



Baltic Cities

Bulletin

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Baltic Sea Wave – Business Development in the New Europe



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COVER PICTURE

City of Klaipėda
Liepu street

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Baltic Cities Bulletin



Dear UBC Friends,

First of all: Welcome to the 7th UBC General Conference in Klaipėda. I wish you all fruitful proceedings and discussions on a theme that is of great importance for the future of our cities, namely promotion of Business Development, and thereby more tax revenues and less expense caused by unemployment and its consequences. However, more important than tax revenues is the well-being of our citizens. A prosperous business life is essential for the vitality of the whole city.

We shall also discuss and decide on other important matters. We shall adopt a new strategy and Agenda 21 Action Program, and we shall elect both board members and presidium.

My first period as UBC President has been a very rewarding. It is clear that UBC plays an important role in the Baltic Sea, and I have many times experienced that UBC is met by respect and even admiration. We are the largest and best functioning regional cities network in Europe.

We are now entering a new era in the Baltic Sea History with the enlargement of the European Union. We will have free movement of labour, capital and goods across the Baltic Sea. We will have the national legislations in fundamental matters based on a common legal base, so businessmen know what to expect on the other side of the Baltic Sea. We will have a common base on democracy, freedom and human rights, and a stable economic and political development, which also boosts business activities. Perhaps we even one day will have a common currency across the Baltic Sea, even if Sweden and Denmark will stay outside that co-operation for the time being.

We have many challenges yet to solve, both in the Baltic Sea perspective and the European perspective. The environmental situation in our Baltic Sea is not good even if it has improved in many places since the foundation of UBC. New threats are also approaching, for example the prospect of increased oil transports on the Baltic Sea. The UBC Agenda 21 Action Program 2004-2009 will be the UBC tool to do our part of the job to improve the environmental situation on our Baltic Sea. At the same time, it is an important strategic program for the implementation of our overall strategy. Sustainable development combines balanced democratic, economic, social and environmental development and is thereby a core objective of the whole UBC.

The general debate on the new EU Constitution concentrates on issues like EU President, EU Foreign Policy and national representation in the EU system. But the constitution contains also very interesting perspectives for the local level authorities, meaning that the EU commission will discuss directly with the sub-national level. It will be very interesting to participate in that process, and UBC will let its voice be heard on this topic.

Once again, welcome to Klaipėda!

Per Bødker Andersen
UBC President

Kolding, October 2003



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A team of the Industrial Park in Jõhvi (Estonia) with their partners from Ogre (Latvia)



Opening of the Business Centre in Vordingborg



Summer meeting of the UBC Executive Board was held in Rostock



Prof. Dr. Ingo Richter, Initiator and Organizer of the Hanse-Tour Sunshine with the Prime Minister of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

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I. THE BALTIC SEA WAVE - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW EUROPE

BALTIC SEA REGION – A TIGER ECONOMY ?

It has become evident that we who live in the Baltic Sea Region live in one of the major growth regions on a global scale and certainly on European scale. Some even call it the Tiger Economies of the Old World. Stable political and economic conditions, good institutional infrastructure, and skilled labour boost confidence, and consequently investments. Also the intense co-operation in our region creates an excellent base for business development.

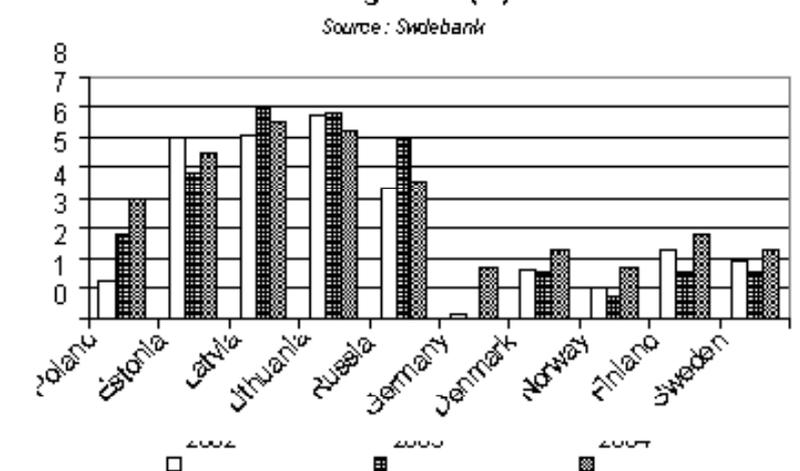
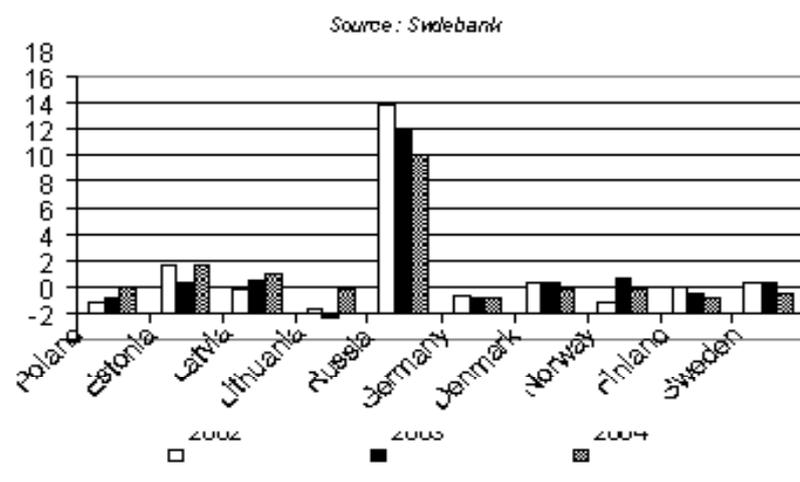
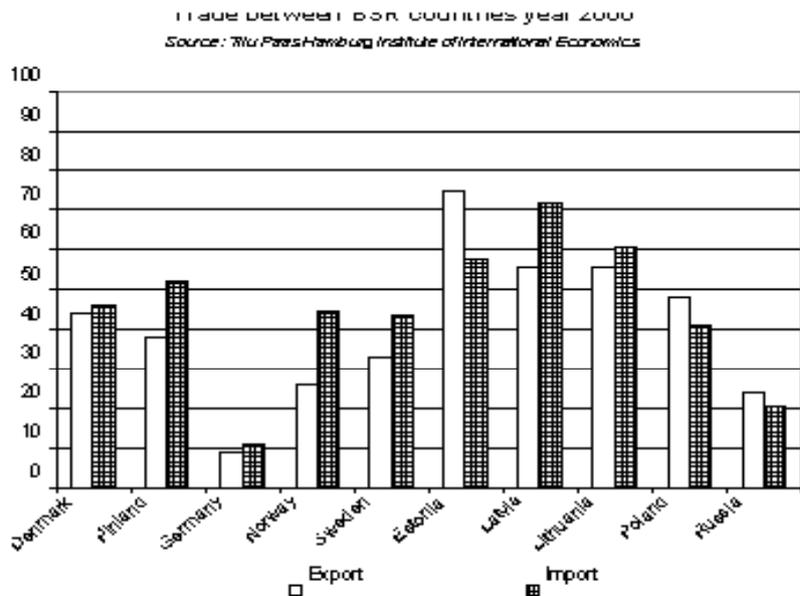
BSR is also to a great deal a self-contained region. The countries trade with each other to a great extent. In general, about half of the foreign trade of the BSR countries, except for the large countries Germany and Russia, is between the countries in the BSR. (figure 1 on Trade between BSR countries)

The region is characterized very much by complementary economies. The present EU countries have access to a highly developed market economy, knowledge-based industry, many large multinational companies with well developed channels to markets, and a large management capital.

The new EU Countries have a growing economy with strong potential and low labour costs but well educated labour. The infrastructure, both the institutional like banking, legislation and law enforcement, as well as physical infra-structure, like telephone connections, roads and harbours, is good. The new EU countries can function as a bridge to other markets, like Russia and Ukraine. Also, historical and geographical proximity are strong driving forces for an increased trade and investment.

Good prospects give results in the GNP growth (fig 2, on GNP growth). The new EU countries and Russia show a remarkable growth rate. Due to poor performance by Germany, the average GNP growth for the whole BSR region including Germany is not higher than to that of the Nordic Countries.

One remarkable thing is that the high growth rate in the new EU countries is that it can be combined with a low inflation and a negative trade balance.(figure 3, on inflation). This high rate of GNP growth in the new EU is also partly due to the fact that it starts from a low level. GNP per person ranges between 25 and 40 % of





the EU average. The Swedish Export Council did recently an analysis on the functioning of the markets in the Baltic Sea Region. In general, the findings show that in spite of some remaining problems, the prospects for further business development are good, and the problems are not greater than they can be solved.

Among the problems are differences in business cultures in the new and old EU countries. The companies are more hierarchic structure with an authoritarian rule. The employees, also at high level, are often not expected to make independent decisions or to take own initiatives. Only written agreements are valid. Language problems are frequent. It can also be difficult to find staff for high management that can integrate with foreign business culture easily.

There are also problems with various government authorities. Repayment of VAT does not function well and the customs procedures are complicated and time-consuming in all of the countries except Estonia. Certification, bureaucracy etc need time. Frequent changes of legislation create problems.

Eastern Europe has among some got a reputation for criminal activity. But the Swedish Export Council concludes that crime is often highly exaggerated and is not a large problem in any of the new EU countries, at least not more than in any other EU country.

But there are other problems even if the prospects for the development of the Region are bright. The vast distances from the northern and eastern part of the BSR to the markets in central Europe, combined with lack of high capacity ferry lines and good flight connections across the Baltic Sea are certainly a disadvantage. Poor infrastructure for transportation and a strong tendency from the EU Commission to concentrate the lion share of EU investment in transport infrastructure to central and Western Europe adds clouds on the sky. Especially Finland, the three Baltic States, Kaliningrad and Eastern Poland suffer from this tendency. Finland has therefore initiated the concept of Baltic Sea Motorways, meaning a stronger focus on maritime transportation on the Baltic Sea. One potential problem could also be lack of interest not only from EU but also from the national governments regarding infrastructure investments in transportation across the Baltic Sea.

*by Juhan Janusson
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CITY ROLE IN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Business takes place in cities. Cities are an important part of the business environment. But municipalities do not create other jobs than those directly decided by the municipality. Real and sustainable jobs are created by entrepreneurs who start or develop business activities. The role of municipal business promotion policy is therefore to stimulate and support entrepreneurship by utilising its network and engaging all good forces in the region.

This role has developed very much during the recent decade or so. Only some years ago, business policy of cities was to allocate good industrial ground and to produce plans on business policies. Now it is not possible just to sit in the City Hall and make plans. Instead it is necessary to spend time and carry out activities with the companies and other network partners.

The task of the municipal business development department is to increase the attractiveness of the city for the business community. They must look, specify and market competencies, and to secure that the general development of the city is attractive for business. As the underlying aim of municipality business policies at the end of the day is to increase the tax base, it is also necessary to give a higher priority to the municipal revenue aspect. The higher wage-level of a business enterprise, the better for the tax-base.

We are now in a very volatile period in business development. The situation will develop very much with the EU enlargement and new ways of making business. Among trends is the rapid increase of knowledge-based business and of outsourcing of activities. There is a need for municipalities to understand the development.

The municipalities must be ready, flexible and ready to accept new trends in an early stage in order to be successful in the long perspective. For example, the most precious assets of successful companies are the employees. The trend is now that availability of staff is more steering for company development or location of additional working places than any other factor. Consequently, one of the main roles of municipalities is to create an environment that is attractive for the employees and workers of the business community. The cities must create pleasant

living conditions for all types of staff, including the leading staff.

It is also clear that people commute from one city to another for work. The business networks do not stop at the municipal border. Therefore it is necessary for neighbouring cities to co-operate and form city networks instead of competing.

Municipal business promotion policies deal very much with forming partnerships with various actors: Universities, chambers of commerce, business organisations, neighbouring communities, municipalities, enterprises.... The partnerships can be formal or temporary partnerships in various projects. Access to the Structural Funds and other financing steers to some extent the organisation of partnership formation.

Kolding Municipality in the middle of Denmark forms partnerships in a co-operation body together with enterprises and other actors. The body carries out joint projects with the members, aiming at boosting business level and make Kolding Region attractive for investors. The role of the manager is mainly to keep the municipality on the right track in order to secure that the city's attractiveness for business activities increases.

Umeå in the north of Sweden has also an active business development policy, but as it has access to the Structural Fund's money and also utilised other EU financing sources, the partnership is formed around various projects together with neighbouring municipalities, the business community, the University and even with partners in neighbouring Finland.

Apart from being a source of financing of projects, EU also plays another important role. It gives an impetus to increase the international aspects of the city and promotes co-operation across sectors and borders.

by Juhan Janusson

*Based on information by
Mr Erling Winther, City of Kolding
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BRANDING A KNOWLEDGE REGION

Regional competitiveness and economic development closely linked to the knowledge-based economy are today's concerns. Emergence of „new economy” based on information, communication, media and biotechnology can be observed. Innovative industries flourish in specific geographic “clusters”. So to set up a nurturing environment for already established clusters and a new generation of entrepreneurs in a network economy with essential knowledge management and existing new business rules is a real challenge.

Aarhus is facing these new competitive rules and aligns own strategies to maintain the position of a leading knowledge region in the Baltic Region. Alliances and collaborations with other knowledge regions are central in the strategy as the locus of innovation and competitiveness is found in the inter-organisational networks of learning.

The region's research budgets and networks are drivers for strong capabilities within the clusters of IT and Life Sciences. Biotechnology is widely recognised and constitutes together with IT new convergence opportunities for the coming decades. A key question



is whether the techniques of cluster building can be learned and promotional policies implemented to offset the natural imbalances in the distribution of these new specialised knowledge resources. Can regional authorities and organisations implant clusters in places that previously did not have them? Learning about the nature of clusters, learning from experiences in developing them with the help of policy intervention, will assist the process of strengthening the existing ones, developing new ones and revitalising the older ones. In this process, the goals of regional equity and competitiveness should be enhanced to achieve the Aarhus region's objective of becoming a leading knowledge-based Metropolis in the networked economy.

Branding Across Borders addresses the issue of global branding head-on,

going beyond the brand itself to address how a region must fine-tune its own organisational structure before it can effectively extend and manage its brands in the global marketplace. Branding across borders offers key insights on developing powerful, memorable global brand strategies. A key issue in global branding efforts is overcoming cultural and language differences in the establishment and execution of a branding message in different world markets.

This challenge permeates all aspects of global branding and impacts selecting which products/services to offer in particular markets to attract customers and competencies. Assuring that all stakeholders convey the values and vision of the region is an important part of the challenge for developing and delivering a global branding strategy for existing and emerging clusters.

