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GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE BALTIC SEA CITIES

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BALTIC CITIES BULLETIN



Dear UBC friends and colleagues,

How do we promote gender equality in the UBC member cities? This question is addressed by the autumn issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin. The articles present the cities' experiences and main challenges with gender mainstreaming in the city policies.

In 2006 Council of Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) launched the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. Cities and organizations have been since then encouraged to sign the Charter and design an action plan on its further implementation.

The City of Umeå signed the Charter in 2008 and during the last decade has been very effective in implementing it, especially in the field of city planning. One of the latest accomplishments is based on the idea of creating safe and comfortable meeting place for girls in the public sphere. Mainstreaming gender equality has got boost from the European Charter in the City of Helsinki. The latest action plan includes 10 Articles from the Charter. After a renewal of the leadership system and election of Lord Mayor, Jan Vapaavuori there is fresh wind of sustainability and equality and also international co-operation.

There's a wind of change one can sense in Gdańsk throughout the recent policies dedicated to equality and diversity. In other cities the main focus concerns different barriers. City of Kalmar empowers young people in getting more involved in gender equality mainstreaming processes. The case of Panevėžys brings the idea of complex evaluation system to control and verify the factual policies on gender equality in practice.

Cities should also promote gender equality among their personnel and one concern in this context is the lower number of women in leadership positions. Chief Design Officer Anne Stenros has made a successful career in a male-dominated sector, but that is still a very inspiring exception.

The promotion of gender equality remains a challenging task on the municipal level. How could we get out most of the European Charter? With its very detailed articles it should be considered as a package of ideas and inspirations instead of a formal procedure. UBC Working Group on Gender Equality decided during its workshop at the XIV UBC General Conference, held in Växjö, Sweden on 24-27 October 2017, to encourage the Executive Board to make the UBC sign the Charter. In coming years a concrete aim is to get all UBC member cities to sign the Charter.

The Bulletin contains also a wide information about the UBC General Conference Växjö.

Enjoy the reading!

Hanna Maidell
UBC Working Group on Gender Equality Coordinator

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FROM INSTITUTIONAL TO COMMUNITY-BASED CARE



YOU CAN MAKE A CHANGE

by Jaimie Just CEMR | jaimie.just@ccre-cemr.org



Jaimie Just is a Policy Officer for Gender Equality and Diversity at the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) brings together national associations of local and regional governments from 42 European countries. CEMR and its member associations are committed to promoting equality of women and men, notably at local and regional level via the European Charter for Equality.

Despite persisting challenges to its full achievement, gender equality remains a core European value and an important policy area to develop.

What does the Charter mean?

Local and regional governments have a responsibility to guarantee effective equality for all citizens. With the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, local and regional governments can make a change.

The Charter is both a political commitment and a practical instrument that provides a set of measures by which gender equality can be pursued in different fields: governance, participation, discrimination, employment, public procurement & contracts, service delivery, planning & sustainable development, regulation, international cooperation.

Online platform for support

The online Observatory of the European Charter for Equality was established in 2011 to provide a platform for support and knowledge-sharing amongst its signatories. Today, the Observatory counts 1,677 signatories in 35 European

countries. The work of the Observatory is carried out by the CEMR Secretariat, the Standing Committee for Equality and an expert group of national coordinators from member associations. The Standing Committee is made up of local elected officials and decides on the overall objectives and oversees the work of the Observatory. The expert group supports the Observatory's activities in monitoring the implementation of the Charter by maintaining contact with the signatories and disseminating information related to the Charter, as well as contributing to the technical aspects of CEMR's work on equality in semi-annual meetings.

What has been achieved?

Since the launch of the Charter, hundreds of projects in several areas - health, mobility, climate, employment, and local infrastructures - have been developed by European towns, regions and associations of local government to achieve more equal and inclusive societies.

The statistics prove, however, that gender equality is still far from being achieved. To date, 33% of women in the European Union have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15; they earn 16,5% less than men for the same work. This is why CEMR will continue extending the reach of the Charter and reinforcing the cooperation between signatories. Therefore, the continued support of the European institutions is needed to continue to sustain the transformative work of the Charter.

Did you know?

