

MINUTES OF THE 88TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
On-line, 30 November 2021

1. Opening of the meeting by UBC President and adoption of the agenda. Election of two persons who, together with the President, will check the minutes.

UBC President Mantas Jurgutis welcomed all participants at the 88th UBC Executive Board meeting organized online due to the pandemic. He reminded that on 29 October 2021 the XVI UBC General Conference elected the statutory organs and adopted the strategic documents, namely the new UBC Strategy 2022-2030 and four Policy Papers. Now the UBC can concentrate on their implementation.

The Board adopted the agenda, attached to the minutes. Natalja Vecvagare, Liepāja, and Jukka Vilen, Kemi, were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

2. Application for membership from Rumia, Poland and Gatchina, Russia, attached. Presentations of the cities.

Two cities submitted applications for UBC membership.

Marcin Kurkowski, City Secretary, briefly introduced Rumia. It is a modern and dynamically developing city, situated in the surroundings of the Tri-city Landscape Park. It is an important housing and communication centre in the Tri-City agglomeration. Among the city's priorities there is sustainable development, climate, green and blue energy, and infrastructure investments. Rumia has 46.940 inhabitants.

Vitaly Filonenko, Mayor of Gatchina, presented its priorities and development vision. Located 45 km from St. Petersburg, Gatchina is one of the most beautiful cities in Russia. The charm of antiquity and the dynamism of modernity, quiet green streets and modern industrial enterprises, the St. Petersburg Institute of Nuclear Physics and the imperial palaces - all this is today's Gatchina. The city is especially interested in cooperation within the Youthful Cities Commission. Gatchina has over 100.000 inhabitants.

Both cities presented the promotional spots. Links to the video presentations are included in the meeting documentation.

Decision:

The Board approved applications for membership from Gatchina and Rumia.

3. Information from the Commissions/WG/TF on planned activities for 2022. (7 min each)

Cultural Cities, Kaunas

Lina Duobaite informed Rūta Stepanovaitė left her position as a chair of the Cultural Cities Commission and started a new job in Lithuanian Council for Culture in Vilnius. Lina Duobaite reported on the main commission's activities in 2021, e.g. projects Ars Baltica Creative Dialogue (ABCD), Culture 4 Climate (C4C) and UrbCultural Planning with CCC as a partner.

The city of Kaunas wants to continue its work as a leader of the commission.

Inclusive and Healthy Cities, Jannis Dammann, Chair of the Commission, Rostock

The chairmanship of the Inclusive and Healthy Cities Commission has been taken over by the city of Rostock. Jannis Dammann, new chair of the commission, presented its priorities and plans for 2022. The first commission's meeting under Rostock leadership was held in the previous week online. The commission intends to focus on sport and inclusion. Four meetings are planned to be organized, including commission's meeting and international All Inclusive event, both in Rostock.

Planning Cities, Paulina Szewczyk, Chair of the Commission, Gdynia

Paulina Szewczyk informed about the meeting held on 27-29 September in Rostock. The seminar was devoted to transformation of former soviet urbanization to a sustainable city model. The seminar gathered over 20 participants and got media attention. The meetings sessions were streamed live. The commission will continue to promote interaction and cooperation between Baltic Sea cities in the field of urban planning and construction in 2022. In cooperation with the Smart and Prospering Cities Commission the PCC is planning to organize in-person seminar in Kiel in June 2022. The commission has got involved in the New European Bauhaus initiative, a webinar on this topic is planned to be held in November 2022.

Safe Cities, Kaspars Varpins, Chair of the Commission, Liepāja

Kaspars Varpins presented the main activities planned for 2022. The commission is going to expand partnership and collaboration with such organizations as Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS), other UBC Commissions. The topics on the commission's agenda include: safety of young people, promotion of safety issues, projects, climate change. In 2022 the commission plans to organize at least two meetings/seminars.

Smart and Prospering Cities, Wolfgang Schmidt, Chair of the Commission, Kiel

In 2022 the commission plans to hold two virtual and one in person event in cooperation with the Planning Cities Commission. External funds are to be obtained for additional projects. The planned meetings include such topics as Creative Ports project, High Potential Region focusing on cooperation between cities, companies and universities. An in person meeting will be devoted to planning and marketing of a new city district in Kiel.