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SUPPORT TO SME

Considering joining to the European Union one of the priorities of city administration is to promote and create favourable conditions for entrepreneurship development in Cēsis. Therefore different investments and possibilities are used to improve infrastructure and quality of services in the city, create new work places. Financing for the investments comes from EU foundations, state and local government, entrepreneurs and international cooperation partners.

Inhabitants of Cēsis are privileged to live in one of the most ancient Latvian towns with cultural and historical heritage that allows to develop tourism. However successful city development cannot be possible without supporting small and

medium sized enterprises (SME) in other spheres. Still, inhabitants of Cēsis don't want huge industrial enterprises to be built in the city.

Cēsis City Council uses modern technologies to make better co-operation between city administration and entrepreneurs. A new city home page has been created and special section called “Entrepreneurship” allows entrepreneurs to put information about their companies. Same the e-mail list of Cēsis entrepreneurs that contains almost 80 addresses is a good chance to inform about news that could be interesting for them as well as to receive entrepreneurs« recommendations.

Entrepreneurs have taken part in various official visits and exhibitions in foreign countries organised by City Council. To get more information special seminars

regarding possibilities and demands after joining EU are organised for the entrepreneurs and financed by European Commission and local government.

Cēsis City Council is looking for new possibilities and ways to support local entrepreneurs those developing city.

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NOT ONLY THE SEA

The region of Bergen represents one of the most complete maritime clusters in Europe, having international expertise in many fields. The main strategy for economic development is to advance some selected industries that represent strong regional clusters with a potential for growth and success.

The selected priority areas are: tourism, fishery and fish-related industries, maritime industry, information and communication technology, oil and gas, research, education and culture. Within each priority area a network organisation has been selected to follow up the strategy for economic development. These organisations are to operate as links between industry/business and local authority. Located on the coast, the city's links with the sea have always been important. Bergen is often referred to as the gateway to the fjords. There are more than 200 cruise ships calls each year, which attract tourists from all over the world. The sea fish resources provide food

and income. Export of fish was the most important trade for several hundred years and contributed to the development of international shipping, which influenced the development of shipping industry.

Bergen has world-leading expertise in marine research. The Bergen-region is the main area for fish farming in Norway. The marine sector is forecast to be the most important industry in Norway in the near future. One of Norway's national economic challenges is to find alternative areas of growth after the "petroleum adventure". But still oil and gas resources on the Norwegian continental shelf west of Bergen are key factors in the economic development.

The city accommodates about 28.000 students. Most important are the University of Bergen, Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration, and Bergen University College.

Culture is also an area of priority for the municipality of Bergen. The city has produced many well-known composers and musicians. The Bergen



Philharmonic Orchestra, the oldest in Europe, and the Bergen International Festival, the largest annual event in Norway, both placed Bergen well and truly on the world cultural map. Norway's first permanent theatre, Den Nationale Scene, was founded in Bergen in 1850. Additionally, "traditional" music and culture of Bergen has significantly contributed to contemporary art and pop music. In 2000 Bergen was given the status of the European City of Culture.

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A CITY OF OPPORTUNITIES

Gdańsk is the largest city in northern Poland and the economic, research, and cultural centre of the Tri-City agglomeration with a million inhabitants. The city's geographic location offers unique opportunities.

Here, the transport corridors of the TINA EU Trans-Continental Transport Network meet. This configuration makes the city a perfect location for the planned Pomeranian Logistics Centre. Next to the harbour, it is to be linked to the Container Terminal (anticipated handling capacity by 2012 - 1 million TEU/year) and other piers. With the PLC located at the node of land and sea routes of the 6th European transport corridor the Polish maritime trade and transit traffic will gain new perspectives. There will be new opportunities of developing transport lines to the Baltic states and seaports all over the world. The centre is also a major pillar of the strategic plan for economic development of the Pomeranian Region.

Gdańsk is the prime tourist area in

northern Poland and on the southern Baltic coast. The city attracts visitors with its world-class historic of buildings, sites associated with Solidarity, cultural events, and leisure facilities with wide and clean beaches, marinas, bathing grounds, etc. Convenient sea, air, and land transport also pertains to tourism development. Noteworthy is the huge success of the new Gdańsk-Trelleborg-Copenhagen ferry line. In 2003 the ferry will take about 170 thousand passengers. The growing interest in Gdańsk makes tourism an ever more profitable sector of the local economy. This, however, calls for new investments in e.g. the accommodation base, new marina, business tourism facilities, etc.

Gdańsk is a major research centre in Poland. It has 12 universities with nearly 62 thousand students, plus 15 research establishments. Well-qualified human resources translate to unemployment below the national average. In the last decade Gdańsk has grown to become an important centre of new economy industries like IT technologies, and the city authorities



The Gdańsk authorities cherish the ambition of maintaining the city's high status in the united Europe

consider the sector promising.

New investment opportunities in Gdańsk are almost unlimited. The city has an unparalleled range of highly attractive, well-linked, and unoccupied land available for development, spread along the seashore, over the moraine hills, next to the landscape park, and the downtown.

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A SMART CITY!

Open and comfortable. A city of tradition and modernity. Gdynia is major commercial and industrial centre. 30% of adults is employed in the maritime sector, which is a natural consequence of city's geographical location. The high technology sector is another basis for the city's growth.

Gdynia boasts unique investment opportunities both in its very centre as well as on the outskirts. On Gdynia's prestigious zone, which is in the waterfront area, there are grounds available for new uses. Nearby, between the port and Downtown Gdynia there is a huge site of nearly 100 hectares for mixed port and city functions. In the past, this area served as a warehouse for exported coal. Today the port is mainly a general cargo port and the largest container terminal on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea. In the western part of the city own "silicon valley" expands. The western direction is also an area destined for housing and estate developments.

Local authorities undertake complex actions to make the most of Gdynia's assets.

The results of ranking, numerous awards and diplomas placing Gdynia in the highest class in respect of investment attractiveness prove Gdynia's high esteem.

Gdynia is an unquestionable leader in conducting promotion activities. In September 2000, the City together with leading enterprises seeking investors both in

Poland and abroad, launched a promotion campaign "Thinking of investing...think Gdynia", which was the first one in Poland organized on such a scale.

In spring 2001, on the initiative of the city, the First International Investment Forum was organised with support from local enterprises. The forum gathered the biggest developers present on the Polish market and in its course full investment opportunities offered by the city were presented. The Forum was organised under the patronage of Polish Prime Minister and Speaker of the Polish



foto. T.Degórski

New investment areas on Gdynia's waterfront

Parliament. The following forums were held in Gdynia, the last one under the auspices of Polish President.

The quality of life along with exceptional land values make Gdynia an ideal place to invest in.

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JOHVI INDUSTRIAL PARK

In recent years Jõhvi has become the fastest developing town in Ida-Virumaa attracting the majority of region's business and service industries. Jõhvi has also become the location for the administrative structures of North-East Estonia. 180 000 people live, within a 50-kilometre circle making Jõhvi district the second largest settlement in the Republic after Tallinn.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers has been commissioned to prepare a business plan for Jõhvi Industrial Park. The Programme finances the project for the Areas of Industrial Structuring of Enterprise Estonia. The business plan suggests stages, structure, financial needs and resources for development of the Industrial Park. The future industrial park has strategically and logistically excellent location. It has the infrastructure suitable for manufacturing enterprise and flexible

facilities, as well as the potential to draw on the labour force of Jõhvi and the surrounding area. One possibility for development is intensive industries such as metallurgical, engineering and



The development of manufacturing industries is at low ebb at present, which causes little variety in the structure of available jobs. That is why one of the priorities of the city development policy is to support the growth of manufacturing industries

instrument making. On the other hand, textile, woodworking and food producing industries are being considered.

As developments connected with the industrial park depend largely on finding additional financing options for the starter investments, it was decided to make a bid for financial aid from the funds of both the Estonian Government and the European Union. The Industrial Park will be located in the Mining Education Centre complex, consisting of several buildings on a large area of land on the outskirts of Jõhvi. Preparations are under way to find tenants for the Jõhvi Industrial Park.

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BALTIC BUSINESS CENTER

In the Baltic Rim you can find a near market with more than 50 million consumers. The region is expanding dramatically and this, opens unspoken business opportunities for many companies. Baltic Business Centre Network, which is represented in 9 countries, gives you an arena where you can quickly find suitable solutions for your business development in this new and exciting market.

Baltic Business Centre Klaipėda was founded in 1995 and was one of the first centres in the Network. That Centre is the biggest entity in the network with 8 employees and its own Trading House in the centre of Klaipėda. Our business idea is to act as a catalyst and platform for Swedish and Baltic companies that want to develop their businesses in respective countries. So far, Baltic Business Centre Klaipėda, together with the mother company in Sweden, has helped about 550 – 600 companies to find their business in the respective

country. Our competence covers, e.g. market researches, partner searches, establishing companies, and long-term co-operation agreements with Swedish companies in Lithuania.

Baltic Business Centre Klaipėda has Swedish management and Lithuanian project leaders. We have long experience working with Scandinavian and Baltic companies. Our project leaders have during long time lived and worked in Scandinavia, which gives them a deep knowledge of the Scandinavian business culture and the language.

During the latest years, we have seen a development, not only that Scandinavian entrepreneurs start their business in the Baltic countries, but mainly that the Baltic companies themselves want to start business in Scandinavia. Baltic Business Centre has worked with many companies, of this



Baltic Business Centre in Klaipėda serves mostly the Scandinavian Companies

kind which today have their business in Scandinavia.

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FOREST INDUSTRY BUSINESS PARK

„Jēkabpils Forest Industry Business Park” Phare Project, will be run by Jēkabpils City Council in co-operation with Latvian Forest Industry Federation and Ventspils City Council. The overall objective is to increase the competitiveness of companies related to forest industries by creating an effective enterprise cluster based on knowledge-intensive production and higher value-added outputs.

Being in the crossroads of the major Latvian timber log transport routes and having a traditional forestry sector, as well as the experience in studying the development potential of Jēkabpils forestry industry, Jēkabpils has found the way to use these advantages to ensure sustainable development of the city and Latvian wood sector.

As a result, there will be two regional project establishments: Jēkabpils Forest Industry Business Park in Jēkabpils and Kurzeme Wood Processing Competence Centre in Ventspils that will provide

space and premises for producers. Industrial space available for tenants in the park will be more than 7000 m² and office premises for administration and management of cluster joining companies - almost 200 m², and in Kurzeme WPCC - more than 2000m² and 200m² respectively.

Also establishment of Forest Knowledge Centre (FKC) in cooperation with Latvian University of Agriculture is envisaged, which will play an important role in problem management within the industry, as well as in information and education. It will consist of centers for Information, Technology, Project Development and Education. The two business parks will receive problem solutions from it, as well as they will collect data on industry and market, in exchange information from FKC accumulated database as well as the Centre will develop educational programs.

The total cost of the project is over 6



From ruins to Business Park

million EUR and 69% is financed by the Phare. The project will last till September 9, 2004. After that the three project establishments will continue to develop and look for new investments.

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BUSINESS IN THE BOTHNIAN ARC

A new business development project Baltic Business Link is a good example of north-south collaboration in the Bothnian Arc. In today's rapidly changing and highly disruptive global environment, SME expansion into foreign markets may be difficult and problematic.

To lower the threshold for enterprises to enter foreign markets, development agencies in Oulu, Luleå, Gdańsk and Halle will co-ordinate actions directly involving and developing real companies and businesses. For instance, the activities that are to be included in the project are co-ordinated participation in the fairs and company face-to-face meetings.

Business development is the main objective in the international work carried out by Luleå city, UBC's new member. Luleå, together with Kemi and Oulu, are vigorously developing the



The Bothnian Arc represents 7 Swedish and 27 Finnish cities and municipalities

co-operation between cities in the most northern part of the Baltic Sea. There are 600 000 people living in the Bothnian Arc that is the northernmost cluster of industry and cutting-edge expertise in the BSR. The strategic industries in the Bothnian Arc are informatics, communication technology, steel, engineering, forestry, welfare technology, tourism and adventure industries.

In order to take full advantage of the development potential in the whole BSR, the Bothnian Arc is determined to collaborate with other cities and regions around the Baltic. Cities of Lübeck and Bornholm can serve as excellent examples of partners involved in co-operation.

“As BSR's northern most member, I believe Luleå has a special mission to fulfil and try to increase the north-south co-operation, and to take full advantage of the great potential of the whole region“, says Karl Petersen, Mayor of Luleå and chairman of the Bothnian Arc Association. And strengthening the co-operation rests within the UBC's main objectives, too.

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A TRUMP CARD OF THE CITY

Undoubtedly, one of the most important „trump cards“ that Koszalin could offer is commissioning of the new „Koszalin“ complex of the Slupsk Special Economic Zone, in which attractive and preferential conditions for foreign investors will be created.

Koszalin is an important business centre in the Region of Central Pomerania, as well as a significant cultural and academic centre.

Entrepreneurs conducting their business activity in the area of the „Koszalin“ complex will take advantage of public assistance in form of real property tax exemption and income tax exemption by virtue of investment implementation or creation of new places of work.

Irrespective of conditions, Koszalin has large reserve of land for buildings intended for industrial, services and housing purposes, as well as storage places, stocking yards, fair, exhibition and commercial centres.

Koszalin is regarded as a modern municipal centre characterised by good



Panorama of Koszalin - view from the north

technical infrastructure satisfying the needs of its inhabitants and entrepreneurs. The city is located on the transit route of international importance connecting Berlin and Kaliningrad and on the national road connecting Koszalin with the South of Poland. Such favourable location is undoubtedly one of the factors contributing to economic development of the city.

One of the priorities of the city authorities is intensive development of institutions of higher education. The Technical University of Koszalin with its over 18 thousands students, is known for its longest academic traditions.

Among our strengths one will find well educated and prepared labour force ready

for co-operation.

Other strong points of the city are favourable conditions for development of tourism sector. The city is situated in one of the most attractive touristic regions of Poland, close to the Baltic Sea with lakes and rivers and large forest complexes excellent for fishing, angling and hunting.

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CITY BY THE SEA

The Kotka-Hamina region's potential for growth and enterprise will be activated through co-operation and competence, with a view to forming significant centres of expertise. The benefits of the geonomic location will be increased through stronger input in the East know-how as well as in a top quality logistics cluster. In addition the region's key competencies are wood technology, information technology, metal industry networks, energy and environmental technology, tourism and food production and rural enterprises.