- ▶ Women earn on average around 17% less than men
- ▶ 15% of mayors are women
- ▶ 33% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15



The Charter at a glance:

- **30 articles proposing concrete measures to ensure equality of women and men,**
- **4 steps (Sign – Plan – Implement – Monitor),**
- **76 indicators to conduct self-assessments,**
- **Online Observatory: receive guidance and share good practices,**
- **“The Atlas”: an extensive directory of Charter signatories in Europe,**
- **A contact person in your country to help implement the Charter.**

More: www.charter-equality.eu

GENDER BUDGETING

AS A WAY TO INCLUSIVENESS

The excerpt from presentation by Marion Böker (Conference of the UBC Working Group on Gender Equality: „Attractive and Inclusive Cities – Promotion of Equality of Men and Women in Local Life“, Gdańsk, 11 April, 2017) , ed. Julia Gierczak

Even though gender equality throughout Europe is still a very fragile concept and there's no real Pan-European consensus concerning its importance, many studies show that gender budgeting is a key factor of not only equality but also development.

Moreover, the deeper it is structurally and systematically fixed in law and methodology, the stronger impact it has on the society as a whole, and on the local communities. Whenever it is impossible to empower this perspective enough through the legislative procedures, there is a chance to turn to tools that could be implemented locally, in the particular cities, if not all over the country.

The goal is to empower cities to direct gender equality and human rights standards in all phases of the decision making and implementation cycle which leads to high range of benefits. All of the social groups involved – the majority and minorities – can profit from such solutions as inclusive planning and implementation approach, including the distinct growth of:

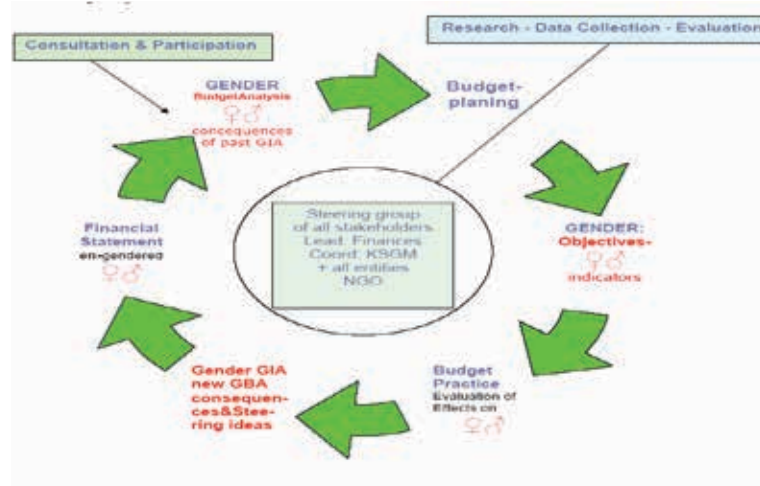
- the wealth and security of communities,
- the institutions and productivity of companies,
- the wide acceptance amongst groups and between individuals.

To make it the really effective way, participatory and transparent processes must be well-organized, with clear agenda and the support of dedicated experts.

Initial process that leads to gender budgeting have to include:

- a professional stakeholder management,
- a precise schedule over years,
- fact sheets that consist of objectives and indicators,
- evaluation cycles, including regular reports.

In Berlin, as the GBI recommended in 2010, now regularly the gender pay gap is documented and the goal is to finally eliminate it completely. Gender budgeting results in changes on the labour market, providing safe spaces for women in the public sphere, empowerment of girls in sports clubs and technical fields of education, to name just a few pros. The gender budgeting is the engine of the political cycle, that starts with the debate, leads through decision making processes and financing to result in restructuring the system.





GENDER EQUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HELSINKI

by Hanna Maidell | hanna.maidell@hel.fi

Gender Impact Assessment is the other “slogan-word” in the context of the promotion of gender equality besides the gender mainstreaming. GIA method (“Suvaus” in Finnish) has been used in Finland since 2000 and in other Nordic Countries even longer. Sometimes it is identified with gender equality promotion.

But one stumbles in difficulties with GIA. A researcher, Anna Elomäki has presented in 2014 at a EU seminar seven challenges concerning the GIA-method used in law drafting in Finland. Her conclusions about the weaknesses of GIA concern also the method in the context of gender equality promotion in a municipality. Clearly there are not enough resources in this sector and the temptation to use simple methods is big.

