and guardianship.
4. Protection of the rights of the disabled.
5. Protection of the rights of minors.
6. Integration of those released from prisons.

The most urgent problems concerning the work of the Department of Social Care of Municipality are the following:

- frequent changes in the payment order for grants and compensations;
- insufficient resources for the implementation of additionally delegated projects;
- absence of an integrated information system for the State's institutions.

At present there are 2 social employees in Klaipeda, who came from England, following the agreement of the EAST EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP. The aim of this project is to share information in the field of social work and its organization, and to improve services to meet the needs of physically disabled children and youth. This programme is designed to assist in the improvement of care for people with physical disabilities, for aid in prophylactic medicine, social rehabilitation and professional training.

By collaborating with the Local Authorities Association of the Baltic in the social sphere, we hope to enter into a close relationship and become more fully acquainted with the organization of social services and programmes, carried out at the local government level.

ACTIVITIES OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Mr Gudmundur Stefansson Chairman of the Nordic Council Social Committee

Mr./Mrs. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen.

I will begin by expressing my gratitude to the Union of the Baltic Cities for the opportunity to participate in this Conference and I hope this Conference will strengthen our ties and help us towards employment and prosperity. I represent the Nordic Council Social Committee, and, as many of you might know, the Nordic Council is a body of co-operation between the parliaments and governments of the Nordic countries. The Nordic Council has 87 members, elected by the Parliaments.

Coming from Iceland I'm especially happy to be able to get together with the representatives of the newly independent states of the Baltic countries, which were from the beginning acknowledged and supported by Iceland in their struggle for independence.

The subject of social policies and employment matters are of greatest importance, especially when so many countries have to suffer difficult economic situations and high unemployment rates. This problem, unfortunately, has become common for most countries in the world.

Unemployment creates enormous social problems. It often affects groups which have a weaker position in the society, and it is a scary thought that there are young people who might never get the opportunity to earn a living through a payed job. The unemployment problem has got to be solved, and that is something we can all agree on.

However, the methodes are not simple to find. What do we gain from an international co-operation, and is it better to leave the problem to the countries to solve by themselves? After all, the employment situation is strongly bound to the economic situation in the countries, and action against unemployment often has consequences on the national economy.

The co-operation between the Nordic countries

The co-operation between the Nordic countries has a long tradition. The Nordic Council was founded in 1952 and during the 1950's, three corner-stones of the Nordic co-operation were laid:

Firstly, the adoption of the Agreement on a Common Nordic Labour Market in 1954.

According to the agreement the nationals of the Nordic countries may freely seek and take up employment in another Nordic country. The common Nordic labour market has proved to be most successful, and since 1954, over a million people have taken benefit from it.

Secondly, the Agreement on Equal Treatment on Social Security in 1955, which I will come to later, and thirdly, the Passport Union in 1957.

The Nordic Council has furthermore contributed to the general discussion about employment policies and the unemployment in the Nordic countries, although it is admitted that the main responsibility lies within the national boundaries.

The Nordic Council Social Committee is responsible for matters relating to employment, working environment, health care, social services and housing. The Committee has often had the unemployment situation on its agenda, and in the past few years especially focused on the youth unemployment and long-term unemployment. It has been emphasized that it is especially important to find ways to integrate and re-integrate these groups into the labour market.

The Social Committee has also concentrated on the social welfare, and emphasized that the Nordic countries maintain the "Nordic model". We are proud of our social systems, and it is now more important than ever to nourish the welfare system, although national economies force the countries to reconsider their social policies, which inevitably leads often to reduced social payments. It is important in this matter to maintain the social security for those groups who most need it.

The Nordic countries have had a long history of co-operation in the social security field, and as I mentioned before, an Agreement on Equal Treatment on Social Security was adapted in 1955.

In 1994, a new Nordic Social Security Convention was adapted. The convention was a result of a revision of the older social security convention from 1981, in connection with the EEA-agreement. The new convention entered into force in 1994. It was supposed to be an addition to the EEA-agreement and cover the social rights for the persons who are not covered by the EEA-agreement, namely those who are not able to claim social rights in another country on the basis of employment.

Unfortunately, the new Nordic Social Security Convention has not proved to contribute to the social rights of the non-employment citizens in the Nordic countries. It has proved to provide less social rights than the old convention and that has been criticized strongly.

But it is not simple to alter the situation. Even if there is a political will to make the social rights the same as before, we have to face the question: Can those Nordic countries, which are members of the European Union, give more rights to citizens outside the Union, than to the citizens of the Union? In other words, can Denmark, Finland and Sweden close an agreement with Norway and Iceland about social rights for the citizens of these countries, which other citizens in the European Union will not be able to enjoy?

This is a question which was apparently not considered fully when the Nordic countries signed the EEA-agreement and the answer is still not clear.

The co-operation in relation with the EU

Beware of the social welfare model is of utmost importance now, with three Nordic countries as members of the European Union. Social issues are not very highlighted in the EU, but it is never the less a fact that the European Union concentrates more and more on social policies. However, the EU does not have effective instruments to concretely influence the national social policies, and many are of the opinion that this is supposed to be so.

It is very important for the Nordic countries to keep up with the discussion about social matters in the EU, as the Nordic countries are keen on "exporting" the Nordic welfare model to the member states of the EU, and agree that it can at least not be the other way round.

In relation to the EU the Nordic Council has so far concentrated on gaming information, but now there is a discussion about the role of the Nordic Council in this matter and how to use the possibilities of the Nordic co-operation in relation to the EU.

It has been recognized that the Nordic countries can via the Nordic council discuss and find common interests to represent in the European Union, although two Nordic countries are not members of the EU, and that the social welfare is among these interests. The Nordic Prime minister concluded on the Nordic Council Session in Kuopio in Finland last November that the EU must take measures to fight unemployment, and the social dimension must be strengthened so that the single market is not misused as a ground for social dumping.

In the debate of the Nordic foreign ministers on the Nordic Council session in Kuopio it was stated that the Nordic countries plan to continue their international co-operation, and the European Union is a fixed point on the agenda of meetings between prime and foreign ministers and the ministers of Nordic co-operation. Furthermore the Nordic foreign ministers stated that the Nordic states would be able to place their mark on the EU Inter-Governmental Conference in 1996 in the areas of democracy, security, the environment, openness, growth and employment.