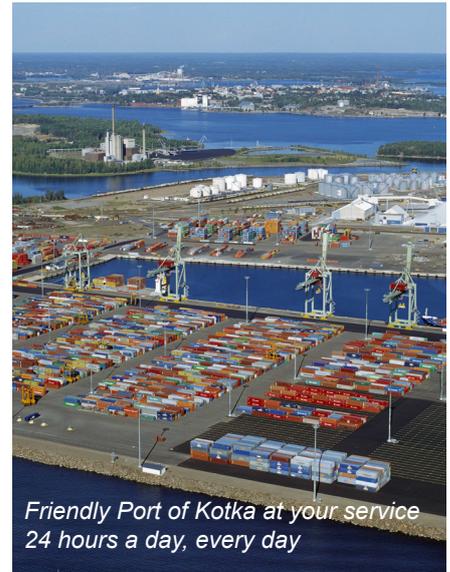
The regional business service company has an authorisation and resources from municipalities to promote especially common key competencies.

Kotka has one of the largest export ports in Kotka-Hamina region in Southeast Finland. The port has connections all over the world and modern international industry like paper, glass fibre, glass, metal and food. The port is not only for

cargo. The Port of Kotka has a plan to get passenger traffic from Kotka to Russia and other destinations at the Baltic Sea.

The city will have a promising view in tourism; the town got as the first in Finland a sea aquarium with all Finnish fish species. The Maretarium welcomes all fish enthusiasts to see underwater life. And those who are really interested in fishes, may have a trip to fishing safari either for The River Kymi or The Gulf of Finland. Another attraction will be the Finnish Maritime Museum which will be located in the Old Port of Kotka when the Provincial Museum of Kymenlaakso will move there.

Young people are very important for the future development of every town. Many young Kotka people would like to stay in their hometown, but the problem is how to get work. There is Kymenlaakso Polytechnic in Kotka, but almost all graduated in information technology move to the metropolitan area. Kotka fights against this tendency



Friendly Port of Kotka at your service 24 hours a day, every day

to rebuild a school to ITC-Centre in order to make information technology companies to move Kotka and develop businesses here.

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ADVANTAGES FOR PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

Lahti and the surrounding region have around 200 000 inhabitants, which is a fair amount as for the Finnish standards. During the last decades Helsinki metropolitan area has attracted population and companies from the rest of the country leading to significant rise in the costs of housing and land there. This fact offers another excellent reason for people and companies to move 100 km north, to Lahti.

In the Lahti region the two largest industrial sectors are wood and furniture

manufacturing and metal. Plastic, food and textile industries are significant part of regional economy.

Although it is a young city, Lahti is at the same time one of the longest inhabited places in Finland located between Salpausselkä Ridge and the Lake District. The foundations of the region were and still are in trade and industry. Geographically the Lahti Region is situated in the crossroads of the main Finnish highways. The railway from Helsinki to St. Petersburg and Moscow goes via Lahti and along the waterways

one has access to the Middle of Finland. These logistic advantages have had major impact on the development of the city and they still offer one of the main arguments for businesses to settle in Lahti.

Good quality of life should be mentioned with the fact that the city developers can and do use all their tools to attract inhabitants and businesses. The surroundings are not crowded and the beautiful nature, forests and water begin practically from the city centre. The choice for leisure activities is varied. Lahti is well known for its winter sports but has also grown into a serious city of culture. Today it hosts the most famous Finnish orchestra, Lahti Symphony Orchestra and the acoustically wonderful concert and congress hall, Sibelius Hall.

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View over Lake Vesijärvi bordering the City of Lahti, Finland



THE INITIATIVE WITHIN LIFE SCIENCE

The latest major investment at Linköping University is within the area of Life Science Technologies, in which biotechnologies and medicine are combined with IT. 16 new professorships have been established which is unique step for Sweden. This investment is estimated to create 2000-3000 new jobs in the region, explains Mrs Eva Joelsson, Mayor of Linköping.

Three campuses of Linköping University have a total of 25,000 students. Also, being second in Sweden regarding the number of students within science and technology, Linköping University - merging molecular life sciences, medicine and technology - has become an entrepreneurial and innovative educational institution that has radically transformed traditional teaching by creating new programmes that go beyond these academic boundaries. This can be reflected in Sweden's highest entrance scores for students applying for studies such as Medicine and Engineering Biology.

The hallmark to cross-border research

Successful innovations in Linköping include their fruitful bridging of Life Sciences, medicine and technology as well as the establishment of strong

research profiles such as biological physics, material science and medical IT. Another characteristic of Linköping University is the close link between research and industry creating a strong entrepreneurial spirit.

Adjacent to the university campus is Mjärdevi Science Park comprising of many firms that are spin-offs from university research. As an example, the Mjärdevi business incubator recently received The Award for Best Science Based Incubator on Public Investment at a ceremony in the Hague in competition with incubators from all over the world. Furthermore, the new Mjärdevi Centre is a major investment state-of-the-art building with possibilities for biotech companies to have generous laboratory facilities, safe waste management and advanced ventilation system including clean room capacity.

Life Science Technologies

Within the next few years, the number of students at the Faculty for Health Sciences in Linköping is expected to have increased from the present 2,000 to 3,000. In order to cater for this expansion, the University and County Council have jointly invested heavily in a new campus which will be completed in 2004. It will house among others a new medical



A new campus will be completed in 2004

incubator for companies starting up and expanding in Life Science Technologies and Biomedicine.

Linköping is the centre of excellence for aerospace, communications technology, software development and electronics as well as life science technologies. Today the city is home to a total of around 20 biotech companies primarily active within medical technology.

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MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN TECHNOLIS

More than ten Kaunas competitive high technology companies together with Kaunas Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, and Kaunas City decided to develop the accumulated scientific and productive potential and to create favourable conditions for local companies in order to cooperate in the technology transfer process. Such results can be achieved with the help of the ERDF through establishing a modern science and technology park Technopolis.

The City Economic Development Division is implementing a project "Preparation of Technical Documentation for the Establishment of Technopolis, a Modern Technologies-based Office Village" that will allow to prepare documents for further financing from

European Regional Development Fund.

Kaunas is historically known as a city of universities, know-how, precise technology, informatics and industry. Historical experience, qualified university engineers, internationally recognized companies need favourable conditions to cooperate, transfer technology and produce innovative products. It is expected that Technopolis will enhance the cooperation between universities and IT companies providing education function.

The city's geographic position, air, rail, river and road transport infrastructure will also help Technopolis to compete and produce innovative products for the country and the members of the EU. Technopolis will be established with the notion of ecology and economy requirements in the area of 20 hectares.

It is expected that modern infrastructure of the science and technology park, recreation zones and buildings will rise the value and provide comfort for the surrounding areas.

Technopolis will unite attempts of private and public enterprises, establish 2500 work places and learning opportunities for university graduates. This park will represent Kaunas in Europe as a centre of high technologies, science, innovations and integrity.

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PUTTING HIGH TECH INTO PRACTICE

The Pori urban area is an economic entity of 240,000 inhabitants. It has long industrial traditions which are presently combined with recent developments and rapid growth in the information technology and related branches. New jobs have been created in recent years at a rapid rate. The most important branches of industry (both in terms of turnover and number of employees) are the metal industry and the manufacture of machinery and equipment.

Pori and its surrounding region has updated its priorities in business policy. We are putting a lot of efforts into adapting new technologies and knowledge - and especially implementing them within the more traditional fields of industry and services as well.

The Centre of Expertise program of Satakunta region is one of our major projects. Its main fields are remote technology and materials technology. The basic idea is to

focus on automation, metallurgy, electronics and ICT technologies. Applying these technologies and disseminating know-how through our development network will enhance competitiveness in more traditional business. On a practical level this work is done by offering technology transfer services and new know-how to companies. Dozens of detailed projects are ongoing at the moment - all of them striving for better competitiveness and growth for the companies involved.

Pori offers great educational opportunities, which also support the development of business life. The Pori University Centre, Satakunta Polytechnic and other colleges train the professionals of today and tomorrow in close cooperation with local business and industry. These institutions also carry out top-level research.

Excellent transport connections, one of Finland's most efficient ports, an electrified



High-tech has many forms ...

railway line and an airport within 2 km of the centre guarantee good logistics in the area. The quality and atmosphere of the residential environment is indeed one of the region's assets.

Welcome to Pori, where hi-tech is being put into practice every day.

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A SHOPPING CHARTER

The retail trade in Norrköping is unique. Looking at the total turnover of 5 billion SEK, people from other cities buy goods for 20% of total turnover. The trade is increasing, both in the centre of the city and in the external shopping centres. So many people coming here for shopping prove how excellent Norrköping is as a market place. There are other cities interested in how Norrköping has succeeded. However, competition between cities runs the development.



Many people choose Norrköping for shopping

In the centre of the town there are three shopping centres with 130 shops. The shops have also agreed on joint advertising, which gives a higher grade of visibility at a lower price. Also, outside the city you find shopping centres open daily. Both centres show a very positive development and increase their turnover every year.

Increasing trade both in the city centre and in the external shopping centres is something quite unusual. It is the good co-operation within the trade organisation and the municipal authorities that is essential. Good results are due to the open dialogue in a long-term perspective to give the consumers a complete supply instead of competing. The prolonged opening hours and the establishments of new shops have created many new jobs in the city centre.

To maintain a "living" city with a mixture of big chains and smaller, local shops are needed, and it is important that new shops get established from time to time. Therefore it is not negatively considered when a shop or a concept leaves, it gives space to a new one knocking at the door.

Who knows what will come out of the dialogue between actors within the trade

and the culture and tourism sector. Is there a possibility of "shopping charter"?

The expectations for the future are high, and the interest of establishing new shops and business concepts in Norrköping is increasing. The university, the new high-speed train connection "Ostlänken" and the airport are very important for further development of Norrköping's trade. From a political point of view it is emphasised that development of the retail trade is important for the city as a whole. Therefore, an investigation of all retail trade is being carried out. The result of this investigation will show what the consequences will be of different decisions and will be a very useful guideline for local politicians. A retail trade policy will be at hand in the end of 2003.

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SMALL & MEDIUM BUSINESS

Seeking to promote business development the Small and Medium Business

Development Fund was established in Palanga in the year of 2000.

The stimulation of small and medium business development, expansion of support for SMEs, developing business infrastructure, promoting the establishment of new working places and reducing unemployment, passing knowledge and news necessary for start and promoting Palanga both nationally and internationally as an attractive town for business development are among major goals of the Fund.

Palanga is a resort located in the western part of Lithuania on the Baltic seacoast, accommodating mostly small and medium

size enterprises. Business development evolves around the development of tourism infrastructure, recast of fish and production of other products, and public service. Most developed field here is tourist services, namely hotels, cafes, restaurants, bars, etc.

As for January 1, 2003 there were 1416 businesses registered in Palanga, but only 45% of them were actually operating. 20% of enterprises work seasonally only. In most cases, registered businesses (80 %) are individual enterprises, 16% small enterprises with 10-49 workers and only 4 % refer to medium size enterprises with 50-249 workers.

The activities of the Small and Medium Business Development Fund are implemented according to the Lithuanian

Law and the programs for small and medium business development. 12100 Lt. were spent only in 2001, and a year later four times more for implementing various programs. Additionally ca. 38200 Lt. will be spent in 2003 for the purpose.

Seeking to promote infrastructure of holiday camps in Palanga, the City Council approved the order of taxation privilege for enterprises, which have the right and wish to render services of special type accommodation (holiday camps). There are also applicable privileges for rental payment of state's land for various economic-commercial and other activities.

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TOWARDS THE BALANCED GROWTH

Business development is to contribute to the achievement of socially balanced growth economy, which arises from the important role of SME. And local government is to facilitate and activate entrepreneurs and to create more jobs.

In early 2002 Tallinn has enacted the strategy of "Entrepreneurship Development Program of Tallinn for 2002-2004" which is a basis for both direct financial incentives provided by Tallinn City Enterprise Board (50 employees) to start-ups and small companies, as well as more comprehensive economic, innovation and cluster development projects initiated in co-operation with different social partners.

Financial incentives and advisory support to start-ups and small firms. Since May 2002, Tallinn City Enterprise Board has provided 71 start-up grants to companies for the total amount of 4.4 mil EEK (ca 281 200 EUR), supported training in Tallinn and abroad. 14 companies have received support to take a young trainee for an internship period.

As financial incentives are limited, advisory and training support is offered by the consultants of Tallinn City Enterprise Board. Since September 2001 over five thousand companies and sole proprietors have received free of charge

advice on different development matters (funding possibilities, business plan, taxes, etc). 2,700 companies of the capital have participated in different training and information days.

Development of business incubation network in Tallinn.

One of the ways the city can support new businesses is to provide a synergy of infrastructure and the so called soft support – advice and training. Between 2002-2004 Tallinn aims to open up 4 business incubators, 2 of which are already currently operating. An incubator for technology and knowledge based firms is located in the area of Tallinn Technical University. Another one was established in May 2003 in Dvigatel industrial area near the airport.

EU co-funding to business development.

Tallinn City Enterprise Board initiates and actively takes part in the projects co-funded by the EU. The Board has been successful in receiving grants from Leonardo da Vinci II to improve and develop qualified labour force (development of sector co-operation network between universities, vocational schools, companies and support organisations). Phare CBC and Interreg



The Rector of the Tallinn Technical University, Chancellor of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Mayoress of Tallinn and the Deputy Mayor at opening of Tallinn Business Incubator in September 2002

IIIA have funded cluster development and training project targeted at companies from metal engineering, electronics and machinery sectors; and science and innovation-orientated business. Co-operation between Tallinn and Helsinki is also supported by Interreg IIIA Programme.

by Toomas Vitsut, Deputy Mayor

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DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR GROWTH AND WORK

The Development Plan for Growth and Work 2003 has its focus on Sundsvall's leading fields, investment and development of the business climate plus the supply of skilled labour. The aims of the development plan are to increase employment and raise the level of education by year 2010.

Strategies

The international and national competition between companies is steadily increasing. Successful competition in the marketplace demands skills, products and services at the leading edge. At the same time, the competition between nations, regions and cities to attract businesses and job opportunities is hardening. Therefore, Sundsvall needs to clearly establish its profile and develop its strengths in relation to the surrounding world. To attain these goals Sundsvall has selected the following strategies: Focus on leading fields, development of the business climate and supply of skilled labour. **Focus on leading fields**

Experience shows that it is more effective to reinforce and develop existing leading fields than to attempt to create new

ones. The activities in this development plan focus on three leading fields where Sundsvall already has strength and a competitive edge. These are: Cellulose/fibre technology, Banking and insurance and IT/telecom. These leading fields combined employ 10,000 people in Sundsvall and at least twice as many jobs are indirectly dependent upon them.