Difficulties to be tackled

Lack of skills and training – In Helsinki this has meant that nobody is telling us how GIA should be used. Is it an Ex-ante Evaluation or not? There is no structure for reporting the results and developing on the basis of them. After collecting the data, what should you do then? There is no qualitative monitoring.

No mechanisms for peer support and learning – We are only told by the ministry and the Association of municipalities and regions that we should just do it, with the help of couple of reports produced in projects. There is no regular meeting network or systematic training.

Almost no reinforcement – There is no authority. Even the ministries are not doing GIA expecting us in Helsinki and other cities to do it.

Networking for better results

Luckily there has been peer networks like UBC and its Gender Equality Working Group which offers support. With other Nordic Cities the city of Helsinki has been able to apply project money from the Ministry of the Nordic Countries. The main result of the 2-year project was that the Gender Equality Promotion benefits from normal development methods. Do not use the nick-name GIA when it is far too vague to become a brand. It just makes people scary and they think it is better to take distance from these sophisticated feminists using strange slang.

We in Helsinki

We in Helsinki do assessments in the context of evaluation which has a status as a scientific framework after decades in the social sciences. Evaluation guarantees that ethical rules are followed and emphasizes the aim of a change rather than a ticking the box exercise.

In Helsinki we have made progress mainly without GIA or evaluation. We have been developing our services to meet the needs of gender equality just by doing the developmental work, as we normally do. We consider the inequality between genders as a social problem that can be a risk for the inhabitant's well-being and therefore it needs our attention.

Watch
“Helsinki story”
movie at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HCYeD-mrMkg>



GENDER EQUAL

ÖREBRO

by Mia Stålgren Patiño | mia.stalgren.patino@orebro.se

It is in everyday life that gender equality is created – or inequality sustained. The Swedish municipalities meet inhabitants in everyday life at all stages of life.

We go to school, borrow books at the library, use public transport – we come into contact with the services of municipalities in all these areas and many more. Municipalities therefore have a key role when it comes to making gender equality policy a reality.

Gender budgeting

There have been several gender equality projects through the years in Örebro but it wasn't until 2007 when the City Executive board appointed a committee that took responsibility for the gender equality issue that a more structured and systematic development could take place. In 2008 the City Council decided that Örebro municipality would work with gender mainstreaming and in 2012 Örebro started to develop gender budgeting. In 2015 Strategy for a gender equal Örebro was adopted that points out gender budgeting as a pre-condition for gender mainstreaming. It is obligatory for all of the committees in Örebro municipality to use gender budgeting and the operating committees that work with gender budgeting in a structured way show better results.

Gender equality in the day-to-day work

The task to work with gender equality is pointed out as a prioritized area of development in the municipality's governance model. This means that gender equality is included in

the cyclical annual process of planning, carrying out activities, monitoring, and development. This is controlled by the operating plan and budget.

From start to finish it has been important for Örebro municipality that gender equality is integrated into the day to day work. To make this possible there are four pre-conditions that everyone has to use:

- basic understanding of gender equality,
- gender-disaggregated statistics,
- gender impact analysis,
- gender budgeting.

Gender budgeting reveals the actors behind the numbers. The purpose is to ensure that public resources are distributed fairly, equally, and equitably. In Örebro the City Executive board's decisions have made it possible to reach further and to work for the long term.

Do we focus on football that activates and engages boys and men to much wider extent than girls and women? Or do we also focus on activities involving a majority of girls and women?

SAFETY

AND GENDER EQUALITY

by Kaspars Vārpiņš | kaspars.varpins@liepaja.lv

There are three articles in the European Charter For Equality Of Women and Men In Local Life regarding safety – Article 21 focuses on Safety and Security, Article 22 on Gender-Based Violence and Article 23 on Human Trafficking.