Sustainable Cities, Agnieszka Ilola, Acting Head of SCC Secretariat, Turku

Agnieszka Ilola informed about new chairmanship of SCC. The commission will coordinate the implementation of the new Sustainability Action Programme. It will also continue its work on projects. In the new EU funding period 2021-2027 SCC plans to be involved in several project applications. Applications with focus on reduction of pollution of the Baltic Sea from nutrients and hazardous substances, sustainable urban mobility, climate budget, energy efficiency in urban real estate and buildings, storm and waste water management, environmental monitoring and research of responsibilities of local authorities.

The commission will go on with UBC TALKS series and publications.

Youthful Cities, Dmitrijs Zverevs, Chair of the Commission, Riga

The commission will continue its activities aiming at empowering youth participation in the BSR and best practice exchange between member cities in the field of youth. Dmitrijs Zverevs informed two meetings were planned in 2022. Also, the commission is a partner in ERASMUS+ project Baltic Sea Youth Platform. Another project YUPAD: YoUth Participatory budgets empowering young people using big Data, also funded by ERASMUS+, has just been approved.

Gender Equality, Cecilia Wróbel, co-Chair, Kalmar

Cecilia Wróbel presented the goals and activities of the group in 2022. They include: eradication of all forms of gender-based violence, elimination of discrimination at decision-making level and in the labour market, promotion of equality and equity in social and urban planning. The WGGE is planning to facilitate a workshop and arrange three webinars on relevant topics.

Also, a newsletter will be published two times during a year.

Youth Employment & Well-being, Matti Mäkelä, Chair, Turku

During the year 2022 the Task Force will concentrate on three major themes:

- STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) Path for every child and youngster,
- Basic Skills or Upgrading Pathways (youngsters with problems with basic skills such as math, literacy, IT),
- Early school leaving and school attendance problems.

Matti Mäkelä informed 3-4 webinars and 2 study visits are planned to be organized. The TF will continue cooperation with other networks, e.g. Flagship School to Work and StartNet and will look for another project opportunities.

The activity plans of the Commissions are attached.

The Board took note of the reports.

4. Proposal from the Task Force on Youth Employment & Well-being, Matti Mäkelä.

Matti Mäkelä reminded that the Task Force was created in 2013 in order to seek practical and effective solutions to tackle youth unemployment and marginalization. The report 'The Good, The Bad and The Next Practices' was created and in 2015 it was decided to continue the work of the TF to help implementation of suggested measures.

During the last two years the Task Force concentrated on three themes - STEAM, Basic Skills and Attractiveness of the VET. There is a need to continue cooperation within these issues. However, the name of the Task Force now only partially reflects its scope of interest. Mr Mäkelä proposed a discussion about the TF's future, indicating three possibilities: changing the name of the TF, establishing a new commission dealing with education or merging it with the Youthful Cities Commission, however the last option may not create an added value.

Natalja Vecvagare, Liepāja, wanted to learn the opinion of Dmitrijs Zverevs, Chair of Youthful Cities Commission on the possible merger.

Mr Zverevs informed that the working methods of the Youthful Cities Commission and the Task Force on Youth Employment & Well-being are very different. TF is an expert driven entity, while the commission is aiming to support youth involvement. The best solution would be to have two separate commissions which could cooperate in projects and initiatives.

Elina Rantanen, Turku, added that concerning the activities of all commissions, UBC is missing perspective related to education and unemployment, so it would be good to bring this perspective. As the task forces are created for some period of time to reach some goals, it would be better to establish a commission for continuous work on the topic of education.

Wolfgang Schmidt, Kiel, said that the big strength of UBC is that it involves young people, which is not so widely practiced in other organizations. He supported the idea to have two separate commissions, one involving young people in the UBC work and the second one focused on schools and universities.

Karin Wohlgemuth, Rostock, stressed that it is important to continue the work of the TF, and did not support merging it with the Youthful Cities Commission. Ms Wohlgemuth wondered what would be the asset for the task force to become a commission.

President Mantas Jurgutis stressed that both these UBC bodies are very active, with regular activities, and different groups of interest. He noticed the TF is already operating like a commission. The President supported the idea of creating the commission on education.