There is also interesting development potential between the leading fields and this gives rise to opportunities to develop entirely new and unique products, services and areas of expertise in Sundsvall.

The positive development of the leading fields will also serve to support the undertakings and development of other businesses in Sundsvall in the form of, for example, expanded services, increased commerce and more visitors. This means that the leading fields will function as locomotives for the other segments of Sundsvall's business community.

Innovation and growth

The regional business community and the city of Sundsvall intend to serve as a platform to stimulate innovation and support growth companies in the region, particularly in the leading fields. The



Sundsvall University building

fundamental goal is to build bridges linking the university, research and business. The network between the leading fields is responsible for this work. The incubator approach aims to stimulate students, researchers and the gainfully employed to start and develop enterprises in Sundsvall, primarily within the scope of the three leading fields.

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SOCIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

After a period of crisis and stagnation

St. Petersburg has been witnessing gradual economic growth in recent 5 years. Now the city is experiencing the transition to the new mechanism of planning and social economic development. At the same time there are about three tens of the target programs adopted separately and operating at the same time.

In the 21st century St. Petersburg needs new regulatory instruments of city economy. The program adopted by the city is based on the strategic planning principles. The Committee for Economic Development, Industrial Policy and Commerce prepared the draft project of the basic provisions of the social economic program until 2008.

The program contains:

- the parameters of the target prognosis of the social economic development, the system of development targets

- the basic directions of the increase of St. Petersburg's competitiveness. The program implies triplicate investment volume until 2008. This will allow to multiply the Gross Regional Product by 1, 6% and the real income of the population by 1, 8%.



The most important task for the coming years is to enhance the city's competitiveness on the world and Russian markets.

All statistic figures show that St. Petersburg is experiencing steady growth. In the 2002 the gross regional product went up by 5,7% in comparison to the year 2001 and by 26,5% comparing to 1998. Also other figures like rates of the manufactured product, the turnover noticed spectacular increase as well as the rate of employment. The flow of investment increased by 5%.

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A CITY IN MOTION



Tartu has adequate experience and knowledge for development of innovative technologies. The city holds a strong position in the establishment of high-tech enterprises, in the fields of biotechnology, material science and information technology.

It is a city in motion, empowered by the radical changes taking place over the last decade which influenced citizens' welfare and business growth. The city's infrastructure has been extensively updated. Large shopping malls, glass tower high-rise offices and apartments, hotels, sports centres and extensive water park are all around the city. Tartu as a pilot area of the EU initiative, eEurope is intensifying the virtual infrastructure. Tartu was one of the first cities to introduce parking fees by a cellular phone. Bus-tickets are provided in the form of SMS and since autumn this

year, ID cards will be made applicable in the public transport, which will be the first real application of national ID-card in Estonia. Also as one of the first local governments, the city offered e-services for citizens. So digitally signed documents are reality in Tartu.

Additionally, Tartu is orientated towards the knowledge-based economy. The main precondition for that is strong universities and scientific base. We are striving at intensifying co-operation between the private sector and universities. For these purposes the Institute of Technology at the University of Tartu was created, with the aim of promoting start-up high-technology companies arising from the University.

The technological leap in Tartu is widely visible, especially in the area of bio- and gene technology. The number of specialists in the field of biotechnology

is expected to rise threefold in a couple of years. For example, the Estonian Genome Project, and many other undertakings in this field have been started here in Tartu. The Estonian Genome Foundation is creating a gene databank of Estonian population for the national health-care and international research.

Tartu has developed into a significant centre of expertise also in medical research, health care and health care technology. The technical and quality standards of medical care are exceptionally high.

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HOW TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

Since hundreds of years people in Småland county in Southern Sweden have had to be very innovative and industrious since the farmland was not rich enough to support a farmer and his family. People learnt to be very innovative and independent, but to join forces and work together when there was a need for that.

This is one of the reasons why Växjö is characterized by a large number of small innovative companies, many of them working in networks. With the great variety of small successful companies Växjö has about the lowest unemployment rate in Sweden.

The municipality actively supports the formation of networks and clusters. We offer creative meeting places; we invite companies, which we believe have common interests and encourage them to co-operate. We claim that our main activity to support growth is "to serve coffee". There are several strong clusters; the "Kingdom of Chrystal", InternetCity, the "Kingdom of Furniture", Bio-Energy, Aluminium, Heavy Vehicles, etc.

The basis for the acknowledged good business climate in Växjö was the creation of the one-stop-shop long before the word



Växjö Business Service Office Staff

was defined. A company gets excellent service, but no financial support, when contacting the municipality.

Representatives from the Office of Business Services visit more than 100 companies per year and also recognise company achievements in various ways. The "Dynamic Växjö" project, described in a separate article, is also of major importance.

The municipality supports activities to promote entrepreneurship among high school students as well as university students, initiatives to increase general

interest in technical matters for young and old or the co-operation between students and the local companies by offering inexpensive rental cars for doing project work.

The municipality owned Videum Science Park offers lower rent to new companies, started by students, in a very attractive environment. There are also several interesting privately owned environments for new innovative, fast growing companies. The most productive Business Services Office task is the support and recognition of the existing companies.

Finally, an entrepreneur can get support from national organisations when starting a company. When profitable his company can attract investors, but there is a gap between these two periods, the so-called Death Valley. Växjö has welcomed private initiatives to involve wealthy local entrepreneurs, which have lately resulted in two networks for the support of new innovative companies during their tough risky years.

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BUSINESS STIMULATION POLITICS

One of the major Vilnius' strategic goals is creation of positive environment for new business, i.e. initiatives to create business system, sustainable business support program related to the increase of employment, as well as funding.

Municipal Support for Business. The program "Encouragement of new employment opportunities and creation of new business opportunities in the City of Vilnius" aims to provide favorable conditions for development and implementation of new business initiatives. It also deals with development of management capacities, establishing excellent conditions for quality, but cheaper service including theoretical and practical knowledge, information, suggestions, consulting and advice. City Municipal Government provides small and medium size business representatives with an opportunity to improve their skills and participate in seminars, use consulting service according to their own interests.

Partnership in Acquisition of Grant from Structural and other Funds Vilnius City Government is a partner in a project

called "Usage of mechanisms of the European Union Structural Funds within the Vilnius metropolitan zone at the district of "Naujoji Vilnia" financed from the EU's Leonardo da Vinci.

Development of New Knowledge Economy is on of the top priorities for the Vilnius Vision. This goal will be achieved while using the present and creating the new infrastructure, certain science and business. There are distinctive knowledge economy centres in Vilnius.

The Handicapped-run Business Support The Municipal Government tends to shape a labour market accessible for everyone while implementing its employment plan.

Creation of Business Incubators and Business Centres. The City of Vilnius is a joint stock holder of "Business Incubator of Vilnija". Giving certain funds for the formation of the incubator's capital, the City is actively involved in supporting small business in need.

Business Studio of Naujoji Vilnia. In 2003, the City of Vilnius supported the Naujoji Vilnia (Industrial District) business study documentation preparation. This preparation will encompass study for a 5



year period.

Taxation Privileges. Setting the aim to increase the number of enterprise in the city as well as new employment, the City Council approved new regulations for "Regulations to decrease land-property costs" in 2002 that are highly applicable as business facilitator.

Support for Business Projects Creating New Employment. There is a program launched that deals with projects having efficient means to offer new jobs on the labour market.

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ROSTOCK BUSINESS - DOCK HERE !

The Rostock Business and Technology Development GmbH was founded to promote the city of Rostock and its business. The task is clear: Attract investors to start business! That means to present Rostock as an attractive business location to potential investors and to help them setting up their branches or plants.

The basis of a new strategy has been realised with the start of the company in June 2003. The company concentrates on four major fields: Acquisition of investors, regional marketing, technology promotion and development, portfolio development and commercialisation of business premises. The company started its work by analysing the existing conditions for business in Rostock. That means the assembly of relevant arguments and information as well as benchmarking and knotting of a small meshed network. To become a competent partner, investors can rely on, it is necessary to focus on

specific regions and branches that fit in the existing mix of branches located in the city and its closest region. As Rostock is an attractive business location there are numerous national as well as international companies working in different business fields e.g. service sector, logistics, transport, biotechnology. The company strives to get in touch with this local business environment and local and regional multipliers to create a transparent community of all branches. Getting in touch, one tries to find out what the needs are and to provide the respective company with a proper solution.

The promotion of technology is another important issue that is going to be realised by an own department within the company. Rostock wants to concentrate on its four major "clusters": 1. biotechnology, health care and medicine, 2. maritime business (offshore, fishing), 3. logistics and transport, 4. service sector and tourism. The intention is to

network the knowledge carriers and to enable the transfer of scientific knowledge between research and industry. This encloses a close co-operation with centers of technology and the composition of specific technology clusters. As the Internet evolves more and more to a very important medium of information it is obvious that the most relevant data and figures about Rostock have to be displayed in a database structured by branch clusters on the website of the company. The information to be found includes data on premises, business figures, contacts in respective business fields and the organisation and reflection of fairs.

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BALTIC SEA BUSINESS

Local and regional business development agencies in the Baltic Sea area have established an informal information network called the Hanse Business Network. The aim of this connection is to assist small and medium-sized enterprises in exploring new markets around the Baltic Sea.

The Baltic Sea Region has always been of great importance to the economic development in Northern Europe. Considering the close co-operation between the EU and the countries of Eastern Europe, the Baltic Sea area will become even more important in the future. An informal Network very often can help enterprises to find new export markets and create business contacts.

The Hanse Business Network traces its roots back to the project datalink LS, a contact and information network between local and regional business development agencies in the Baltic Sea area that was founded in 1995. The contacts and experiences we have gathered in the past eight years are valuable in our



The Hanseatic Kogge - a sign for tradition and renewal



Conference and meeting place for business in the restored historical building

present work.

The Hanse Business Network as an informal co-operation can help companies in the participating regions to find business contacts, provide information and get access to common networks and infrastructures. Our services are

not restricted to the use of databases and address lists. We also arrange on a project work basis visits and business meetings, where companies from different countries can exchange information and find new business partners.

The Hanse Business Network has arranged business-networking events for different business sectors in the recent years. Some

four hundred small and medium-sized businesses from the region have already benefited from these events. Before each event an extensive catalogue of company profiles has been published. From this catalogue participants selected their discussion partners. Over two days of networking sessions, a scheduled program of individual meetings were constructed for each participant to help them build personal contacts.

Previous networking activities have concentrated on printing, graphics, paper; ecological building industry and healthcare industry. The business meetings were successfully accomplished in 1997, 1998 and 2000. The industries that have participated in these events and came from more than six countries met to discuss business opportunities.

In Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden the companies have access to all services of the Business Development Corporations. In Latvia, Lithuania and Russia informal contact points are able to organise business meetings and visits in different markets.

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AN INVESTOR FRIENDLY TOWN

The town of Pruszcz Gdański is particularly well positioned for business and investment. What makes it special is its attractive location (it lies within the Baltic Sea Region, in close proximity to the Tri-City conurbation of Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia) and good transportation links. In addition, business development and inward investment are on top of the priorities of the local authorities.

In the town works are underway on a modern and environment friendly business and industrial park. Located in close proximity to the Tri-City ring-road, in the future the site will be also provided with access to a new motorway, considered as Europe's economic backbone. The site is attracting more and more well-known companies. This is because the town offers attractive business accommodation, a



Local Authorities offices are located in that building

competitive tax system (compared with adjacent municipalities) and attractive land prices. In an effort to stimulate small business, Pruszcz Gdański has joined the Pomorski Regional Loan Guarantee Fund ensuring better access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises. The Fund has recently opened its Consultation Point in our town.

Pruszcz will shortly become home to

one of the region's biggest investments of the recent years. The town came first in the race for a major investor, leaving Gdańsk and Gdynia behind. Pruszcz will benefit from additional income and its residents from new jobs. The town's success was made possible due to its firm policy, offering a personal touch in investor relations and quick decisions by the authorities and city council officers alike.

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BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

Kolding has a long standing tradition for being very active in the area of business promotion. The aim is to create jobs for all citizens and thus to increase the tax income of the city. This is not an easy task and not always easy to obtain. In years of depression or low business activity all good ideas and good will are needed.

In order to draw on the expertise from all sides of the local community a joint operation has been formed with the local business people and the Industrial Development Council of Kolding was created. The council consists of members from both the city council and the local trade and industry. Both sides contribute financially to the organization, but the city pays most of costs.

A strategic plan and an annual action



Hotel Koldingfjordhus

plan is created. The plans change considerably over the years reflecting the current economic business conditions. Standard actions each year are attraction of new businesses, advice and help to entrepreneurs, who want to start their own business, and creation of networks

between local companies in order to exchange ideas and give advise to each other. The council also works as a link between the local business community and the city council. All work done by the representatives from the local trade and industry is free of charge.

In order to improve the business conditions the Industrial Development Council advise the city council. As an example the Council has recently recommended the establishment of a science park within the food processing equipment field. At the moment both Councils are working on a plan of the park.

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AMBER WALLEY - NEW HORIZONS FOR INVESTMENT

This is exciting and challenging time. We are about to join the European Union and become more open and attractive to the foreign investment. We have done a lot to call Liepāja a City of Change. The city of successful changes as the people living here on the stretch of sand between the amber sea and the lake have always been tough, wise and daring.

Liepāja today is the most rapidly growing port in Latvia and the industrial output per capita in Liepāja is twice as large as in the rest of Latvia. Liepāja offers modern and business-friendly environment, as it is the education and business centre of Kurzeme region.

Business incentives. Liepāja is an excellent location for investors. City offers qualified and cost-efficient labour force, appropriate infrastructure, logistics and highly beneficial fiscal incentives granted by the Liepāja Special Economic Zone. The legislation of LSEZ is harmonised with the EU requirements and will be in operation until 2017. Businesses within the LSEZ are entitled to several exemptions from taxes and VAT.

The city and especially LSEZ can offer as much as 2000 ha of free territories adjacent to the port, airport and the



Liepāja port at night

city. Premises available include former industrial production facilities that have the infrastructure (gas, water, electricity, etc) necessary for starting production. There are several industrial park projects both municipal and private offering premises for investors.

Developed logistics possibilities

Liepāja has a unique geographic position – it is a natural transit point between the Western Europe and CIS countries as ice-free port links various points of destination. The port is multifunctional and allows combining various types of logistical activities. There are ferry routes to Rostock in Germany and Karlshamn in Sweden. Liepāja also offers second largest airport in Latvia, and excellent road and

railway cargo transport possibilities.

Indeed the welcoming and favourable business environment has resulted in relevant amount of investments. At the end of 2002 the amount of accrued foreign investments in fixed assets of the companies registered in Liepāja reached LVL 14 m. The last two years brought in Liepāja the largest amount of non-financial investments in the last seven years period. Half of the assets in 2002 were invested into technological machinery and equipment.