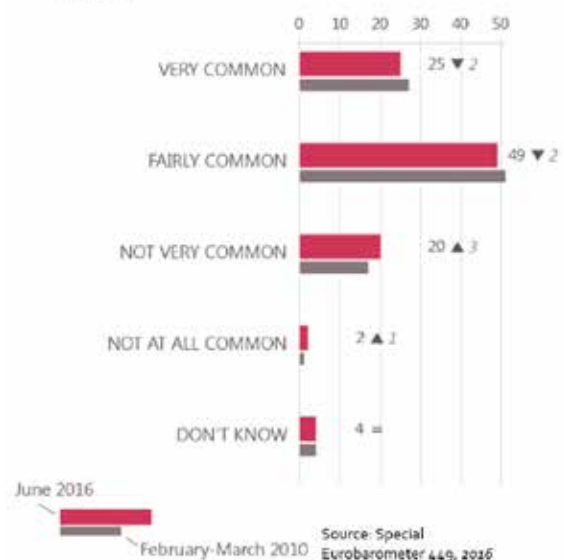
The Article 21 states that the city will be willing to analyze from a gender perspective the statistics concerning the volume and patterns of incidents that affect the security or safety of women and men and to develop and implement strategies, policies and actions, including specific improvements to the state or design of the local environment (for example, transport interchanges, car parks, street lighting). This means that looking at gender the city can enhance the quality actions which are performed to increase the level of safety and the feeling of security among the inhabitants.

In the Article 22 the city is asked to establish and strengthen policies and actions against gender-based violence, such as:

- Providing or assisting specific support structures for victims,
- Providing public information, in each of the mainly-used local languages, on the assistance available in the area,
- Ensuring that there is effective co-ordination between the relevant services such as the police, health and housing authorities.

According to the survey on Gender-based Violence requested by the European Commission and published in November 2016, 25% of interviewed think that the domestic violence against women is common in their countries and 49% say that it's fairly common. And in six years the percentage has gone down only 4%! Only 26% thinks that it's not a big issue. (Figure 1)

QB1 In general, how common do you think that domestic violence against women is in (OUR COUNTRY)? (% - EU)



The Article 23 lists the tasks to establish and strengthen policies and actions to prevent human trafficking including as appropriate.

The collaboration with all institutions responsible for preventing human trafficking seems to be crucial, as well as the educational efforts addressed to diversified members of the society, including state and local institutions, and of course NGO's.

YouthEQ

KALMAR 11-12 OCTOBER 2017

A NORDIC GENDER EQUALITY
CONFERENCE WITH
A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE



YOUTH PERSPECTIVE IN GENDER EQUALITY WORK

by Ann-Sofie Lagercrantz | ann-sofie.lagercrantz@kalmar.se

Photo: Jan Magnusson, Kalmar

The Nordic Gender Equality conference, YouthEQ 2017, was held in Kalmar on 11-12 October 2017. The gender equality work carried out on various levels of society often lacks a youth perspective.

We tend to put a strong focus on gender equality during the adult period of life – as if gender inequality suddenly emerges in adulthood. By introducing gender equality issues early in life, young people can develop their gender equality awareness and bring it with them into adulthood. This awareness can increase their interest towards other issues in the society like the challenges connected to economical growth and local as well as regional development.

Towards the equal youth policy

The municipality of Kalmar took the initiative to arrange a Nordic conference with the theme of young people and gender equality. The Nordic Gender Equality Fund in partnership with the municipalities of Kristiansand in Norway, Kolding in Denmark, Reykjavik in Iceland and Mariehamn in Åland Islands in Finland supported it financially.

The YouthEQ conference was centered on five themes, all inspired by the youth policy and goals, which allows us to create relevant content in order to strive for a sustainable and equal youth policy. Two very exciting and fruitful conference days went with learning from each other in issues concerning education and learning, work and self-sufficiency, participation and representation, health and exposure

and culture, media and leisure in a gender and youth perspective.

Over a hundred politicians, civil servants and representatives from municipalities, national agencies, county councils, schools, youth clubs and nonprofit organizations in the Nordic countries attended the conference. The aim was to gain energy and new tools so that the participants can help to advance the gender equality among young people.

A wide range of seminars and lectures was organized with research, methods, discussions, best practices and exchanging experiences.

After a welcome speech of Vice Mayor of Kalmar, Bertil Dahl, the young soul singer, Adeé sung her great song *Woman*.