Paweł Żaboklicki reminded that according to the UBC Internal Regulations, 'The Executive Board may nominate an ad hoc UBC Commission after application from at least three Member Cities. The final approval of the creation of the new Commission is taken by the General Conference.'

Decision:

The Executive Board authorized the Presidium to decide to set up an ad hoc commission dealing with questions of education, when three UBC member cities would submit such application. Later on the next General Conference would approve the creation of the new commission.

5. Smile City goes Baltic project proposal, Rostock.

Jens Will, leader of 'Smile City – component Places' made a brief presentation of the project and its new international component Smile City goes Baltic.

In September 2020 the City of Rostock was granted a huge financial support within the national programme 'SMART CITY made in Germany' aimed to be a SMART model city for the wellbeing of its citizens. There is no digital strategy for Rostock yet so this project gives a chance for digitalization and sustainable urban development. However Rostock wants not only to be a technical smart city, but also a smile city, with the main goal to make inhabitants happier.

Rostock set up a special task force in order to concentrate strongly on this challenge. The budget is around 8 mln EUR from the government and 4 mln from the city council. In phase A two project parts

have been worked out to achieve the goal of a people friendly city – smile: exchange, citizens, governance and places. In phase B - implementation of goals, strategies and measures is planned.

Mr Will thanked UBC for a letter of interest signed in 2020 and support during the application phase. He stressed that an intensive exchange with other cities would help Rostock to take advantage of already available experience.

Mr Will added that they would like to offer discussion aimed at concrete and immediate topics:

1. Citizens involvement and community building
2. Interaction of local stakeholders and data based decision making
3. Shared public spaces in the cityscape
4. Scientifically supported knowledge transfer.

Mr Will said that by the beginning 2022 Rostock will start to encourage wide Baltic debate on these themes and invited UBC for support and cooperation.

Wolfgang Schmidt proposed to support the initiative and disseminate the results among the member cities.

President Jurgutis supported the project and looked forward to more practical steps in 2022.

Karin Wohlgemuth added that Rostock wants to start with a smaller format, as it has to go along with the national funding. Next spring there would be a concrete proposal.

The description of the project is attached.

Decision:

The Board decided to support the Smile City goes Baltic initiative.

6. Policy positions follow-up actions/initiatives in 2022, UBC Antenna in Brussels.

Marko Paunovic, Head of UBC Brussels Antenna, briefly presented a report of Antenna activities in 2021, the report is attached.

Mr Paunovic proposed Policy Papers follow-up actions in 2022. Activities are divided into two pillars. First one is related to visibility and partnerships. Second one is related to flagships and projects.

I. Pillar:

1. Arranging and attending meetings with key stakeholders together with the UBC leadership.
2. The event in the European Parliament
3. Capacity building of MC in the EU funding
4. Policy passport – making policy positions easier for young people, shorter with some visuals
5. The event within the European Week of Regions and Cities
6. Other representation events

II. Pillar – policy update and analyzing the topics, then preparing projects applications to different EU programs.

The action plan is attached.

President Mantas Jurgutis thanked for the good work the Antenna has made so far. He stressed that the recently adopted policy papers must turn into practice through flagship projects, as it is very important for UBC to be recognized as an organization full of content, not only a territorial based network.

Decision:

The Board took note of the Brussels Antenna action plan 2022.

7. Budget for 2022.

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the budget proposal for 2022.

The last General Conference, held on 29 October 2021 online, approved the membership fees for the next two years. They remain on the same level.

In the budget 2022 incomes would come from the membership fees, resources saved in 2021 and the EU projects. The expenditures include e.g. commissions, projects, meetings, services/maintenance, communications, advocacy & policy, presidency etc. The budget is attached to the minutes.

Decision:

The Board adopted the budget for 2022.

The Board assigned the Presidium to make a final decision on commissions funding in 2022.

8. Next Executive Board meeting, spring 2022.

President Mantas Jurgutis informed that the exact date of the next Executive Board meeting to be held in spring 2022 will be determined depending on pandemic development.

9. Any other business.

No further questions have been raised.

President Mantas Jurgutis thanked all participants for a fruitful meeting and closed the 88th online Executive Board meeting.

Mantas Jurgutis
Chair

Paweł Żaboklicki
Secretary General

Natalja Vecvagare
Adjuster

Jukka Vilen
Adjuster