Christofer Tham, Swedish investor and General Manager of 4-star hotel has noted Liepāja's development during the time while he has been there is huge. Nevertheless Liepāja's potential with its location and facilities is still great. "The harbour, the business life and the local authorities supporting it makes it smooth to establish and run a business here. The beach is marvellous and together with the big offer of music events: from classic and folklore to jazz and rock, it makes Liepāja also a leisure city. We as a hospitality business representatives experience now an expanding tourism here," concludes Tham.

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FROM INDUSTRIAL HARBOUR TO KNOWLEDGE BASED BUSINESS

Vordingborg has developed a strategy for transition into the knowledge-based society. A core element is modernisation of the old traditional harbour to be developed into a new part of Vordingborg where businesses and residents can work and live with the sea view.

The first part of the plan has been successfully implemented as one rather big industrial estate. A former spread cheese factory has been rebuilt into a modern facility for medium and small businesses. The idea was borne when one of the largest call centres in Denmark located in Copenhagen was looking around for a location for their possible expansion. A local task force was established with participation from the Union of Commercial and Clerical Employees, Vordingborg Municipality, South Zealand Business College, Storstrøm Public Employment Service and Vordingborg Business Association. The objective for the task force was to develop the conditions, which the company would consider as important when deciding about the new additional location.

A number of conditions showed to be more important than other:

- access to adequate and enough human resources,
- a proper location for rent, with the possibility of further expansion,
- accessibility by car within an hour from Copenhagen,
- a nice location without polluting factories smokes, etc.,
- fast and flexible public service and co-operation.

The latter two conditions had to be adjusted. The work force had in general an adequate competence profile but there was a lack of specific knowledge and training within the functions of the call centre. The Harbour area was dominated by traditional harbour industries mainly related to transport and storage of products related to agriculture and road construction.

The task forces had two responses to these two questions:

- the union, the labour service and the business college developed a new training course for callers in call centre functions, and educated 50 persons ready to take on the new tasks – if the company should decide to locate new activities in Vordingborg.
- Vordingborg Municipality took the



Future look of the Vordingborg harbour

leadership in developing both a modern space for the company and the part of the city around this building. Together with an investor, the old spread cheese factory was totally modernised. Also, the plan for re-conversion of the industrial harbour into a modern (even fancy) housing area was developed.

What have been the results of this rather “wild” strategy? New workplaces and the first 170 exclusive flats with the view to the sea are to be built soon.

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FEDERAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Geographical position of the town promotes social and economic development of Kronstadt. The town is the center of transport corridors: marine and river as well as road transport. That is why the town participates in several federal and regional development programmes.

Some examples of these programmes are:

- construction of a complex of protective facilities from floods;
- development of a marine commercial port „Kronstadt” as a part of the Large port of St.Petersburg on the basis of temporary berths of protective facilities and berths which are not used for basing of the navy ships on the Kotlin island.
- construction of a circle highway around



Port Kronshtadt is a part of Large Port of Saint-Petersburg

St.Petersburg

- development of network of yacht ports under the project SUPORTNET RUSSIA.
- The Legislative assembly and Government of St.Petersburg create the basis for effective investment activity and development of civil economics of the city.

Basic fields of investments are:

- participation in the lease, re-structuring , privatization of both state and municipal property. The objects of investment are territories, facilities and other objects of real estate not used as required and turned over from the Ministry of Defense of Russian Federation.

- participation in implementation of recreational projects: hotel complex and objects of tourism building.

Kronstadt is preparing to the 300-years anniversary celebration in 2004 and looks to the future with optimism.

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REGION OF OPPORTUNITIES

The Baltic Sea Region has played an important role in the history of Europe for centuries. It has been a place where different cultures and nations lived and interacted with each other. As the time passes, we have recognized it again that the countries in the region cannot co-exist without co-operation and mutual understanding.

Now that the Baltic Sea region has recovered its historical role as an area for economic and cultural co-operation and the gate between the East and the West, it has an opportunity to become one of the most important centres of growth in the world. Our region has plenty of opportunities to develop as a model region in close relation to the EU enlargement process being as an excellent opportunity for the Baltic Sea region and for Latvia in particular to demonstrate

that it is integral part of Europe. Currently, Riga plays an important role in the regional development process, and the importance of our capital and the region will increase.

Riga has already developed its environmental strategy with the support of foreign experts. In the course of the discussions and the development of the strategy, Riga found that environmental issues cannot be solved locally – it is not only the support of the neighbouring towns and rural areas that is needed. We also need understanding and support of neighbouring countries in order to implement the strategic goals. The recent events have affected the global economic situation. However, they have taught us another lesson – broad economic co-operation and mutual understanding will be able to protect us from various unpleasant surprises.

Of all the countries in the Baltic Sea region, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia are the youngest ones and we have not yet accumulated enough of experience in democracy, and the civil society and stable political culture have not yet developed in full. In these areas, we can learn a lot from other countries in the region – not only how to create effective administrative institutions with high capacity but also how to implement such institutions in a way that leads to high trust of the public in the state and public power.

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INTO THE FUTURE WITH OPEN MIND

Tampere has always been known for its unprejudiced initiatives. One such initiative is the eTampere Information Society Programme. It will be a few years before we are able to determine the programme's final success, but it is already fair to say that it certainly has not been short of open-minded courage.

The main objective of the Programme is to transform Tampere into the world's leading researcher, developer and applicant of information society – through business development and the creation of new online services and resources for the use of citizens in their everyday lives.

The eTampere programme is now halfway. National and international mid-term evaluations of the programme have given a clear message: the activities have got off to a good start and the chosen basic policies and areas of emphasis are correct. The programme has created co-operation in forms that would otherwise have been unlikely to evolve. Key targets have been reached and eTampere has become an esteemed, well-known player in information society development.

The eTampere programme consists of six independently operating research and development sub-programmes of total value EUR 47.5 million. The whole programme is co-ordinated and marketed by the eTampere Office. The office also creates prerequisites and channels for the participation of citizens.

The areas of emphasis selected at the beginning of 2003 were an active citizenship, new service innovations, progressive learning and companies, and a strengthening of internationalization. Real advances have been made in each of these areas. Citizens' online transactions have risen in number, so have the available online services. The most significant new online services this year include health service advice and a preparatory forum that promotes opportunities for citizen participation. Online democracy is still a key area of development together with training for citizens.

The eTampere programme has many positive achievements under its belt. The greatest challenge, however, is yet



to be resolved: how to link this extensive programme to be more beneficial to everyday life. Both businesses and private citizens expect a wider range of concrete services.

This is why the eTampere programme will increasingly focus on practical projects and the development of services, including practical tests. New electronic communications technology should be natural and therefore understated part of innovative business and daily services for active citizens.

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START YOUR BUSINESS IN TURKU

Turku region is located in the most South-Western part of Finland. It is perfect for Baltic Sea trade. The region's economy is strong and diverse: Turku is home to successful shipbuilding and steel industry as well as one of the major bioscience centres in Scandinavia, and a lot more. Turku takes good care of entrepreneurs. For example Turku Area Development TAD Centre offers its expertise in helping you to establish a business in the Turku Region. Turku is very interested in new collaborative opportunities with the Baltic states along with the cities of Poland and North Germany. Also the cities of St Petersburg and Stockholm have always been important business areas for Turku.

In Turku Science Park innovations become business

The Turku character is largely influenced by a tradition of trading since its early founding days. This means a strongly rooted entrepreneurial culture and a focus on regional co-operation. Turku Science Park is an example of the innovative spirit created through a regional network of business and educational institutions in Turku: three universities, 50 research

centres, 13 500 experts, 750 companies, 100 start-ups, linked together with the industry of the Turku business region with its 14 000 enterprises. The result is a truly innovative and interactive operational environment, which serves as an efficient basis for high-tech growth. Turku Science Park's strengths include biosciences, ict and materials research. Turku Science Park provides business premises both in the long and short term. 180 000 m2 of state-of-the-art premises are already available, and the construction work continues. For example the Turku Bio Valley offers production and product development facilities made to measure for the pharmaceutical and diagnostics industries.

Baltic Business Network is a project creating concrete business opportunities for enterprises in Southwest Finland and Baltic countries.

Fast connections, easy to reach

Turku is conveniently located on the Oslo-Stockholm-Turku-Helsinki-St. Petersburg axis along the E18-highway. Three-and-a-half million people travel through the Port of Turku every year.



Turku offers premises for high tech companies - BioCity is a home to many major biocompanies

Business travellers can use the Turku International Airport which is expanding and will have more flight connections to the Baltic Sea area due to the growing business travelling in these directions. Train connections to the rest Finland and Russia are good, especially the fast train (pendolino).

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BBB RATINGS AFFIRMED FOR SZCZECIN

Local government ratings in the CEE countries have a relatively short history, with the majority of entities first rated in 1997-1998. Over the past five years there have been a large number of rating changes, which are still driven by nation-wide developments, such as changes to the intergovernmental system or improvements in the country's policy environment.

So far over the past few years, Szczecin local government has shown good budgetary performance despite significant financial pressures stemming from large infrastructure financing needs and intergovernmental reforms. Szczecin's ability to maintain sound financial performance will, therefore, to a large extent depend on the municipality's own management and budgetary discipline. The city leaders have an understanding

of the fact that a city's international competitiveness also depends on such factors as **credibility and power**.

Since 1998 Szczecin is rated by two independent rating agencies – Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings Ltd. - which belong to the group of the best-recognised and largest rating agencies in the world.

Standard & Poor's Ratings Services affirmed its **BBB** long-term issuer credit and senior unsecured debt ratings on the City of Szczecin. The outlook is stable. The ratings on Szczecin reflect its economy and the city's budgetary performance, which, although adversely affected by the Polish administrative reform and the economic slowdown in Poland, has been prevented from deteriorating significantly, owing to the city's prudent budgetary management.

Szczecin's debt burden is expected to remain at a low level compared with

other Polish cities rated by Standard & Poor's. Fitch Ratings, too, affirmed the Long-term foreign and local currency ratings of the City of Szczecin at «BBB».

Rating agencies rate regional and local governments in many European countries. In all cases, the analytical methodology is the same, focusing on a range of economic, system, and administrative factors, budgetary performance and flexibility, and the entity's financial position.

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II. UBC TODAY

WELCOME TO VII UBC GENERAL CONFERENCE !



Dear members of the Union of the Baltic Cities,

I would like to heartily welcome you to the 7th UBC General Conference in Klaipėda! We will, as usual, devote one day of the General Conference to a theme that is important for our cities. This year the conference will mirror the impacts on us and on Europe of the Baltic Sea Region business development, the Baltic Wave.

Our region, the Baltic Sea Region, is one of the most attractive growth centres in EU and in fact in the world. Our skilled work-force, our high educational and technological level and our good environment creates a very attractive business climate and a steady and sustainable growth.

The cities have an important role in this process. Most economic activities take place in cities. The ideas, the money and the people meet there and push the development forward. The political and administrative capacity of the cities are also an important growth factor in the process.

I would like to heartily welcome you to our General Conference in Klaipėda to discuss and get inspired on the role of cities in the process of developing our region. In that way we can all be part of the strengthening of the Baltic Wave of economic development, for the benefit of our citizens and coming generations.

Welcome to the 7th UBC General Conference!

Per Bødker Andersen
President of the Union of the Baltic Cities



Dear members of our large Baltic cities family, dear Guests,

It is my pleasure and honour to open hospitably our town of Klaipėda is gates to you, coming from all over the Baltic Region, other parts of Europe and even other continents to the great congress of the Baltic cities.

During the last decade we all were witnesses and creators of the great historic change that next spring would be crowned by birth of the new European Union. The times pose very special challenges for

cities – large or smaller ones, from the EU or accession countries, for everyone will have to operate under new conditions. What is to be done that “the Baltic wave” in economics would be strong and overwhelming, how cities should act to achieve the ambitious objective to make the Baltic Region the most competitive and dynamic society in Europe? Our conference is the evidence that by working together cities are eager to find the right answers. More partners than competitors, the Baltic cities are keen to act locally to harmonize the contrasting economic landscapes in the eastern and western parts of the region. Business development is one of major instruments to contribute to this process. I wish that keys to success performance of business in our cities are found during the discussion of the conference.

We are especially glad that the high conference will share with us the solemn moments of awarding our town with the Council of Europe Prize’2003 for international co-operation and propagation of European unity ideas. This award is an exceptional historic event not only for Klaipėda, but for the whole Lithuania, the people of which have sacrificed so much to be part of the free world. So, welcome to Klaipėda to rejoice over the European award and discuss our common future.

Rimantas Taraskevičius
Mayor of Klaipėda

The Award

If it is the marketing opportunity, the grant or just the great honour that has been the incentive for our member cities to put a lot of effort on applying for The Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2003 is a secret. The EnvCom secretariat has received a good number of high quality applications. During the Award ceremony that will take place during the General Conference in Klaipėda the winner will be announced and will receive the Award diploma and grant. The

outstanding practice that will be awarded should embrace businesses in some way and cover one of the five themes Air Quality, Biodiversity, Energy, Environmental health or Information and Education.

The Award Committee has had the delicate job of evaluating and choosing the winner among the applicants. The cities that are taking part in the award with their good practices are, Panevėžys with “Risk of radon in Panevėžys”, Jūrmala with “Environmental Friendly Business Fair”, Aalborg with “New use of Harbour fronts”, Cēsis with “Environmental Development

Board”, Vilnius with “Let’s Live in a Clean and Healthy city”, Sopot with “On the stream walk – didactic path” and “Oxygen balance”, Kaliningrad with “Environmental education for businesses”, Kaunas with “The School for Community”, Gdynia with “Environmental friendly city”.

Don’t miss the opportunity to get some good input and new ideas to implement in your own city. During the general conference all the practices will be displayed with pictures and text.

by Anna Granberg



37TH EXECUTIVE BOARD IN ROSTOCK



The 37th meeting of the UBC Executive Board was held on the 18 June 2003 in the City of Rostock, Germany, upon the invitation of Mr Arno Poeker, Mayor of Rostock. In connection with the Board meeting the participants had a pleasure of visiting the impressive International Gardening Exhibition in Rostock.

General Conference in Klaipėda

Ms Ina Sidlauskiene informed the Board about the status of preparations to the General Conference in Klaipėda. Ms Sidlauskiene said that invitation brochures will be printed and sent out to all member cities, international organisations and others in July. The Council of Europe awarded the City of Klaipėda with the Europe Prize 2003. The Award ceremony will take place at the beginning of the General Conference.