Photo: Jan Magnusson, Kalmar



REPORTING PROCEDURES IN PANEVĖŽYS

by Asta Puodžiūnienė | asta.puodziuniene@panevezys.lt

Implementation of realistic gender equality principles in practice and their understanding in the society reflects on the progress and civilization level of a country. The new Reporting and Controlling Procedures of the Policy of Gender Equality was approved in Panevėžys this autumn. It defines the principles of implementation of gender mainstreaming in the administration of the municipality.

It is the first document of this kind prepared on the level of local authorities.

Despite of the fact that gender equality issues have been tackled for almost 20 years, Global Gender Gap Report (2016) tracks the progress of Lithuania from the 44th position to the 31st one (out of 145 states). In accordance to the Gender Equality Index (EIGE), Lithuania stands in the 18th position out of 27 EU states.

Lower income for women

Fundamentally, Lithuanian tendencies are similar to the ones in Europe – there is no big difference between the participation of men and women in educational processes and the situation is rather favourable in health sector. Unfortunately, the largest scores of inequality are in such domain areas as power and time.

The scores of occupational or work issues remain lower than the ones of men. Women also tend to receive less salary and the incomes are lower comparing with men. High

female economic dependency is a fundamental result of inequality in this domain area.

In the midway

In the field of knowledge, women are much more educated and strong gender segregation remains in education area. Rather large differences between men and women are obvious in the domain area of time for economic, care and social activities).

Lithuania is in the midway in respect to the domain area of power. Despite of the facts that women make half of the labour force and even more than half are women who have graduated from higher educational institutions, men continue to hold top-level positions in decision-making processes.

Gender inequality prevails in political area, regarding the leaders.

Gender representation and gender responsive content is of great importance and it needs to be taken into consideration in all phases of the policy-making process.

The City Council of Panevėžys consists of 31 members and only 7 out of them are women. That makes 22 per cent.



GOOD PRACTICES

ON GENDER EQUALITY IN KIEL

by Christiane Buhl | christiane.buhl@kiel.de

The city of Kiel is very committed to the goal of gender equality. In the following paragraphs we are going to share three examples which may be adaptable for other cities, as well.

Flexible working agreement

For employees of the Kiel City Government, there is a work agreement on flexible working hours, and one on distance working. The Office for Equality strives to make these regulations even more flexible and to achieve a greater acceptance of alternative working time models. In the last few years, the City of Kiel has significantly expanded its services concerning childcare, especially for all-day childcare, which is crucial for creating equal opportunities for women in their work life. In the city administration, the creation of job profiles and the implementation of the personnel selection procedure take place on a gender-equitable basis. In accordance with the plan for the promotion of women, if a position is vacant in a pay category where women are under-represented and if there are candidates of equal merit, women will be preferred.

Against violence

There are numerous advisory bodies in Kiel, each offering services for a specific target group (domestic violence, sexual abuse and rape, female migrants, girls and young women, addiction problems, eating disorders, psychiatric disorders, mental and health problems, work situation, pregnancy, homelessness). They co-operate according to the so-called "Kiel Model", which is unique nationwide. Their credo is to help women with a variety of ambulant offers before there

is a need for finding protection in one of two shelters in the city, which complement the ambulant advice centers. All of these advisory bodies are funded by the city of Kiel and by the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Women's Alliance Kiel

A local project called "Frauenbündnis Kiel" (Women's Alliance Kiel) helps cross-linking local NGOs, the advice centres, political women's groups, experts from science and economy, and private women. The Women's Alliance elects a team of speakers biannually, that represents the Alliance, plans events, gives press statements and convenes full meetings of all members each year. Their collective goal is to influence political decisions in favor of women in Kiel.

▼ **The Women's Alliance Kiel and its members march for the right of bodily autonomy of women and the concept of "No means No!"**





JYVÄSKYLÄ PROMOTES EQUALITY

by Marja-Leena Oinonen | marja-leena.oinonen@jkl.fi

As an employer, the City of Jyväskylä promotes equality and an equal personnel policy. In support of this, an equality plan for Jyväskylä for 2017–2020 was completed in spring. In line with the plan, equality is seen as a resource for Jyväskylä.

The Finnish Equality Act was updated and the Non-discrimination Act was implemented in 2015. According to these regulations, municipalities are responsible for promoting non-discrimination and gender equality. The plan was prepared in co-operation with the employer and representatives of personnel organisations.