This is a clear example of the unique co-operation between the Nordic countries, and shows that our culture and interests extend the boundaries of duty.

The new structure of the organisation of the Nordic Council

Before I go any further I feel obliged to mention that the Nordic Council is going through radical changes in its working methods, which is a part of the reform that goes on within the bodies of the Nordic co-operation. The reform was considered necessary, partly in the light of the divided membership of the Nordic countries in the European Union, with three countries as members, and two countries outside the EU.

The organisation, which the Nordic Council is about to abandon, is based on six committees, and each one concentrates on a special field; social affairs, culture, economic affairs, environment and legal matters. After January 1st, 1996, we will have three committees instead of six, based on a "geographical" structure: The Nordic Committee, the Europe Committee and the Adjacent Area Committee. The Europe Committee will be responsible for matters related to Europe and it will be an excellent forum for the matters I have just mentioned.

As the names of the new committees indicate, the nordic co-operation will be based on three main pillars: first, the co-operation within the Nordic region, second, the Nordic region and European issues and third, the Nordic region and the adjacent areas.

Although the structure of the Nordic Council becomes "geographical" it does not mean that the fields mentioned before will be abandoned, on the contrary it is our hope that the changes will make the work of the Council more effective through focusing more on general political matters. The social matters will still be on the Council agenda, and in my point of view the social matters will always be of greatest interest, especially when the economic situation in the countries continues to create problems which affects the citizens socially.

The co-operation with Nordic countries' adjacent area

The Nordic foreign ministers stated in Kuopio that the most important subject before the EU Inter-Governmental Conference was the enlargement eastwards. The Nordic region had a particular interest in expanding western co-operation eastwards, particularly to the Baltic.

Co-operating with the areas adjacent to the Nordic countries are of great interest for the Nordic Council. The Nordic Council and the Baltic Assembly have been co-operating for five years now and the Nordic Council Adjacent Area Committee will focus on matters in the Nordic region and the Baltic states, and also matters concerning Northwest of Russia and the Arctic area/Barents Sea.

Matters concerning the Baltic states are and will be highly actual, and it has been stated that the Nordic Council will address economic and political issues within the framework of the new Europe, with special attention to areas adjacent to Nordic countries. Questions about future developments in the Baltic region will be raised and debated.

Furthermore, the co-operation will include initiatives that can provide a contribution to stability and security, democracy, to sustainable development and a balanced utilization of natural resources, and to mitigating effects of industrial pollution and nuclear waste.

In last September, the Nordic Council arranged the 4th Parliamentary Conference on Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Area in Rønne, Denmark. There it was, amongst other things, concluded that it is important to intensify co-operation with and among the sub-regions

around the Baltic Sea as basis for a growing regional identity, the development of local democracy and self-government, and sustainable economic growth.

It was furthermore called on the Governments of the participating countries to manifest political willingness to stimulate regional, sub-regional, and local co-operation within the Baltic Sea Area. Also to safeguard a stable and secure political, economic, legal, social, and ecological development in the region, and make sure that in this process sound and equal minority rights are guaranteed.

Social matters in the Baltic states have often been on the agenda of the Social Committee. The Committee has found it important to co-operate with the Baltic states and it has contributed to measures taken in the social field. In the Nordic Council session in Kuopio a recommendation directed towards the Nordic Councils of Ministers was adapted, to educate young persons from the areas adjacent to the Nordic countries in the narkotica-field as "informateurs", so they could contribute to the fight against illegal narkotica by giving information about the dangers of narkotica to other young people in the Area.

The last thing the Social Committee will most likely contribute to in this relation is arranging a seminar, with members of the Nordic Council and the Baltic Assembly as participants, on migration matters relevant to the Baltic Sea. The seminar will take place in Helsinki in January 1996. It is our hope that the seminar will cast light on the migration problems in the area, and also it is an excellent opportunity to discuss the measures taken, both in international organisations, and in the Baltic states and the Nordic countries.

Conclusion

I asked before what we can gain from the international co-operation in the field of employment and social policies. I am convinced that more is gained than lost. It can be very meaningful to express and discuss thoughts and ideas in the international community and try to find solutions to the very serious problems of the unemployment situation. After all, these problems are not entirely national, these are international problems which affect all countries in the world.

I do not hesitate to conclude that the Nordic countries have gained from their co-operation, both with each other and also with the Baltic states and other adjacent areas, and I sincerely hope that it will continue to be so.

I would like to add, being a former Mayor of the town of Hafnarfjörður in Iceland for seven years, that I see the role of the municipality and the local authorities being very important in the subject of employment and social matters. Local politicians get to know the problems face to face - and are pressed by the people for some positive results.

The question of employment, as you are well aware of, is not only about supporting you and your family, but also the question of being - doing something worthwhile for your society. That is something you as local politicians must recognize, you don't only deal with figures, but people - you see the real problems.

At last, I wish to thank the Union of the Baltic Cities again and wish it luck in its future work.

SOCIAL-HANSA ACTIVITY AND POTENTIAL OF JOINT COOPERATION WITH UBC

Mr Carl-Einar Jorgensen, Chairman of the Social-Hansa

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you.

We are glad that we have the opportunity to tell about Social-Hansa today.

In the time about 1989/90 many contacts were made between the Nordic Countries and the states round the Baltic Sea. Partly to exchange ideas and slowly to exchange individuals on basis of the "Nordic Model".

At that time pedagogues, social workers and other persons from the Nordic countries and Germany, who know each other from former time, discussed how to make a connection, where it would be possible to have a near and uncomplicated contact with Balticum and others, specially about social affairs and social subjects.

After some meetings with representatives of the countries, Social-Hansa was formed in September 1992 as a result of cooperation between ICSW in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the welfare-organization in Schleswig-Holstein and Socialpolitical association in Denmark.

The former Prime Minister Bjern Engholm was one of the initiators - therefore the name "Social-Hansa" - in connection with the Hansa system (but not only the towns).

From the beginning it was decided that Social-Hansa should be a coordinating body and have as its primary task establishing a network between the countries in the Baltic region and coordinate cooperation between the involved organizations and persons in Social-Hansa and all interested in cooperation.