Conference Programme

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the preliminary programme of the General Conference. First conference day will be fully devoted to the conference theme: "The Baltic Sea Wave - Business Development in the New Europe". UBC invited interesting speakers from the European institutions and from the business

sector. Three conference workshops will follow the keynote speeches. The second day of the conference will be devoted to internal UBC matters such as reports, elections, finances etc. The Council of the Baltic Sea States Committee of Senior Officials will have its meeting during the UBC GC in Klaipėda.

Elections

President Per Bødker Andersen informed the Board that himself as well as Vice-Presidents Armas Lahoniitty and Arno Poeker are ready to candidate for the next period. Mr Gundars Bojars, Mayor of Riga, is the third candidate for the Vice-President. The Board decided to nominate mentioned above persons as the candidates to the UBC Presidium.

Fees and budget

Mr Żaboklicki presented the proposal of new membership fees and the budget for 2004 and 2005. The new membership fees are needed in order to cover the necessary costs and to give respective resources to the commissions and networks. The Board agreed that in 2004 the fees for "eastern" cities should be 65% lower than fees paid by "western" cities. The Board stressed that gradually the fees for member cities in all

countries should be levelled, eg. in 10-13 years time perspective. The Board decided to propose mentioned fees and budget to the General Conference.

Environmental Award

Mr Risto Veivo informed that following the success of the 1999 and 2001 awards, the Commission on Environment has decided to organise the award again this year. Following the theme of the General Conference, emphasis will be put on involvement of local business in good environmental practices. Mr Veivo also informed that the Commission on Environment decided to start preparations of the new UBC Agenda 21 Program 2004-2009 to be adopted at the GC in Klaipėda.

UBC Strategy

President Andersen informed that the strategy working group submitted the first draft of the new UBC Strategy. The Strategy paper consists of the following parts: Origins of the UBC, Why City Cooperation, Common History and Destiny, Common Role of the Cities, Common Values, Vision, Mission, How We Work, Aims of the Commissions. The new strategy is to be adopted at the GC.

Baltic Cities Bulletin

Mr Żaboklicki presented the latest issue of the UBC Baltic Cities Bulletin, published in connection with the *European Year of People with Disabilities*, announced by the Council of European Union. The bulletin includes articles sent by member cities, presenting the situation of disabled people and their role in the society.

The next Executive Board meeting will be held during the General Conference.

by Paweł Żaboklicki, Secretary General

SIX-YEAR AGENDA FOR THE UBC

At the moment, the Baltic Sea Region and Baltic Cities are not sustainable. There are numerous environmental, economic and social challenges that need to be tackled in order to enable a meaningful and healthy life for future generations.

However, almost all UBC member cities are currently implementing their own local Agenda 21 action programs, and the UBC has become the most important source of working models and good practices on sustainable development to its members. Following this success, and building on the current needs of Baltic cities, as well as on Baltic Sea Regional, European and Global policy developments, the UBC

is now committing to a new sustainable development action program for the years 2004-2009. The emphasis of this new program will be on implementation of concrete sustainable development actions in the cities.

For our guidance in that work, the VII UBC General Conference will (most likely) decide on five goals for Sustainable Baltic Cities. This means that during 2004-2009 the UBC will work on:

1. Sustainable management and good governance of cities,
2. Sustainable use of energy and resources,
3. Good living environment and nature

protection,

4. Sustainable economy and transport, and

5. Social integration and health.

To work on each of these goals, the UBC will implement a number of projects and utilise its regular network activities such as exchange of good practices and policy liaison. The largest "toolbox" to be applied will be the projects. They will mobilise the majority of member cities and several other partners, and will altogether cost approximately 8 Million euros. The progress on the five goals will be monitored three times during the program period.

Risto Veivo, UBC EnvCom Secretariat



A NEW UBC STRATEGY

A new UBC strategy will be adopted by the UBC General Conference in Klaipėda. The present strategy document was adopted at the UBC General Conference in Stockholm four years ago. Very much has changed since then, so this revision was necessary.

The strategy has been worked out by a working group consisting of Anita Boje, Juhan Janusson, Tonu Karu, Mikko Lohikoski, Paweł Żaboklicki. J. Janusson has been secretary to the working group.

The starting point of the strategy is a discussion on the reason for being of UBC. Cities as political and administrative authorities have a very similar "business idea", which is to cater for the well-being of its citizens by providing basic services and utilities, and to cater for the future generations by spatial, economic and strategic planning. This is done by providing schools, social services, planning, utilities like water and waste handling, and so on. These tasks are similar

in all cities regardless of size, wealth, location or role in the urban system.

We all share a common history and destiny; cities have a common role, and common values.

All this serves as a basis for a strategy for the future where the role of UBC in Europe is described. UBC and its member cities want to play a role in a future Baltic Sea Region, characterized by peace and stable economic, democratic and environmental development. We want to be

- a strong voice on regional and European affairs,
- a meeting place for exchange of ideas and contacts,
- a framework for to facilitate, carry out and disseminate co-operation projects and activities,
- a key partner in the Baltic Sea Region co-operation, promoting our region together with other organizations and authorities, and
- a part of the European co-operation,

promoting local authority voice and opinions.

All this brings to the mission of UBC. UBC shall be a spokesman for its members in Baltic Sea Region issues and a platform for BSR cities to meet and work together.

UBC shall support Sustainable Development, balanced democratic, economic, environmental and social development. We shall also promote Local Level Governance in Europe and in the Baltic Sea Region but also be watchdog regarding EU policies that affect cities in the BSR

Doing that, UBC shall also seek co-operation partners all over Europe and globally and provide information and promote awareness rising.

The strategy text has been sent to all member cities and all organs of UBC so that everybody can give their opinion on the matter before the General Conference. The strategy will be printed in an easy-to-read 8 page booklet after adoption.

by Juhan Janusson

UBC ART COMPETITION "DREAMS WITHOUT LIMITS"

The great final of the UBC international art competition for disabled children took place on 2 July 2003 in Gdynia City Hall. **78 works from 18 cities from 7 countries** were sent to the competition. The countries were represented by the following cities: Kolding (Denmark), Johvi, Kureessare, Tallinn (Estonia), Cesis, Liepāja, Tukums (Latvia), Kaunas, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, Vilnius (Lithuania), Gdynia, Koszalin, Reda (Poland), Nacka, Ystad (Sweden) and Baltijsk, Kronstadt (Russia).

34 jury members, among them the representatives of UBC, the diplomatic corps residing in our region, the authorities of Gdynia, members of Metropolitan Council of Gdańsk Bay, Gdynia's organisations acting for the benefit of the disabled, representatives of Polish Foundation of Disabled Rehabilitation, journalists and the renown artists, chose 3 winners and 4 finalists:

Winners:

- 1st prize: Agnese Beikule (16 years), *Dreams without limits*, Cēsis, Latvia
- 2nd prize: Victoria Chipan (11 years), *The bird's farm*, Kronstadt, Russia



1st prize "Dreams without limits", Cēsis

3rd prize: Maria Vassina (15 years), *Family of my dreams*, Tallinn, Estonia

Finalists:

- Rikke Kjoerby (13 years), *Beach dreams*, Kolding, Denmark
- Deivydas Juozapavicius (16 years), *Landscape*, Šiauliai, Lithuania
- Paulina Szymanska (12 years), *Dreams without limits*, Koszalin, Poland

- Oskar Brorsson (15 years), *Fish*, Ystad, Sweden

Children's works presented the variety of artistic techniques and interesting approach to the competition theme. But most of all, pictures presented children's dreams: the simplest and the most sophisticated ones.

All participants received diplomas, additionally, the winners and finalists received prize gifts.

After the competition the works of young artists will be exhibited in Gdynia City Hall Gallery between 15.09-12.10.2003, and as well as in October during 7th General Conference of Union of the Baltic Cities in Klaipėda (Lithuania). The exhibition will be also staged in member cities of the Union. Members willing to hold the exhibition in their cities please contact the competition co-ordinator.

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COMMISSION ON BUSINESS OPENS ITS SECRETARIAT

On 15-17 May 2003 Kaunas City hosted the Annual Meeting of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation. The representatives came from 18 cities all around the Baltic Sea

The Commission focused mainly on its motto for this year's meeting „E-dimension: Public and Private partnership”. E-dimension, innovations



Participants of the UBC Business Commission annual meeting in Kaunas, May 15-17, 2003

via technological parks and business incubators, formation of the municipal budgets - accumulation of funds for the EU investment projects were among the subjects tackled.

On May 16, the participants visited the annual exhibition „Kaunas 2006: Contact Business Science Investment”. The perspectives of Kaunas economic development as well as a number of Kaunas companies and their production were presented at the exhibition. Presentations and discussions on the e-dimension, as well the innovations via technological parks and business incubators surely provided new

ideas for the participants and presented the progress of the on-going projects.

All the participants acknowledged that the topics of the meeting are very important for all the cities and should be developed in the future as well. The e-dimension issues could be discussed in cooperation with the Commission on Information Society.

The meeting established the Commission's Secretariat in Kaunas. The next meeting of the Commission in 2004 is agreed to be held in Växjö. Tallinn was proposed as a meeting place of the Commission for 2005.

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PERSPECTIVES OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Cēsis, the cradle of the Latvian National flag, is situated in the very middle of North Latvia. It is the town that delights both visitors and inhabitants with its unique charm, rich cultural heritage, winding medieval streets and the magnificent landscapes of the Gauja National Park. This charming city hosted the annual meeting of the Commission on Tourism this year.

24 people from 16 UBC cities gathered in Cēsis on 23-25 of August to discuss perspectives of tourism development. The meeting was opened by exhibition, jointly with the Baltic Welcome Center - members of the UBC Commission on Tourism had a possibility to get acquainted with the results of the Interreg IIIB project, in which Cēsis Tourism information centre participated as a partner.

The meeting informed about the possibilities to participate in the INTERREG IIIC program with tourism development projects for Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and changes when these countries enters the European Union. The useful information was presented by Ms. Ieva Kalnina from Interreg IIIC Secretariat. Ms. Romy Sommer brought information from Animare Tourism Project Management and shared experience in preparing and running of Tourism projects.

During the meeting was presented and discussed the Baltic Cultural Tourism Policy Paper that has been prepared over the past year by the Baltic working group, headed by national consultants of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and supported by UNESCO. Everyone agreed about the importance of development of cultural tourism and initiatives to create policy for cultural tourism development in national level.

The Commission on Tourism had also discussed the tourism situation for disabled people. During discussion were held the problems, which trouble disabled people to feel free during traveling. The members described situation in their home cities and shared experience, what is possible to do on municipality level for improving situation.

One of the questions in agenda was elections for a Steering Committee (October 2003 - September 2005), so the new Steering Comity was elected. The members, who will work in Steering Comity for two coming years are: Vladislav Andreev (Kaliningrad, Russia) Kyrre Dahl (Kalmar, Sweden), Armands Muiznieks (Jūrmala, Russia) and Irena Satkauskiene (Palanga



From the left: Viktor Rydell (Kalmar), Romy Sommer (Rostock), Kyrre Dahl (Chairman, Kalmar), Valda Veilande (Cēsis), Martins Malcenieks (Cēsis)

Lithuania). Kyrre Dahl was elected as a Chairman of Commission on Tourism.

Armands Muiznieks offered to host next annual meeting of Commission on Tourism in Jūrmala. But before meeting in Jūrmala members of Commission on Tourism are looking forward for the meeting during VII UBC General Conference in October 2003 in Klaipeða.

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EMAS PEER REVIEW FOR CITIES

EMAS Peer Review for cities project is progressing well and all 16 partner cities are further developing their environmental management systems since the first Eco-Management and Auditing System (EMAS) training session in May in Tallinn.

The second training session for cities took place on 6-7 October in Barcelona. The focus was on "Peer Review" process and research on linkages between European Union 6th Environmental Action Plan (6EAP) and EMAS.

Two days training provided city participants the skills to undertake the peer review in a twin city. Information and knowledge to enable the cities to reassess their own environmental management system was also provided. The first results of the desk research on 6EAP and EMAS linkages were presented to the cities. In-depth research will be carried out now after the training in five pilot cities to identify and vision how does the particular city see EMAS evolving to take account of the 6EAP over the next 10 years. The results will be integrated into peer reviews taking place in cities during the spring 2004.

The training session was a very good forum for city representatives to exchange their experiences and challenges they have been facing while implementing EMAS.

The project next newsletter will be issued this Autumn. For further information, please visit our project web-site: www.emascities.org.

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TBESTC

Big interest for TBestC resulted in 10 devoted cities taking part in the project

It has been hectic times for the UBC EnvCom staff to select ten cities that will be able to take part in the TBestC project. Out of the many interesting applications the following ten city couples/groups were selected. Riga, Sopot and ECAT-Kaliningrad will together study the Eco-lighthouse project in Kristiansand.

Jelgava and Cesis will get the opportunity to learn more about water management and bio-diversity in the City of Malmö. Sillamäe will try to adopt the excellent environmental education scheme for businesses established by ECAT-Kaliningrad and City of Liepāja will try to reach the EU requirements for air-quality through their co-operation with City of Turku. At the first Workshop that will take place in Turku 9-11 October the cities will start up the co-operation and plan for the up-coming study visit that is one of the core events in the project. The information collected during the study visit together with the analysis of the city's own situation will form the basis for the feasibility analysis and report.

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SUSTAINABLE PORTS IN UBC

There is a need and a wide interest to develop sustainable port policies in the Baltic Sea Region as well as on European level. Within the Union of the Baltic Cities, port cities and ports have been co-operating for several years in order to develop improved policy models. The newly started Interreg III B project New Hansa of Sustainable Ports and Cities (2003-2005) results from this co-operation.

This UBC Agenda 21 project, lead by the City of Lübeck, is a genuine multi-stakeholder process of 15 ports and port cities, aiming at improved environmental policies and sustainable development at all ports of the Baltic Sea.

The problems addressed have economic, social and environmental aspects as well as considerable territorial impacts – and they call for integrated solutions. Specifically, the project concentrates on harmonising and strengthening the policies and practices to reduce air emissions, wastewater discharges and solid waste generation of vessels, and to improve reception practices of ship-generated wastes at ports.

On international level, the most important outcome of the project will be the joint policy document – the Baltic

Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Ports (MoU). Wide support and commitment will be sought to the MoU in the Baltic Sea Region as well as in the European Commission. Links and dialogue are being established, and contributions and co-operation are strongly welcome from all stakeholders!