The main objectives of this plan is to include measures to facilitate equal pay for equal work, as well as career development opportunities for all genders and work-life balance. Gender equality means the equal treatment of all people irrespective of gender. Gender equality is not only about improving the status of women. It concerns men, women and sexual minorities alike.

Survey on equality in services

In 2016, Jyväskylä conducted a survey on equality in services. Around 500 residents responded. The purpose of the survey was to determine how successfully equality is implemented in services and whether discrimination occurs.

Based on the responses, no gender discrimination occurred in services. However, elderly people, as well as young people belonging to sexual minorities, felt that it was difficult to raise issues with the personnel in basic education services

and healthcare and social services, for example.

Well-being report and plan

The City of Jyväskylä published an extensive well-being report in spring 2017. The report was prepared by a large group of operators, organisations, residents and other partners. The well-being plan establishes goals for Jyväskylä with regard to non-discrimination and gender equality. Gender equality will be increased by means of service guidance development. Service guidance plays a significant role in the accessibility of services, and the achievement of actionable goals will be monitored by means of an equality survey, which will be conducted during each term of the City Council.

The City of Jyväskylä's equality plan includes the following actionable goals:

- **Attracting applications from both women and men for open positions;**
- **Promoting the equal placement of women and men in various positions and creating equal career development opportunities;**
- **Promoting gender equality with regard to terms and conditions of employment, particularly salary;**
- **Creating working conditions that are suitable for both women and men;**
- **Promoting work-life balance by paying attention to work arrangements in particular;**
- **Preventing gender discrimination;**



KAUNAS PROJECTS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

by Kaunas Women Employment Information Centre | info@muic.lt

Gender equality is an important factor contributing to economic and social growth and development of the EU. To adjust to globalization changes, economic and social challenges and to assure sustainable development – every EU country must devote as much attention to gender equality as possible.

On 1 July 2017 the New Labour Code of Lithuania was launched, and it also affected gender equality in companies. According to the article 26, it is obligatory to assure the equal salary, employment possibilities, work conditions, etc. for men and women in their employment places. However, a big part of businessmen still consider it as an unimportant rule that is easy to evade. Reacting to it, Kaunas Women Employment Information Centre (KWEIC) encourages gender equality both in the field of employment and in other spheres.

Since the establishment in 1994, KWEIC actively works to improve the situation of women in Lithuania, business establishment, education of leaders and has influence upon approval of favourable legal acts in these fields. It cooperates with Social Security and Labour Ministry and largely contributes to implementation of equal possibilities' programme of men and women.

The Centre together with partners has prepared and implemented various European and national projects about innovative education on gender equality, prepares information to assure equality of men and women in work places, encourages the participation of men and women in balanced decision making and in their leadership (more than 50 publications: research, information brochures, books, leaflets, etc.).

During the last ten years, KWEIC has organized political campaigns in order to support women's role in politics in all regions of Lithuania, has prepared and sent out recommendations for political parties how gender equality should be assured in the political party.

In 2014–2016, the Project „MILDA“ was implemented („Milda“ is a goddess in Lithuanian pagan mythology, the abbreviation stands for „Women's Initiative in Growth of Democracy in Lithuania“). It has a big impact on the increase of political awareness of women. In the Project „Gender Equality – Profitable Investment“ in 2013–2015, the activities of KWEIC were directly related to assurance of high competent experts in gender equality issues. They were responsible for organization of education courses on how to assure equality of gender in municipalities of Lithuania.

KWEIC gives lectures on legal issues how to reach gender equality in labour market in 60 municipalities of Lithuania, how to start the dialogue of social partnership and balanced representation of both genders in decision making.





GENDER EQUALITY IN THE CITY PLANNING

by Linda Gustafsson | linda.gustafsson@umea.se

Young girls make an underrepresented group, when it comes to spontaneous sports and activity areas. They are also underrepresented in dialogue on urban development projects in public environments.

With the support of the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the Municipality of Umeå worked together with groups of girls around 15-20 years, focused on their experiences regarding safety and security in public space, as well as their expectations in taking over the place.