The main emphasis of the work is centered on social problems and tasks in the different countries, discussions of "models of solutions" in societies, establishing courses and other

project-activities.

From the beginning there is a "working-paper" and rules for the association.

The Basis of the Work

At Social-Hansa's foundation March 1992 a working paper was accepted with the title "For a society in Solidarity and Culture".

This paper formed the basis for the future work.

One of the most important tasks for Social-Hansa was to initiate a dialog between the participating persons or countries and through the cooperating to create the best possible models for solution of problems in a social and cultural society.

It was decided that Social-Hansa's primary aim should be to create a well-functioning network between the participating countries. A network with sufficient flexibility that the differences of the structure in the countries can work without problems.

The network at the same time functions effectively enough to enable concrete queries concerning social and cultural matters to be answered quickly and in most efficient way as possible.

To be able to do so, Social-Hansa's offices are established in all participating countries where national coordinators would be present as the official contact persons.

A long list of aims - apart from the network - were written such as: to seek contact with associated organizations as well as national and municipal institutions within the European Union (EU).

In the moment a small elected committee has the daily cooperation to the national coordinators:

Carl-Einar Jorgensen, international coordinator (chairman), Denmark

Holger Rohde, Arbeitsgemeinschaft Freie Wohlfahrtsverbände, Schleswig-Holstein, Kiel

Janusz Galeziak, County of Gdansk.

Which countries are involved in the network-cooperation ?

Denmark, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway.

The Nordic countries have a formalized cooperation through ICSW, the social schools and associations and institutions, also Germany is part in such a cooperation.

Institutions, schools and associations in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia are slowly through Social-Hansa in connection with one another. There is a need of "social models" and educational "know-how" and a wish of cooperation in practical and theoretical forms.

How does Social-Hansa work?

Social-Hansa is a voluntary organization which finances its project through the support from foundations and in cooperation with related welfare-organization in connection with the establishment of concrete projects, together with a long list of different organizations and institutions, among others ICSW, Union of the Baltic Cities, Socialpolitisk Forening, Pensionisternes Samvirke etc. Social-Hansa has also a close contact with municipal and national institutions in Denmark and in the affiliated participants-countries, it can be stressed that Social-Hansa's national coordinators are centrally positioned in these countries.

Activities already implemented.

Elderly 'people conference - Back to the Future - Bornholm 1993 (all countries). Cooperations Agreement sign by representatives from all Baltic countries - 1993. Social-Hansa offices established in all countries 1993/94. Press, Politics and Democracy course held in 1994 for participants from Poland, Education and Democracy - course held in 1994 for participants from Lithuania, Farming, Democracy and Efficiency in 1994 for participants from Russia.

Establishment of a municipal project between the cities: Lubeck, Copenhagen, Rostock, Tallinn and Gdansk concerning nurses in eldercare (start in 1995). A conference in Rostock in 1995 concerning narcotics and drugs problems. Social-Hansa was also part in the Social-Summit (UN) Copenhagen 1995 and is now a part in Social Monitor, which is follow-up institution with contact all over the world.

The Future (aims and means):

Social-Hansa's aim is to strengthen cooperation between the countries around the Baltic Sea working with social-work problems. Working together with Social Schools and training centers for social workers and the like. Working with courses and cooperation with the Danish "Demokratifond" to finance the activities, but also other founds. Social-Hansa is planning a conference about insurance/social security in February 1996 and together with the municipal of Copenhagen a conference Elderly People and Responsibility from 20 to 25 September 1996, where a special conference will be organized in the cooperation with the UBC about elderly people (23-25 September 1996) - Welfare and Society, Help or Development (invitation for both conferences will be posted).

Social politics are in a complicated situation in the whole region.

The Nordic models have problems with economy and grantings. The EU social politics are in a debate between the countries - about the principles of subsidiarity or the principles of solidarity - or the welfare mix - welfare pluralisme.

It could be necessary with a dialog about distribution and economical levels in the national policy and between the countries around the Baltic Sea.

Experience and exchange of ideas and alternative ways should be discussed.

In this discussion Social-Hansa is able to contribute.

So we are ready to work together with UBC and special with the Commission on Social Affairs.

Thank you.

INITIATIVES DIRECTED AT IMPROVING SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS - EXAMPLES FROM MEMBER-CITIES

Ms Vibeke Jensen, Deputy Head of Employment Office, Aarhus
Mr Audun Oiestad, Municipality Director, Bergen
Mr Ryszard Klim, Member of the City Council, Elblag
Mr Piotr Swiderski, Vice-Director, Employment Office, Gdansk
Mrs Eila Onnisekka, Education Planner, Employment Unit, Helsinki
Mrs Agneta Hammerin, Head of Social Welfare Department, Kalmar
Mr Viktors Buls, Assistant Chief, Foreign Relations Department, Riga

"Examples of initiatives directed at improving social and employment conditions"

by Deputy Chief Executive Ms. Vibeke Jensen, Aarhus

Introduction

A central problem with which the Employment Department in Aarhus, Denmark has worked in recent years is to differentiate between the various groups of unemployed. The main rule is, that the persons with the greatest needs are also the main target groups for our efforts.

This means for example that students with a passing need for public support must do cleaning work for the city's pensioners until they start education or find a job by themselves. The remaining group with a weak connection with the education system or with very little experience with the labour market will get a job training offer in one of our projects within 13 weeks after being registered as unemployed.

Central tools in our work are careful counselling and individual action plans where the unemployed and the counsellor make a contract concerning what they must obtain in the employment project and where it shall lead to, e.g. concerning education or job. The individual action plan is frequently being checked and adjustments made if necessary.

The projects have about 500 trainees per year.

In the following I will focus on 2 examples of employment projects

1. Monroe's Lunch Service
2. Handicamp-Handiguide

But before the examples I will mention five central themes for our future work:

- a. Our target group is expected to have bigger social problems than seen before,
 - b. The unemployed are very far from the ordinary labour market,
 - c. We must develop our methods to deal more efficiently with new target groups,
 - d. We will increase our cooperation with the labour market parties, especially the labour unions, to support our efforts,
 - e. We still base our efforts on the idea that entering the labour market is possible also for weak target groups, which our experience also gives us reason to believe.
- Nevertheless, we must remember, that we must meet the unemployed person on the level where he or she is now.