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KICK OFF FOR BALTIC URBAN UNIVERSITY FORUM

During the three-day conference, 4-6 September in the lovely city of Stockholm, 60 city representatives and scholars from 20 cities around the Baltic Sea gathered with the purpose of launching the BUUF project. One of the main purposes of the seminar was to tie closer links between the cities and to start the planning for the up-coming 20 Best Practice seminars that will be held in the project. During the three-year period every city in the project will arrange one seminar on one of the ten themes in the project. The first two seminars coming up is Water management in Enköping (6-7 Sept) and Greenery and Culture in Kaunas (9-12 Oct). During the seminar Folke Snickars, Dean of Royal Institute of Technology and Joachim Spangenberg from SERI held excellent lectures and gave some good food for thought to the participants. The purpose of the BUUF project is to learn from each other's good practices at the seminars and to monitor the proceedings through a set of indicators developed in the project. An advisory board consisting of approximately 50 scholars from the whole region will guide the whole process. The task of the board is also to produce 10 Best Practice reports presenting the good practices within the themes.

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OVER COMMON HISTORY AND DIFFERENCES AROUND THE BALTIC SEA

At the end of summer the island Hiiumaa hosted the student's summer school managed by Commission on Education, Kärđla Town Government and Kärđla School. „The Meeting Point of Different Cultures” project lasted for 3 months. The students participating in the project studied the history and culture of native places from the period of 1940s to 1960s and prepared a presentation and a photo exhibition on the project topics.

Five schools from Norrtälje, Šiauliai, Tukums, Tartu and Kärđla joined the project. After some preparatory work at home, each working group chose 2 girls and 2 young men to participate in the summer school. The aim of the project was to get aware about participants' own roots and understand the differences between various cultures. It is a possibility for communication, the development of English speaking skills and motivation for learning foreign languages. It is also important for mutual understanding

of European cultures.

In the summer camp, which was held in the Kõpu Boarding School on Hiiumaa, 15-18 year old students made presentations, worked together during the workshops, practised English and became acquainted with each other. The young people of Kärđla School worked as guides and showed Hiiumaa. A special course on the history of the island was held in the Hiiumaa Museum during preparation of the project.

Jointly within the project the students found out the history around the Baltic Sea during very difficult time - the war and years after that. At the workshops the students discussed in 4 groups: education, music, dance and fashion of the 1940s - 1960s. All of them pointed that it is very important to know the history of our nations and countries. The students found out, the *iron curtain* divided the history around the Baltic Sea in 2 groups. The young Swedes spoke about progress after the war and



The presentation at the education workshop. A class in 1940s-1960s in the Soviet Union

how people worked hard for a better future. The Baltic students told and showed very expressively in their presentations hard life and the nonsense of big words in the Soviet Union.

The students found the topics of the project interesting and were happy about the possibility of joining the summer school.

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NEW CULTURE BOARD AND NEW VISION

The 7th Working Session of the UBC Commission on Culture, held in Szczecin, Poland, on 2-5 Oct., produced a new board and new vision for the organisation, which aims to boost cultural co-operation among partner cities in the UBC. The meeting, held in conjunction with the opening of the Baltic Biennial of Contemporary Art, drew representatives from 14 UBC cities.

“Once again, we have a small group, but one that is committed to moving forward,” said Slawomir Szafranski, who directs the Culture and Promotion Department in Szczecin and was re-elected as chairman of the new CoC board. “Our goal is to focus

on different aspects of cultural life in the region and move beyond the sphere of contemporary art.”

Joining S. Szafranski on the new CoC board are: Tarja Hautamaki, director of Culture Services, Vaasa, Finland and Olov Gibson, Cultural Official, Visby, Sweden. In addition, members proposed that Olga Cherkasova, director of the Mension-Museum of Revikh, representing the city of St. Petersburg, take up a board seat. Further, the board will canvas officials from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in order to fill the final seat at the meeting in Klaipeda.

Representatives at the Working Session also contributed to the CoC's action plan for 2004/2005. Among the projects contained in the plan are the production of a book detailing the history and culture of cities around the Baltic. Entitled 'A Strand of Baltic Pearls: A History of Cities in the Region'. The book will be written by historians and scholars, with the goal of publishing within a 2-3 year timeframe.

Other programs in the action

plan include the continuation of a pair of on-going projects. The Baltic Biennial will continue, as will publication of Mare Articum, the Baltic magazine of contemporary art. The city of Szczecin will continue to cover the cost of operating the magazine, with the city of Riga which also proposed to fund an issue of the semi-annual publication.

Looking ahead, board members said that the inclusion of several Baltic countries in enlargement of the European Union next year provides new opportunities for the CoC to extend its network of contacts. They added that this, in turn, will provide UBC cities with the opportunity for new partners, new funding and new projects.

“There will be new challenges,” said Gibson. “But it will also provide an opportunity to raise the region's cultural profile. Developing closer ties with Brussels is important.”

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The new CoC Board (from the left): Slawomir Szafranski, Tarja Hautamaki, Olga Cherkasova, Olov Gibson



COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION LOOKING FOR NEW IDEAS !

HANSE – TOUR SUNSHINE

In August, a questionnaire was sent out to the network of the Commission on Transportation and all contact persons within UBC. The aim was to get an insight in what, within the transport field, people in the member cities find interesting and would like the commission to focus on. The network depends on the activity of the members and needs input to make interesting workshops, seminars etc. A number of suggestions were lined up for people to choose between, such as: Public Transport, Accessibility, Environmental issues, Harbours and shipping, parking and many more. Several members have taken the opportunity to communicate their opinion, which the commission appreciates.

In the questionnaire there was also a question about forming a working group as a support to the Commission on Transportation. The suggestion originated from the participants at the Annual

meeting in April. Those who are interested in participating in such a group could indicate it in the questionnaire.

The next meeting for the Commission will be in Klaipėda the 18th of October. The topics will be, among other things, the results of the questionnaire and the future working group. There will also be discussions about the next Annual meeting and seminar that will take place during spring 2004. The Commission is at the moment working with the location for this meeting, which will hopefully be Lithuania. The focus of the seminar will also be discussed in Klaipėda.

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This good will cycle ride organised by professor Ingo Richter, the retired director of the Children's and Youth Clinic at the Rostock University and the Rostock Authorities started on 25 July. In the tour took part ca 100 participants, the prominent persons from economy, politics, culture and sport, clothed in blue T-shirts with a big golden sun on the back. They rode bikes for two weeks for about 4.000 km around the Baltic Sea to deliver humanitarian help to children with the main aim is to build a bridge between Western and Eastern countries from the Baltic Sea Region and contribute to the European integration of those states. The tour was organised under the UBC patronage.

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YOUNG VOICES

Youth work should be an important aspect of international cooperation, especially within the Baltic Sea Region, one of the most dynamic parts of the world today.

Young Voices conference. The Young Voices of the Baltic Sea Region conference held in Kalmar, Sweden on 15th- 18th of May 2003, hosted around 100 young people active on the local level and civil servants dealing with youth issues. The participants came from 8 countries and 34 cities and 7 young people from the Lake Victoria Region in Africa. The conference was launched by the City of Kalmar, together with UBC and the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs.

The main objective of the Conference was to highlight issues important for youth in the Baltic Sea Region, and to discuss the possibilities of youth participation in the UBC.

During conference preparation a questionnaire was sent out to 20 UBC member cities, asking what they, as young people, consider the 5 most important issues for youth living in their city.

The conference also presented an action plan for youth involvement:

- 1) A youth network - connected to the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs, which is to become a co-ordinating body.
- 2) A Commission on youth cooperation and participation - it will consist of youth as well as civil servants dealing with youth issues on the local level.
- 3) Annual UBC Youth Conferences
- 4) The young people consider it of great importance that the UBC Executive Board get in contact with young people of every city in which they meet in.

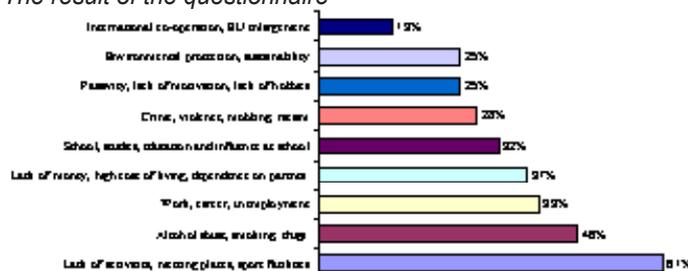
5) Cooperation between the UBC and youth - The conference also wishes the UBC Secretariat to work towards the nomination of a youth contact officer in every UBC member city.

You can find the complete summary of the conference on www.kalmar.se/

At the Executive Board meeting of the UBC, held in Rostock, Germany, 18 June 2003, the executive deemed that the UBC Youth network would have to be coordinated by a member city rather than by the other organization. The executive also expressed that the concept of Network is more suitable for youth involvement than that of a Commission.

What will happen next? The question of co-ordinating a Youth Network has been addressed to Kalmar. The future of youth participation within the UBC, will be raised in a seminar during the UBC General Conference in Klaipėda, Lithuania.

The result of the questionnaire



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CITIES AS REGIONAL ENGINES

The Commission on Urban Planning organizes the second ABC-seminar on 16-19 October. The theme will be: "Cities as Regional Engines".

The UBC Commission on Urban Planning has developed a unique working method, employed in a couple of seminars. The basic idea is to let professional city planners form a network, act as expert advisers in actual urban development problems. At previous seminars it has been noticed that the ongoing processes are similar in different cities and countries. Planning problems and possibilities are of the same character even if there are big differences in size and location between the cities. Therefore, it is possible not only to discuss but also to solve planning questions together. This is the working method used in the project ABC-Alliance of Baltic Cities, a city network co-operation for local approaches to regional strategies.

ABC is an INTERREG III B project and is running over the period 2003-2005. 27 cities from seven different countries are participating in this project. Phare-support is also pending. The objective is to develop

new strategies and methods for concrete action on local level. The burning questions are:

1. Developed urban management
2. Cities as regional engines
3. Renewal of city districts
4. Common conclusions on local

approaches to regional strategies in the BSR and also concrete small investment proposals.

The intention is to build a well-established network of city planners, and make this network known as a serious and clever partner to co-operate with when solving local and regional planning problems in the BSR.

The first of the six seminars was held in Kolding, Denmark in April this year, and the second one is held in Vaasa, Finland, in October. Given a number of qualified background lectures, the participants will discuss local solutions in groups. The main question is what could be done in and around the city of Vaasa to develop both the city and its region to contribute to a further development of the city of



Bird-eye view of Vaasa

Vaasa as a regional engine.

The themes for the work groups are:

1. Development of the regional attraction
2. The significance of a developed traffic infrastructure in the region
3. New use of a former military barracks area.

As a result a project report will be published.

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PROGRESS IN LAKE VICTORIA REGION

The current phase of the cooperation between Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Cooperation (LVRLAC) and the UBC has now lasted for one year. Looking back at this year, a large number of activities and sub-projects have been initiated aiming at internal strengthening of LVRLAC as an organisation.

First and foremost, the main secretariat of LVRLAC in Entebbe has developed into a well functioning unit. This is an important step, because any organisation needs a central focal point, an engine that will push it forward. Many routines still have to be developed, but most of the secretariat infrastructure is now in place.

One of the sub-projects is focusing on creating an internal communications network between LVRLAC members. 10 selected LVRLAC members have now received a complete computer set. The next step is to ensure Internet connectivity and the actual communication among the members and with the Secretariat. One important side effect of this project is the capacity building of LVRLAC members

which got opportunity to work more efficiently and to develop the skills of their staff.

A successful story is creation of the LVRLAC Women's Network. Since October 2002, the network has grown steadily, with national chapters being created in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Women's Network has scheduled a number of meetings in the next half year including a large scale seminar for women councillors and technocrats. The strengthening of the Women's Network has interesting implications for development. Both women councillors and technocrats are often working closely in relation to the local communities. Through the network based community work, the Women's Network may soon focus on tangible projects involving poor communities, reaching out and educating school children and addressing issues like HIV/AIDS.

Strengthening LVRLAC as an organisation is the foundation for development of the local authorities and the communities of the Lake Victoria



The LVRLAC Secretariat is located in the same building where the City Authorities have their premises

Region. Focus can soon shift to initiating tangible projects and activities for development. Cooperation with UBC members may be an important step in utilising capacities and experiences from the Baltic Sea Region. The ties between LVRLAC and UBC are strengthening. A visible result of this is the visit of a LVRLAC delegation at the UBC General Conference in Klaipėda.

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CAAC – A YOUNGER SISTER ORGANISATION OF UBC

CONFERENCE
OF ATLANTIC
ARC CITIES
CONFERENCE
DES VILLES DE
L'ARC ATLANTIQUE
CONFERENCIA
DE LAS CIUDADES
DEL ARCO ATLANTICO
CONFERENȚIA
DAS CIDĂȚILOR
DAR ARCO ATLANTIC

The Conference of Atlantic Arc Co-operation was set up in July 2000 in Rennes (France). Today it brings together 34 members within the five countries of the Atlantic area. It promotes:

- The maritime vocation of Europe;
- A European and Atlantic urban model;
- A balanced and polycentric development for Europe;
- International opening and co-operation amongst cities.

The members of the network can be cities over 100,000 inhabitants or urban networks of towns.

Why an Atlantic Urban Network?

There is no single urban model of development within the Atlantic area. The cities are diverse and have developed at different times and often according to very different patterns.

Nevertheless, the Atlantic cities face common difficulties and challenges. Furthermore, the Atlantic area has many advantages that should be taken into account by cities in order to reinforce a sustainable development of their own territory and of the Atlantic area in general.

The Conference was created by members eager to develop an area of solidarity and projects, who have decided to promote their synergies, develop a series of new cooperation programmes in fields of mutual interest and increase their political weight at the European level.

The framework of the Conference

An enlarged Union: the arrival of new members is to be considered not as a risk for the Atlantic area, but as an opportunity.

A major role for the urban community: 80 % of Europe's population lives in cities, it is necessary that the cities have a major role in the European Union to guarantee that their inhabitants and their needs are borne in mind.

The European Spatial Development Perspective, adopted in 1999, reflects the

need to ensure the *economic, social and territorial cohesion* of the European Union. An active participation of the cities is essential to make the ESDP a reality.

The activities

A strategic approach is:

- participation in the work undertaken to apply the principles of the ESDP to the Atlantic area ;
- promotion of the importance of the role of the Atlantic cities for a balanced development of Europe and of its Atlantic seaboard before national and international authorities;
- participation in the European debates such as European governance, future European cohesion policy, territorial dialogue, etc.
- and the projects.

In the framework of the Conference, five **Thematic Commissions** have been set up

- Accessibility and Sustainable Development Commission
- Culture and Heritage Commission
- Economic Development Commission
- Ports Cities Commission
- Urban Development Commission

Each commission discusses and analyses its specific topic and formulates a series of action proposals to be developed by the members.