During the project different groups of girls participated in workshops dedicated to dance, photography and other artistic expressions. The workshops resulted in an exhibition about expectations on being a young woman in Umeå. The works were presented at the museum of Västerbotten. The outcome of the workshops and the exhibition has been a concept for a safe meeting place free from expectations, fears and insecurities.

The meeting place Frizon

The meeting place Frizon in Årstadernas park has an oval roof with windows in various colours. In the free zone, there are basket seats that were inspired by the gondolas on the "Whirlwind" roundabout. Apart from creating a place that is secure, light and welcoming, there were wishes for it to be possible to connect on the phone and play music from it, which has now become reality.

A permanent imprint can be seen in the roof through small icons that were originally printed on paper with an eraser focusing on the things the girls wanted and the ones they did not want in the park.



Årstadernas Park is a central park in Umeå, where many young people are moving about and passing through. The place is designed with an oval roof with windows in various colours. In the free zone, there are basket seats that were inspired by the gondolas on the 'Whirlwind' roundabout.

During the whole process it has been important to verify our initial arguments against the needs and wishes of the target group several times. One simple thing, for example, is to adapt the environment and seating places so they can be physically comfortable for girls, that they wouldn't need to sit there in awkward and disturbing poses.

All in the aim of making gender issues a bigger part of the physical planning, given the areas that are still not necessarily the case today in most of the projects.



Photo: <http://www.tyrens.se>



BENCHMARKING EQUALITY

by Milla Ovaska | milla.ovaska@espoo.fi

Espoo and the city of Shanghai are celebrating the 20th anniversary of a profound sister city cooperation in 2018. The friendship between these growing business hubs spans to all areas of city and government activities.

In late September 2017 the Shanghai Women Federation visited Espoo to share experiences and challenges in the area of women's rights, good childhood and non-discrimination. The visit included discussions with Espoo social workers in child welfare and work against domestic violence, introduction to Espoo's equality and non-discrimination work, an excursion to a day care center and meeting with the deputy mayor. The two cities with different cultures and societal structures found common challenges and fertile ground for cooperation.

Equality is rooted in the legislation

Sirpa Hertell, the chair of the Sustainable Development Programme of Espoo named the three most important themes in the municipal decision-making from the equality perspective. Number one is the subjective right to day care, which is affordable, readily available and well resourced. Second is investing in public transportation. As 2/3 of the passengers of public transportation are female, better public transportation infrastructure is not only good for the environment, it also enables more mobility and freedom for women. The third most important agenda for equality in municipality according to Hertell is having women as decision-makers. In Espoo 56% of the council members are female, when the average in Finnish municipal councils is 39%.

▲ **"We are stronger together and our discussions are richer when we have perspectives from different cultures and circumstances" - Espoo's Deputy Mayor Juha Metso said at the meeting with Shanghai Women Federation**

Empowering women in Shanghai

In Shanghai, the Women Federation is working for the women's and children's rights in the society and acts as a platform to empower women and to encourage female participation and leadership in society. Their aim is to give a forum for women and to influence inside the government for policies favorable for female emancipation. At the moment one key goal on Women Federation's agenda is to develop day care for children under 3 years old. The kindergarten starts when kids are 3 years old, but having a service for smaller kids would enable a swifter return of the mothers to work life.

The delegation of Women Federation was also interested in learning how the Finnish education system supports the development of innovative, independent minds. The Women Federation is devoted to make Shanghai the best place for children in China, and is considering joining the Child Friendly Cities-initiative by UNICEF. The City of Espoo shares the same goal in Finland and the sister cities will continue discussions on how to support each other in the process of becoming the national leaders in equality and child friendliness.

GDAŃSK TO SIGN

THE CEMR CHARTER?

by Julia Gierczak | gierczak@neww.org.plPhoto: Grzegorz Mehring / www.gdansk.pl

Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life – launched in 2006 and thoroughly promoted on many levels by the experts of CEMR – has been already implemented in almost 20 Baltic Cities, but still remains the underrepresented part of strategy in Polish cities. In Poland we note only two formal signatories to date and none of aforementioned is a member of the UBC. Gdańsk steps forward to make a change.