Example 1:

Monroe's Lunch Service

- a project for young mothers

A 43 weeks course for young mothers. The course contains both personal development, civics, vocational qualification and work training.

Goal:

- to reestablish personal power and ability to run own life
- to inspire to continue with an active and out-going life
- to motivate and qualify to work and education
- to plan and initiate actions towards self-support.

Target group:

16 young mothers between 18 and 25 years with no previous qualifications and no actual resources to enter the labour market or start education/training.

Content:

Women's lives:

History, sexual roles, upbringing, children, health and illness.

Lunch Service/Vocational qualification:

Economy, accounting, computer training, communication, market research, organization, cooperation, sales, aesthetics and nutritional food.

Lunch Service/Practical qualification:

The women establish their own small business - daily delivery of lunch packets.

Exchange:

Study tour to another EU country with their children to visit various catering projects.

Future:

To be a citizen, labour market conditions, education, job seeking and activity plans.

Follow up:

Evaluation with the trainee and counsellor followed by possible job training.

Duration:

27 February to 21 December 1995 - 39 weeks plus various holidays.

Example 2:

Handicamp-Handiguide

Background:

To qualify unemployed for the labour market and especially physically handicapped it is necessary to make new training experiments.

Handicamp-Handiguide is a cross-curricular training of 3 different target groups. Tourism is the overall theme and a new combination of trades, service functions, new technology, communication and information characterize the project.

Handicamp-Handiguide is a training and trade cooperation project, built upon development, production and sale of a handicap friendly camping hut and a tourist guide for handicapped.

Handicamp-Handiguide combines cooperation, education, job training and product development in new ways.

Handicamp-Handiguide makes Aarhus and other Danish cities appealing as exciting and low-priced tourist areas also for physically handicapped. This is of advantage to both business and employment.

Handicamp-Handiguide develops a proto-type/packet deal (on both project and product level). This creates export possibilities both to companies and the municipality.

Project description:

Goal:

In 1993 the Project House developed the idea for the Handicamp-Handiguide project with the following goals, content and target groups:

1. The overall goal of an employment/training project is to relate with quality and creativity to the municipality's intention of a higher integration of handicapped in the labour market and to develop new initiatives in the tourist area.
2. To establish a pilot project where high priority is given to experience drawn from previous projects concerning methods and contents regarding counselling, teaching and production
3. To qualify and motivate the trainees to education/work in various trades, tourism and information.
4. To develop a marketable idea for further export.

Project period and target group:

The project runs for 2-3 years beginning in the spring of 1994. The participants can stay in the Project between 5 and 12 months. A job training period in private companies or in self-established production units can follow courses.

Planned content:

The project is organized as a company, where the task is to develop, produce and sell Handicamp-Handiguide as a packet deal. Starting point is to make an Aarhus Guide followed by locally based guides.

Overall themes:

Nature/culture, handicap-integration, tourism, local history etc.

Basic courses:

Computer training, drawing, chromatology. production planning, marketing and cooperation. Introduction is compulsory for all.

Production:

The trainees now choose between two production lines: a construction line or a guide/marketing line. Each line combines work with concrete tasks to relevant theoretical training - while the trainees are trained in cooperation and cross-curricular problem solving.

Construction line:

In cooperation with a construction company or a public production project:

- model construction and construction of the Handicamp huts
- erection of the huts at the camp sites
- development and production of flex-furniture
- building materials, coating/foiling, drawing/designing, computer drawing, introduction to building technology etc.

A private drawing office will act as consultant in the initial phase, and as far as possible the participants will attend supplementary qualifying courses at Aarhus Technical College and the Centre for Vocational Training.

Marketing line:

Takes place at the Project House.

- preparation of information material based on the Handicamp idea.
- preparation of PR-material for the camp sites
- preparation of locally based tour guides (1-2 languages)

Printed and electronic medias will be used.

Teaching includes DTP, lay out, screen design, journalism, marketing etc.

Status 1994 – Handiguide

1. Teaching

In 1994 two teams of 14 handicapped, 7 long term unemployed and 13 young people were engaged with the project. All 34 went through a 5-month teaching programme including word processing and DTP, research and journalism, tourist related courses, local history and handicap integration. Apart from this educational and vocational guidance was also part of the project.

2. Productions: Aarhus Guide and Grenaa Guide

The spring class produced the "Handi-Guide Aarhus - an experience for all".

The autumn class is finishing a guide covering the Grenaa area.

Status 1994 - Handicamp

Until now a handicap user friendly camping hut has been developed in cooperation between the Project House and the drawing office of Petersen & Aaris.

Presently 6-9 huts have been sold to Blommehaven Camping Ground which means that 8 unemployed will start building the huts in November 1994. This part will introduce the participants to carpentry, and is established in cooperation with Aarhus Technical College and/or the Centre for Vocational Training.

1995 - Project and content:

In 1995 the project will have 40 participants. The task is to further develop the project to a saleable packet deal to other Danish cities and camp grounds - and if possible also to foreign cities and camp sites.

The Blommehaven Camping Ground will act as a sort of exhibition place "the camping ground for all".

Based on these ideas the following will be initiated:

Development of the teaching idea and the proto type handiguide/camp in Aarhus:

Guide line:

18 unemployed will follow a new guide course where they are trained in computer use and information.

Construction line:

The 8 trainees from 1994 will continue in the project.

Production:

6-9 handi-huts incl. mobile furniture

Development regionally, cooperation between municipalities:

A cooperation is established between the municipalities of Aarhus and Samsø.

Guide line:

18 trainees go through a guide course. 3-4 handicapped from Samsø participate.

Production:

A Samsø-Guide.

Construction line:

8 new trainees will construct huts and make furniture.

Marketing of the huts to camping grounds on Samsø.

If possible the production of the huts will be transferred from a public project to a private production company.

Development of new education:

In the autumn of 1995 18 young people start a new camping ground service worker education.

This is established in cooperation with Blommehaven Camping Ground.