For example, two C.A.A.C. projects have recently been approved within the framework of the Interreg III-B programme: one concerning Atlantic industrial areas, and another contemplating the creation of an Atlantic cultural observatory and the organisation of cultural action seminars. Different studies have already been undertaken within the commissions.

Strengthening Atlantic urban cooperation.

An essential step towards developing an Atlantic urban project is to deepen mutual knowledge of the different Atlantic urban realities. A better knowledge of the wide-ranging nature of these realities and the priorities of each city should allow members to cooperate in a more structured way.

Within this framework the Conference is preparing different instruments designed to strengthen cooperation between its cities. These include an interactive urban directory, database records for each



Newly elected CAAC Executive Bureau

member, a presentation of the urban institutional systems in the five Atlantic Arc States and interactive thematic sections on the internet.

The Interlocutors

The conference acts in complementarity with the actions led by other actors in the Atlantic area as well as with other urban actors and the European institutions, to their mutual advantage and for the major benefit of the citizens.

Decision-making bodies

The **General Assembly** brings together all the members of the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities. It defines the orientations of the Conference and decides, through its resolutions, on the actions to be undertaken by the organisation. It convenes every year.

The **Executive Bureau** is elected by the General Assembly for a period of two years. It includes the presidents of the various thematic commissions. It directs the conference, ensures that the resolutions made by the General Assembly are followed through and coordinates the work of the thematic commissions.

The **General Secretariat** is in charge of the smooth operation of the Conference. It is based in Rennes.

The newly elected President of the Conference is Ms Paz Fernandez Felgueroso, Mayor of Gijón (Spain) and member of the Committee of the Regions

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III. NEWS FROM MEMBER CITIES

Cēsis – home to active youth !

Youth in Cēsis has proved that they want develop and know how to achieve their ideas, projects and participate in the process of making politics.

Two years ago during a youth conference crystallized idea about youth council and one year ago such a council was established at Cēsis. Youth Council (YC) consists of 11 deputies and elected chairman, vice-chairman and secretary.

The Council participated in PIPE – Latvia leader teaching seminars, where we learned how to write projects and documents, how to work with people and better understand each other. One of the first YC activities was Christmas tree decorating. Involved was youth from all city schools. They made decorations and decorated it to show solidarity of youth.

The Council's aim is to create stronger connection between city council and youth. Also this is the best way how to involve in city politics making. YC deputies attend meetings of City Council of Culture, Education and Sport committee where they can express their opinion and give advices about actual problems. Other activity is going in for raids to clubs, Internet cafes, cafes etc. together with policeman in order to follow the problems of juveniles.

One of the the biggest projects was organization of a festival on the first school day. The aim was to show leisure time spending possibilities and recreate youth of Cēsis. There were exhibitions of youth organizations, concert with participation of youth amateur groups and couple professional groups. Funds for that event were from the City Council, but the most part was given by sponsors.

The Youth Council are thinking about new project – Youth House, where youth could organize discussion evenings and other activities. The most important things are determination and wish to work than everything will be possible.

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Children from Russia enjoyed Pony Riding

Underprivileged children from Kaliningrad in Kiel

In August this year, 32 homeless and socially exposed children, at the age 11-16 years old, from the Kruglovo Rehabilitation Centre near Kaliningrad and five teachers spent a week holiday in Kiel.

Thanks to generous sponsors who made this trip to Germany possible, children could be offered a wide variety of things to do and see. The comprehensive programme included, for instance, a barbecue and campfire on the beach and a visit to the German sailing-school ship, 'Gorch Fock'. The girls were delighted with the horses and rabbits at a farm. In addition to pony riding, the children also had the chance to build huts and play badminton, volleyball and basketball. For boys, one of the top attractions was a match against a team from the Kiel District Football Association. The hit, however, was a day trip to the amusement park near Kiel. In the City Hall, the Russian guests were welcomed by the President of the City of Kiel and Members of the City Council.

Kiel and Kaliningrad have enjoyed a close relationship as twin cities since 1992. The highly successful aid campaign under the motto: Russian Partners in Need for the 'Most' (Bridge) home for street children in Kruglovo was launched four years later. Thanks to the great support provided by the people of Kiel, it has been possible to provide € 75,000 for the home. With the aid of donations, showers, toilets and washbasins have been fitted and a kitchen installed. In 2001, a school was integrated into the home. Now, the children have eight well-equipped classrooms, a gymnasium

and other facilities. The 85 children and young people currently living at the 'Most' home, all of whom have a hard career as street children behind them, live together with their teachers in substitute-family groups.

The 'Kruglovo Street Children's Home' project has been widely acclaimed both in Russia and abroad. In all-Russia competition for programmes to combat and prevent drug addiction, physiological disorders and asocial behaviour among young people, the 'Kruglovo' project emerged as the winner.

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East Sweden Metropolitan Area

Two equally sized neighbouring cities, Linköping and Norrköping, are joining to establish East Sweden Metropolitan Area! The next step is gaining recognition as one of Europe's regions of the future.

"The co-operation of our two cities will lead to dynamic growth through improved competitive power, and we can offer a high quality of life at all phases of life," says Mattias Ottosson, Chairman of Norrköping's city executive board. "We are now established as the fourth largest metropolitan area. Our next goal is to get known as one of the growth regions of Europe."

"With the accumulated expertise in the region and the involvement of industry, our ambition is to increase the number of inhabitants from currently just over 400,000 to 500,000. This growth is a sure way to secure the future prosperity of the



It takes only 25 minutes by car between Linköping and Norrköping



region,” says Lars Jagerfelt, MD of Future Linköping AB.

“This is a region with the heartbeat of a big city, but which also has the countryside right on its doorstep, a rich cultural life, and a buzzing entertainment district,” says Thomas Sjölander, MD of New Norrköping AB. In terms of sport, the region holds its own, with its legendary football club and an elite ice-hockey team, LHC, in Linköping.

Thanks to early investment in computer technology by Linköping University, appealing ideas have gained support for development into new high-tech companies. Clusters of extraordinary motivation and vigour have endowed this region with world-class skills. This area has expertise in aeronautics, electronics, software, medical technology/ biomedicine, telecommunications, and logistics that is unique in the world. An university with 25,000 students and 300 professors is one of the foremost in Europe.

The cities complement each other. Norrköping is a large and highly advanced centre of logistics with one of Sweden’s largest ports. Linköping is a centre for aeronautics. Norrköping has a significant processing industry and Linköping a food industry. According to one EU report, the whole region is one of the most important centres of IT in Europe, with the highest proportion of people employed in IT-orientated industries in Sweden, after Stockholm.

In the future, high-speed trains will take 10 minutes between the cities, and less than an hour to Stockholm. This region has also three airports that allow flights to a range of European cities.

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Cross-links

Located 200 km south of Stockholm Linköping University [LiU] is the main provider of higher education and knowledge in an expanding region with a population of 400.000. Public-spirited interaction has been a hallmark of LiU since its birth. Study programs import society’s pertinent issues into the classroom. R&D projects are allied with public and business



Acreo, established in Norrköping, is one of the direct spin-off from academic discoveries and innovation

sectors. Commercialisation of research findings and incubation of spin-off ventures are carefully facilitated.

Through its mission of providing leading-edge education and research relevant for the needs of society and industry, LiU has most certain played a major role in the development of Sweden’s fourth metropolitan region. Twin cities campuses in Linköping and Norrköping houses more than 25.000 undergraduate students, 1.400 research students and 3.000 employees. In the Science parks of Linköping and Norrköping we find 250 firms and 6000 jobs of which more than half are direct spin-offs from academic discoveries and innovation.

One of them, typifying the transition of an idea to commercial viability, is Sectra. Sectra was set up in the late seventies by LiU academics who worked in vanguard areas of computer science, image processing and telecommunications security. Yet another is Acreo, a knowledge intensive company bridging the gap between academic research and industrial commercialisation. Established by Acreo and Linköping University the Centre for Organic INformatics (COIN) is dedicated to research in organic and polymer electronics. The Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship foster growth and development in knowledge-based companies and offers a unique entrepreneurship program.

University holding actively assesses idea potential that might interest venture capital. Business Incubators supports fledgling companies in their start-up stage, providing office space, administrative services and professional advice and assistance.

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Dynamic Växjö

1. Politicians, city staff and businessmen often have different views of what could best help a city grow. When each group is asked to guess the priorities of the others, they fail miserably.

2. Current research has shown that a great deal of the development of a city is the result of contacts in informal networks.

A few years ago Växjö’s chief executive, Marita Svensson therefore, with the support from the Information- and Economic Development Office invited 200 persons representing all aspect of life and business to a first meeting to form “Dynamic Växjö”- a network of citizens interested in the development of the municipality.

After an introduction dedicated people took charge of parallel sessions in all spheres of living and regional co-operation. Each topic come up with a list of short term and long term activities aimed at securing the continued growth of Växjö.

The municipal task given the highest priority by the groups was education. The most important deciding factors for a move to a new location is the quality of education for children and the availability of nice living quarters, and the job opportunities.

The municipality presented its long-term plans and Dynamic Växjö and the workgroups suggested priorities. Several items could be taken care of rapidly since funds were already allocated. For new non-budgeted suggestions the municipality offers to cover up to 50%. After this initial meeting workgroups were formed. Today the network consists of some 700 people representing business, the university, the municipality, the county council, organisations, societies and individuals. The network meets at least 4 times a year and the steering committees meet more often as required.

The brand name Dynamic Växjö is currently used for three key profile areas:- Växjö’s attractive business climate, Education and The quality of life in Växjö

All aimed at attracting people and companies to Växjö and at strengthening its position as a regional centre in Southern Sweden.

by T Lennart Gardmark

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The best moments of Christmas

The oldest town in Finland, Turku, is the home of Finnish Christmas celebration. Many European traditions and habits of Christmas have spread to the rest of Finland through Turku.

The best-known Christmas tradition in Turku, the Declaration of Christmas Peace takes place in front of the Brinkkala Mansion at the Old Great Square on Christmas Eve. As far as is known, Turku is the only place in the Nordic countries where the tradition of the Declaration of Christmas Peace has continued uninterrupted from the Middle Ages until today. The whole of Finland and parts of the neighboring countries calm down to listen to the solemn Declaration through the radio and television. In the last few years, the traditional Declaration of Christmas Peace has been accompanied by a new tradition of the ecumenical appeal for world peace delivered in Turku Cathedral by bishops of four different denominations. Unique in the whole world, the ecumenical appeal for world peace will take place on December 18, 2003. Last year the humanitarian appeal for peace was presented by representatives of the organization Doctors without Borders.

Apart from the Grand Opening of the Christmas City, the events repeated annually include the Christmas Market, Santa Lucia's Day celebration, Twelfth Day skating and St. Knut's Day Carnival. You can listen to the Christmas tidings and the most beautiful Christmas carols in the Cathedral, the national shrine of Finland. The Christmas tree in front of the Cathedral sheds light on the Christmas season. The traditional Christmas Market will be organized in the splendid, historical milieu of the Old Great Square from November 29-30, December 6-7

and December 13-14. The products sold in the market are handmade. During the Christmas season you can try the different tastes of Christmas dishes in many restaurants and tourist resorts. Christmas dinner tables since the Middle Ages are shown in a number of museums. For example, at the Turku Castle there is the sumptuous Christmas dinner table of the Renaissance Court, decorated with a peacock, while the Luostarinmäki Handicrafts Museum shows simpler Christmas tables from the 1800's and 1900's.

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Sustainable Development Strategy

The city of St. Petersburg has been developing its strategy for sustainable development since 1996. The methodology used is new in the regional planning in Russia. The key features of this plan worth stressing are: strengthening of the city competitiveness, partnership in the plan's development, combining of the long-term vision and tangible actions, etc.



Ensemble of Peter-and-Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg

The Plan also focuses on negative factors for further development of the city. These are: unfavourable climate and complicated hydro-graphic conditions, typical for the cities located in the deltas of the rivers, significant income differentiation of the population, low - quality houses, obsolete

engineering communications, lagging industrial and economic structure, etc.

After SWOT analysis, the main goals for St. Petersburg's development were defined.

The first strategic direction is creating of the favourable house keeping climate. It will require developing complex economic and administrative conditions for house keeping and will exert influence on city business.

Secondly, integration into the world economy, will enhance external trade and city transport functions, strengthen competitiveness in manufacturing. Ideally, the city aims at promoting itself on the world market with the cultural and tourist services.

Thirdly, improvement of the city's image is in the focus. With this actions for the renaissance of the city historic centre, creation of the reconstruction zones, development of the communication networks, development of infrastructure, and improvement of the environmental conditions will follow.

Finally, the city wants to create favourable social climate, focusing on better employment and more effective social protection system for families, children and the old and the disabled.

Also, St. Petersburg Government continues with the sustainable development orientation in its Program Statement. Provision of environmental security for the present and future generations of St. Petersburg inhabitants, obligatory evaluation of the engineering, industrial and construction impact on the city environment, environmental security as integral part of all the spheres of city housekeeping, use of the best existing technologies, openness and the availability of the ecological information for the citizens, participation of the citizens and the NGOs in solving environmental problems are among some of the priorities.

The realization of all the above mentioned principles stipulates the priorities of the city development.

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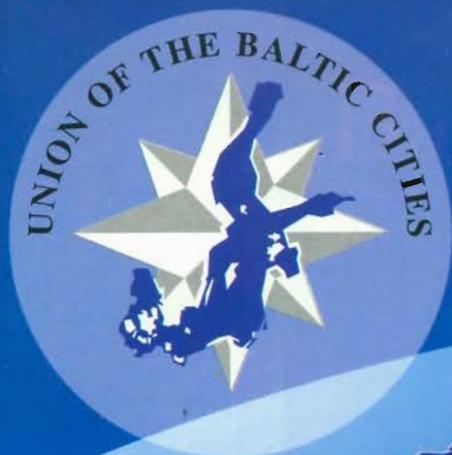
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Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is a network of over 100 member cities from all 10 Baltic countries, with an overriding goal of contributing to the democratic, economic, social, cultural and environmentally sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.

The Union has based its operational activities on ten working Commissions on Business Cooperation, Culture, Environment, Education, Health and Social Affairs, Information Society, Sport, Tourism, Transportation and Urban Planning. The Commissions coordinate and execute specific projects, activities and special events. Each city is capable to have its own creative and fully independent input to the Commissions' work.

The Union has an observer status with the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) and the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE).

The Union is open for new members. Any coastal city of the Baltic Sea or any other city interested in the development of the Baltic Sea Region may become a member of the Union by making a written declaration of its will to enter UBC.

Please contact the Union's Secretariat in Gdańsk for more information about the UBC work and the rules of entering the Union.