

Dear UBC Friends,

The coronavirus outbreak has changed our lives dramatically. It deeply hit our families, societies, economies and daily life in the cities. This is the time, when unity, active citizenship and leadership of change are the crucial values paving the way to better tomorrow.

Unity and active citizenship. This extreme situation also effects UBC's work but by working harder for our societies and Baltic family we will contribute to a better development of the Union and its cities. Even though we must stay home, we keep together, what now seems to be more important than ever before. We all share realities and experiences and, though the approaches and measures differ from country to country – we, as a family, reside in the same Baltic home. Unity and active citizenship are the keys to lock the door of the virus room and to end this hard period in our society, which will surely be written in history books.

Leadership and change. How will this story be remembered? This depends on us. More than ever before our societies need hope, patience and leadership. I have no doubt that you and your teams are the ones to deliver that. This difficult time of uncertainty calls for more responsibility, solidarity and patience, for mutual understanding and compassion. I believe that once what we are facing right now finishes, we will emerge of the situation changed and different, but much stronger than ever before. Baltic values will bring us through the hard today towards a better tomorrow.

Be ready. In these uncertain times, as a network we should not only protect our citizens and empower medical systems, but also do our best to prepare our cities and UBC for the time after the crisis. The consequences of Covid-19 will be very visible in the economy and daily life, that is why we as UBC should invest our resources in exchanging good practices in European cooperation, build capacities of our staff and look for technological solutions to turn the crisis into opportunities as much as possible, and why not to use the UBC network for this in the upcoming years.

The future. The decisions we make and the lessons we learn as one Baltic society are long-term. Exchange of views and practical solutions is of major importance, as we are all aware that the crisis we are facing today will have long-term consequences in the future. By keeping together, sharing our experiences and problem-solving approaches we will make the future of the cities and the region stronger than ever before. I want to express my support to all of you and your teams fighting day by day in the front lines of this battle with the invisible enemy. By being together, we are stronger than it!

Stay strong and healthy!

Warm greetings



Mantas Jurgutis
President of UBC