Duration:

6 months, incl. 2 months practise

Content:

Language, service, accounting, guiding, activity planning, first-aid and cooperation.

Development of international cooperation:

Development of packet deal "Handicamp-Handiguide" as marketable idea based on already-established contacts.

Copartner:

The Employment Department of the Municipality of Aarhus is responsible for the project but the project will be developed in close cooperation with other municipalities, user-organizations, tourist organizations, the production projects of the Employment Department and trade schools.

New elements in the pilot project:

- cooperation between public authorities and private companies concerning training of unemployed and handicapped
- cooperation between public authorities and private companies concerning product development and sale of packet deal regionally and internationally
- combination of traditional and high technology-based production and education in a project
- thematic combination of handicap integration and tourism

Qualifications:

Apart from qualifying for construction work, tourism and information the project gives the trainees cross-curricular qualifications useable in other branches working with computer-based communication, product development, sale, service and handicap integration.

III GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

AARHUS, 8-9 DECEMBER 1995

"Initiatives directed at improving social and employment conditions in Bergen"

Mr Audun Oiestad, Municipality Director, Bergen

Who is responsible for organizing the initiatives?

Administrational:

- The department of employment in the Municipality of Bergen under the supervision of the head of department and in cooperation with statal labour market authorities, and some municipal organizations.

Political:

- The Bergen City Council, the Municipality and the Administrative Political Committee.

Decisive organ for choosing the labour market initiatives:

- A mixed group comprised of representatives from the municipality of Bergen, the employment agency, the labour unions and the employer organizations.

Unemployment in 1995

Nationwide: 140.000 seeking unemployment. This is an unemployment rate of 6,5%.

(From 1994 to 1995 this number has decreased with 20.000)

Of these are: 45.000 participating in employment initiatives (2%)

In Bergen: 8.700 seeking employment. This is an unemployment rate of 7,4%.

From 1994 to 1995 this number has decreased with 500)

Of these are: 2.500 participating in employment initiatives (2,1%)

Age distribution of unemployed citizens in Bergen:

Below 20 years: 4,2%

20 - 24 years: 17,8%

25 - 29 years: 20,4%

30 - 49 years: 38,8%

50 - 59 years: 8,9%

Above 60 years: 9,9%

Long Term unemployment

(more than 26 weeks) comprises 34%

of the persons seeking employment.

The aims for labour market initiatives in the municipality of Bergen.

- to get the unemployed persons back in ordinary employment as soon as possible
- to minimize the harmful effects of the unemployment in the municipality
- to utilize the extraordinary initiatives for occupation in such a way as to support the fields of priority for the municipality
- to contribute to an increase in value increment in the municipality and a decrease in the social expenditure

Groups among the unemployed who have priority:

Youth, including the increasing number of unemployed academics.

Long term unemployed , including persons above 50 years seeking employment and persons with a limited range of choice of employment.

Youth below the age of 20 are included in the government's guarantee for occupation for youth.

Initiatives: Work experience; initiatives including tutors.

In Bergen: 158 participants in work experience initiatives.

Youth aged 20-24 without a permanent occupation or place at an educational institution are offered participation in labour market initiatives.

Public expenses for employment initiatives in 1995

Nationwide: 3.310 million

In the municipality of Bergen: State: 91,0 million

Municipality: 33,0 million

Labour market training in municipality of Bergen 7,0 million

Trainee initiatives in the municipality of Bergen: State: 8,4 million

Municipality: 14,8 million

Total in the municipality of Bergen 154,2 million

Statal refund per month of work: NOK 13.000.

The employed receive 85% of tariff wages.

Employment initiatives in the municipality of Bergen in 1995

1. Total (year average): 1200 persons are participating in labour market

initiatives of 8 months per person.

2. Trainee initiatives (year average): ca. 300 persons (2/3 of which aged 16-24).
3. Qualification courses (AMO-courses) administrated by the municipality of Bergen: 2100 student months are complected. The state pays all expenses.

The aim is higher competence in order to increase the possibilities on the labour market of the persons seeking employment.

The courses are combined with work experience through labour market initiatives.

Employment initiatives in the municipality of Bergen 1995

	Men	Women	Total	% of total
Age groups:				
Below 20 years	47	25	72	5,4%
20 - 24 years	120	101	221	16,6%
25 - 29 years	121	120	241	18,1%
30 - 49 years	290	259	549	41,2%
50 - 59 years	99	81	180	13,5%
Above 60 year	46	25	71	5,3%
		Total:	1334	

Special labour market projects in 1995

Employment for mentally disabled persons (64 persons)

Aim: 100 occupations

Work training groups for socially work disabled youth who are long term social registerites.

12 work training groups are established with 75 participants.

Cooperation with the department of health and social security.

Long-term unemployed persons above the age of 50: increase effort.

Labour market projects:

- Environmental campaign

- Campaign against vandalism
- Rehabilitation of discarded school books and inventory for later re-use
- Rehabilitation of school buildings, protected buildings, etc.
- Internal temporary labour arrangements in the municipality
- Educational temporaries
- Employment in ideal organizations
- Larger arrangements (Exhibitions, etc.)
- Computer courses
- Supervision at the school for older term unemployed persons

The effect of labour market initiatives - the state 9 months after "The labour market survey" in 1993

Employment:	35,5%
Taking education:	8,8%
Participating in new initiatives:	9,5%
On rehabilitation:	1,0%
Unemployed:	38,7%
Other:	6,5%

	100,0%

Without the labour market initiatives we would have:

- a larger open unemployment
- a higher long term unemployment
- a greater risk for isolation of the labour force
- a worsened social situation for the individual unemployed person

III GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

AARHUS, 8-9 DECEMBER 1995

"Tasks executed by the city of Elbl^g within improving of social conditions, employment and counteracting city's inhabitants unemployment"

Mr Ryszard Klim, Member of the City Council, Elblag

Social assistance in Elblag is primarily executed by Municipal Center of Social welfare which has been appointed by City authorities.

Social assistance and services are executed within the framework of own and ordered actions. Above mentioned assistance would concern 3.868 communities - it means 14.659 persons - within 9 months of 1995 year. It constitutes 11,5% of total inhabitants. Amount of this assistance - 599.494 \$.

Community assistance was primary directed against persons and families who were short of financial resources regarding a security of primary requirements with additional matters, as: adaptance difficulty in the new society, health and care problems, unemployment etc.

In the present system of social assistance following types of services are generally implemented :

1. Currency (money) benefits submitted in a form of permanent, periodic benefits or single (purposeful) benefits concerning purchase of clothing, fuel and house repair.
2. Assistance in nature, it means various types of thing assistance as clothing, linen, household equipment.
3. Specialist welfare services against ill persons and mind-handicapped persons whose rehabilitation will take place in a family environment.
4. Stay at welfare houses whose character character and tasks depend on concrete person or family problems.
5. Offering welfare services at living places especially for old, handicapped or chronic ill-health persons.
6. Quotas coverage connected with a purchase of drugs.
7. Allowance of purposeful benefit connected with expenses coverage following as a consequence of random event as well as funeral making according with a dead person religion.
8. Other tasks result from community demands, for example: children's supplementary feeding or leisure organization for children from pathology families.
9. Services connected with a maternity protection.
10. Family and nursing benefits.
11. Social work directed at persons and families with the purpose of strengthening or recovering abilities connected with a normal operation in the society.

In the broadest range this center will develop and apply additional forms of assistance, as:

- ordering clothing, household equipment and furniture coming from gifts,
- lending the medical equipment,
- distribution of Christmas packages and food,
- legal assistance in relation to alimony claims and arrangements of rents matters,
- funds collection for children from poorest families,
- cooperation with foundations and non-governmental organizations.

To implement above mentioned purposes it has been necessary to create social workers team and specialists being able to identify situation of individual persons, family societies as well as pathology problems at the whole area of city.

Municipal Office of Social Welfare staff is created by Social Work Team consisting of higher qualification and professional practice workers. These teams are supported by Preventive-Therapeutic Team consisting of specialists in the range of psychology, sociology, pedagogic and law.

The major part of social welfare amounts is envisaged for unemployment benefits. The 2.289 benefits were given for 1.980 persons at the amount of 255.280 \$ within mentioned term. Recalculating per one person month benefit amounts to 14,32 \$.

The above represented data shall inform us that given amounts for unemployed benefits constitutes 42,6% of all services in this mentioned term.

It ought to realize that unemployment's rate in Elblag, in the mentioned term of 1995 year, achieved the highest level - 26% and comprises the fourth part of Elblag population regarding a production age.

Unemployment results in many risks and creates groups on unemployed persons named as groups of special risk. To this group belong: graduates, handicapped persons, long-term unemployed, persons authorized to take prolonged benefit and persons in the before-pensionary age. In relation to every mentioned group Work Office in Elblag together with Municipal Office of Social Welfare are able to propose relevant programme or kind of

assurance directed at social situation improvement.

On the day 30th September 1995 the number of unemployed persons without benefit right was amount 6.851 persons, what constitutes over half of the total registered persons.

Within 9 months of 1995 year, Regional Office of Work in Elbl^g put mayor pressure on comprising of the client's majority through work market active programmes. Among the specialist programmes the biggest part of expenses is given for intervention works - over half of Work Fund is envisaged for active forms counteracting unemployment. Residual expenses are envisaged for: public works, courses, training, loans for enterprises to finance work places, graduates activation and loans for unemployed persons concerning undertaking own economic activity.

Assumption of social policy in 1996 year:

1. Assistance for unemployed persons regarding adjustment to work-market expectation.
2. Liberalization of negative effects of unemployment.
3. Development of actions strengthening motivation of work seeking.
4. Enlarging of information range about work market and employers expectations.
5. Development of professional consultancy.
6. Establishment and implementation of special programme concerning risk groups.
7. Establishment and implementation of training programmes.

At the end of my performance I wanted to express again the giant role of social assistance connected with a liberalization of transition system results.

We cope with all changes better and better, but threats constantly grow. Then we expect that our membership in the Union of the Baltic Cities will allow to take an advantage with newest experiences in the field of social welfare.

Commission of Social Policy in the Municipal Office in Elblag and Municipal Center of Social Welfare and Regional Work Office will count on acquaintance with your elaborated methods counteracting social pathologies (especially problems connected with alcohol and unemployment).

These above mentioned institutions are interested in system of social welfare applying, problems of professional consultancy, methods of unemployed persons training.

From here our request referring to start direct contacts between institutions dealing with above mentioned problems.

Of course there are some interesting solutions in our institutions too. So we think that time has come for direct working contacts.

Thank you for your attention.

Piotr Swiderski, Employment Office, Gdansk

Mister President, Ladies and Gentlemen

At the begining of my presentation about activities of Regional Labour Office in Gdansk, aiming at labour activity of unemployed, I would like to have a look of passed years in this respect in our region.

Changes, which took place in our country starting from 1990, it means beginning of transformation, reflected also on labour market.

Illustration no. 1 presents a scale of unemployment in our region. Data, shown there, represents a huge increase of unemployment in years 1990-1992. starting from 1993 this number started decrease. We hope, that this positive tendency will be steady.

This tendency resulted most probably from:

- early stop of the trade recession, faster then in other parts of the country;
- adapting of Gdansk companies to new economic situation;
- early adapting of Regional Labour Office in Gdansk to new conditions ruling on labour market, consisting of optimal service of employers with taking into consideration needs and expectations of unemployed.

These programmes aimed at easing the unemployment consequences are; financed by Labour Fund, from rates paid by employers and the state treasure. Due to limited funds of state treasure, sums of money spent on active opposition of unemployment are still unsatisfied. Level of money spent on different activities in this respect is represented by ill. no. 2 and no. 3 presents proportion of the sums to sums spent on unemployment benefits.

Conclusion from this illustration is as follows: sums spent on different active programmes have never reached 11 percent of sums spent on unemployment benefits.

The way of using money for different active programmes against unemployment is shown on ill. no. 4. Decrease of the number of persons guided to trainings, intervention and public works, has fallen rapidly in 1995 - due to lack of funds for it.

Policy of Regional Labour Office in increasing activity of unemployed is as follows:

A/ TRAININGS AND QUALIFYING NEW JOBS - offered mainly to the following groups:

- persons with long-standing working experience, who lost their jobs because of their age, narrow scope of qualifications, new requirements on their posts and as a result of economic transformation;
- teenagers without occupation.

B/ ORGANIZATION OF INTERVENTION WORKS

- it is an activity which joins expectations of unemployed persons with needs and expectations of employers, especially where employers need financial support during building their new companies.

C/ ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC WORKS

- it is an investing activity from state and semi-governmental offices combined with an activity from unemployed. I hope, that during your visit in 1997 on the Millennium of Gdansk, you will have an opportunity to see some results of these public works.

Organization of intervention and public works should help some unemployed, who have big problems to find permanent jobs. Considering level of difficulty to find jobs we can point some groups:

- without job over 12 months;

- single parent with children;
- men over 55 years of age;
- women over 50 years of age;
- former pupil, especially from secondary school ;
- persons without or with unsatisfied qualifications;
- former prisoners;
- released from military service;
- disabled persons.

Other activities of the Regional Labour Office in Gdansk should be mentioned, too:

- labour clubs - group meetings which should overcome some psychological problems connected with new job;
- labour center - extension of the Regional Labour Office activity concentrated especially on giving advice and information about other institutions providing different help like, legal advice, financial recommendations, money benefits;
- preference loans - for unemployed starting new business.

Results of above mentioned activities are shown on ill. no. 5.

To sum up) my speech will present main items, which properly answered become a strategy of our action:

- selection of persons, who really want to find a job;
- promotion of enterprising;
- high quality of our services in fighting with unemployment, especially on a field of professional consulting;
- good and proper coordination of our work with a strategy of development of the whole region.

Our services will be extended in 1996 by special programmes. It is foreseen by new regulation of Ministry of Labour and Social Politics in special programme on opposition of unemployment.

THE YOUTH GUARANTEE PROGRAMME IN HELSINKI

- from unemployment to activity, Mrs. Eila Onnisekka

We have carried out a youth guarantee programme since the early 1980s, despite the fact that in those days Helsinki had no youth unemployment to speak of. Today in Helsinki there are about 8000 unemployed people under 25 years of age. The jobless rate among young people is about 30%.

We want to offer different and meaningful activities for those who have been out of work for a long time. Our youth guarantee programme consists of different possibilities depending on a person's current situation, his/her future plans and wishes. We have a special job counselling office called ZAPPA here in Helsinki, into which you are able to walk straight from the street and ask about your possibilities to get a job. However, through the state labour office we get most of our clients. We have job counsellors, who interview young people thoroughly and then will try to find a way from unemployment to activity.

The most common alternative is to offer our customers a job for six months. We have a special job network, including a great variety of city jobs. Naturally, when placing people, we take into consideration the requirements of the job, the person's previous education, experience, wishes and how they would like to develop themselves. At present there are about 1200 young people working in our job network in Helsinki. About half of the salary comes from the city of Helsinki and the other half from the state. Helsinki has put a great deal of money and interest into employment.

Some of our clients are not interested in or suitable for a usual job. For those people we have built other possibilities. We have here different workshops, production schools and special projects where people can learn things by doing them in practice and at the same time learn useful work duties and responsibility. These are also working places for six months and special counsellors guide youngsters during that time. All workshops and production schools are based on a special theme.

We have a production school called the Blue Workshop which offers practical training and work experience in four different fields during six months. One which is based on performing

skills and theatre (Comico Piccolo), one based on cooking and running a cafe (Cafe Lucullus) and then there are lines where youngsters recycle textiles and repair clothes. The last lines are called Atelier Rotondo and Sartoria. The Blue Workshop has gained a lot of publicity because of its positive atmosphere and good result with youngsters. They do their vocational work and work for private persons and enterprises. In addition to teaching, counsellors or trainers have to teach basic working life rules for youngsters, besides other things.

Mediaworkshop is our newest production school. It is based on the idea that after six months of guided working, young people will be able to handle the media. In the Media Workshop people can learn how to produce TV and radio programmes, write articles and learn how to use the latest data technology and the Internet. We think it is important that unemployed young people can work with the latest quality equipment.

In both production schools there are about 30 young people and 8 counsellors working at the same time. Youngsters have been chosen by counsellors, trainers and labour office staff. At the moment there must be at least five months of unemployment behind them.

Those production schools are the biggest ones and are funded by European Social Fund. We have plenty of smaller workshops too, which work on the same basis.

We also arrange short courses and data processing courses, in order to help job seekers and strengthen youngsters' self-confidence. Those courses are open to everyone under 30 years of age and living in Helsinki. In addition to these short courses, we have also longer courses, which are arranged by the vocational schools in Helsinki and they are financed by the European Union.

These courses are from particular fields like the food industry, health and social work and data technology and they take eight months. These don't give you any final exam, but you can apply straight to the same school, outside the formal application procedure.

From the beginning of 1995 a few of our workshops have got funding from the European Union's Social Fund programme 3. During this year over 300 people under 25 years of age are expected to participate in our social fund projects, in addition to jobs, workshops and courses we have developed a special Woodhouse Constructing Project with ESF funding. During that project young people learn how to build a wooden house and after an 18 months' training and working period they will get their vocational exam from the school. We have chosen to this

project 50 young people under 25 year of age. They have all been unemployed before, either a few months or even a few years. However, quite many of them do have work experience from the construction business.

With European Social Fund money it has also been possible to develop further education for those people who have already been in our workshops. These courses are also arranged by the Helsinki City vocational schools. In that way we try to offer young people a shortcut to the vocational training. This is because lack of training is the biggest common denominator for youth employment in Helsinki.

We want to offer a quite large scale of possibilities for young unemployed people, because there are so many different kinds of unemployed individuals with different education and motivation. In the future we would like to build more contacts to the private sector and to private employers. We also hope that our office can help private entrepreneurs with apprenticeships, because that system is quite complicated in Finland. Our interest in the future is that unemployed young people should participate in international exchanges, too. We have started to develop this together with the Nordjobb organization.

This year about 3000 youngsters under 30 years of age have somehow taken part in our activities. We do a lot of co-operation with other institutions like the State Labour Office, the Helsinki City Social Department as well as other departments and the Ministry of Education. We have also done some examinations about young people and work. However, the young individual him- or herself is the most important matter to us. All of our possibilities have developed to serve unemployed young people of Helsinki in the best way there is.

In Helsinki we have also same kind of unit for adults. They have offered a job for over 2500 people during this year.

The accompanying scheme shows how this programme has been organized and what it encompasses.

PROJECT- SOCIAL WELFARE

a cooperation between Panevezys and Kalmar

Agnetha Hammerin Head of Division Social Welfare Center

COOPERATION PROJECT BETWEEN KALMAR AND PANEVEZYS IN SOCIAL WELFARE

At UBC:s boardmeeting in November 1993, one decided to encourage a cooperation between the different member cities within the field of Social Welfare. The first seminar was held in Kalmar, Sweden, during a week in May 1994. Kalmar had the honor to invite two participants from PSmu Estonia, Ventspils Latvia, Panevezys Lithuania, Kaliningrad Russia, Leba and Gdansk Poland. The seminar concerned transfer of knowledge of Swedish social- and unemployment public insurances and social welfare.

The purpose of the seminar was accordingly to give the participants a picture of the Swedish social security system, it's function and structure. Lectures and study visits were held within the areas of labourmarket, socialinsurances, care of elderly and disabled and finally also in the area of the social consequences, such as social benefits, rehabilitation of drugaddicts and children's rights and need of shelter.

Every day ended with an evaluation. The summing-up showed the need of a project that goes deeper into this subject. A deeper transfer of knowledge in both theory and practice use, modellings and structures were asked for. So this first seminar, held in Kalmar, is to be regarded as the first step towards this deeper cooperation between Kalmar and Panevezys.

Kalmar - Panevezys

Many cooperation projects are driven within one clearly defined area or subject. This project will try to attain a comprehensive view in the field of social welfare. To reach this purpose there are a cooperation between the County council, the County office of public insurances, the city of Kalmar and the same authorities in Panevezys. The operational phase of the project is based on discussions, wishes and demands from the colleques in Panevezys.

The over all purpose of the project:

Through a deep and creative cooperation an improvement of knowledge and competence in

both theory and methods is reached.

The project content:

- Education and exchange of experiences
- Cooperation within the area of social insurances
- Cooperation concerning the care of elderly and disabled
- Cooperation concerning children's rights and need of shelter
- Cooperation in the field of medical care

It is agreed that the women's situation especially shall be considered and focused on through all cooperation in the project.

Phase 1: - Investigation of the needs and problems in Panevezys within the agreed areas.

June -95 Representatives from Kalmar went to Panevezys and made this study together with colleagues there.

Phase 2: - The same representatives from Panevezys went to Kalmar, to study the

Okt -95 structures, organizations, educational systems and methods used in social work in Kalmar. The purpose in this phase was to make a concrete plan for the content in the project.

Phase 3: -Realization phase according to the plan. In this phase there will be personnel Mars -96 from Panevezys visiting Kalmar and vice versa.

In the area of public social insurances: - Sodra in Panevezys wishes to study how to build a legislation in Kalmar and how to organize an archive.

In the area of the

elderly and disabled - How to organize a daycarecenter for disabled

- Rehabilitation and methods for disabled children,

- Management and teamwork within the elderly care and homehelp

services

In the area of

social welfarecenter: - Theoretical seminars about children's rights and the analogical social work in families.

- Preparing lectures for families who are ready to adopt children.

In the area of medical care:

- Exchange of experiences within the field of infectious and venereal diseases
- Dental services among children and youngsters and prophylactic dental care.
- Neonatal care.

Phase 4: Evaluation.

Financing: The Government (through SIDA) has financed phase 1 and 2. A new application will now be sent for phase 3 and 4.

Project leader:

Mikael Daxberg, City of Kalmar Raimundas Alekna, Genovaite Vaicekauskiene, City of Panevezys

Examples of initiatives directed at improving social and employment conditions in Riga Latvia

15 thousand job-seekers have been registered in the City of Riga. It is below 3% of all economically active population of the Capital of Latvia. The national unemployment level is over 6%, in Latvia.

The low unemployment rate, in Riga, could be explained by delayed privatization process in Latvia. The development of medium and small enterprises is going on rather slowly. This process has caused the lack of vacancies.

The big problem is so called 'hidden unemployment' as a result of compulsory unpaid leaves for workers in the events of enterprise insolvency. At present, the low rate of unemployment has to be considered as serious problem situation in Latvia because of a very low income received by the majority of people. More than 60% of the family incomes is below the officially determined subsistence wage, in Latvia.

The active labour market policy is an important tool to keep the low rate of unemployment. The part of active labour market measures has increased and the ratio of unemployment

benefit payments is diminishing. 6200 unemployed have been placed in job with the assistance of Local Offices of Latvian State Employment Service Riga Centre.

Unemployment benefits have been assigned to about 39% of total registered unemployed. The rest of the unemployed have been offered social assistance in different forms of active labour market measures. Different forms of training have been used. More than 30 vocational training and upgrading programmes have been offered to unemployed, in 1995, including the possibility of selecting courses according to individual needs. 1562 unemployed completed their vocational training, during the first 9 months of 1995, 40% of them have already found their placement.

Local authorities also organise socially useful works with participation of 300-500 unemployed, every month.

One of the most serious post-Soviet problems, in Riga especially, is the knowledge of the State language. According to current law, persons can not work in a qualified job place without having an official Certificate of the State Language knowledge. About 40% of unemployed, who are non-Latvians, have not yet passed the exams on Latvian language. It extends social tension in the society.

In order to solve the problem, an extraordinary approach will be used. A special TV programme to learn the basic State language will be transmitted.

Our foreign partners are also taking part in improving social conditions, in Riga. The City of Bremen, Germany, have started an experience exchange programme for children from unsuccessful families. Another Riga-Bremen project is made to create a Children Care Centre for children living in their families without sufficient attention from their parents.

The City of Norrkoping, Sweden, is continuing assisting with education of employees for homes of disabled and elderly people.

The Danish Social System Export organisation EXOSS together with the Riga Social Assistance Coordination Centre of the Riga City Council have now started working to create an Elderly and Disabled Care Centre, in Riga.