The Charter's implementation shouldn't become the only tool to support equal policies in the city but it would be a very effective and highly recommended asset to start with. The experiences of cities that signed the Charter prove it is a valuable method of empowering the policy-makers in taking into very serious account the matters of gender inequality, supporting the efforts of activists and experts working on eliminating violence against women and girls and to finally increase gender mainstreaming locally.

UBC Working Group on Gender Equality has become just one of many, but rather important actors in the process of providing the social change. Małgorzata Tarasiewicz participated in consulting meetings and coordinated various initiatives on the subject. As a result on 11 April 2017 UBC Working Group on Gender Equality organized the international conference "Attractive and Inclusive Cities. Promotion of Equality of Men and Women in Local Life". Its main purpose was the promotion of Charter with the support of CEMR, the City of Gdańsk, local and international experts and European Solidarity Centre where the whole event took place.

At the Conference "Attractive and Inclusive Cities. Promotion of Equality of Men and Women in Local Life", held in Gdańsk on 11 April 2017, the city of Gdańsk declared its support to the idea of the Charter implementation.

The conference programme included the expert background, to mention only Jaimie Just (CEMR) who was discussing the principles of the Charter applied practically and Marion Boeker, well recognised international expert analysing in her presentation the potential of gender budgeting models. Important follow up of this part, preceded by the panel discussion and the presentations of local authorities (including Piotr Kowalczyk, Vice Mayor of Gdańsk and Ritva Vilyanen, Vice Mayor of Helsinki), become workshops led by the academic expert, activist and politician.

The conclusion of the meeting was the letter of recommendation read by Małgorzata Tarasiewicz in response to the very recent declaration of Paweł Adamowicz, the Mayor of Gdańsk, announcing his support to the idea of the Charter's implementation. We are waiting for the results of the Gdańsk Citizens' Panel that has just voted on supporting or giving up on this concept.



PARENTS' GUIDE IN PORI

by Soniya Raissi | soniya.raissi@pori.fi

With a focus on empowering women, the parents' guide project of the city of Pori seeks to ensure that the migrant women get the possibility to know more about their new society. It is about education, health, integration challenges, work life and gender equality in Finland.

The opportunities for women to integrate in the new society are limited, because of cultural norms or a necessity of arranging a child day care. The integration process within families are running uneven. While children and youth can settle and become a part of the new society very quick, and men get the opportunities to join language courses or to start working, the women are those whose integration goes very slowly. They play, however, a central role in the process of integration of families.

The training helps to recognize the needs

During the training, the parents' guide gets a view of their life perspective in the new community. As the process develops, prejudices and discouragement, that prevailed before, make room for increasing self-confidence, openness and courage.

The training is run with schools, cultural unit, health care office, unemployment center, the Church, child-protection and youth center and supported by Finnish mothers and families. These intercultural encounters are central for a tolerant and peaceful coexistence of different cultures.

The training lasts about five months and is mainly targeted at women with migration background. At the end, they receive the appropriate certificate from the Mayor of the City.



**Exploring the feelings the women had when coming to Finland. Translation:
IKÄVÄ = LONGING (missing my home),
ITKU = CRY**

One of the results is that the women offer support to other women in need, for example, when it comes to questions such as childcare or school enrollment, translations, multicultural events.

How the society benefits

The resource, that the parents' guide uses, is personal experience and the network of co-operation partners. Giving something back to their new community and women in need they are also able to start their own projects. Projects can be from starting a reading circle, giving Finnish lessons to migrant women and teaching handcraft to complete a vocational training course, starting to work or to complete one's own university degree.

Under this guiding principle, the parents' guide project is open to all people, it is open to new ideas, always anxious to align the offer with the current needs, a project supported by getting and giving on the basis of voluntary work, it is an offer of multicultural people with diverse skills.

They support and enrich the daily work e.g. in daycares and schools. The parents guide take over an important bridge function, between parents, cultures, religions and institutions and to break down language barriers.

INSPIRING CAREER

IN A MALE-DOMINATED SECTOR

by Hanna Maidell | hanna.maidell@hel.fi

Design Director Anne Stenros, a thought leader on design thinking and creative leadership, was one of the speakers at the UBC General Conference in Växjö.

Anne Stenros started in her position as Helsinki's Chief Design Officer in September 2016. The job description has gathered a lot of interest, especially from abroad, because it is a pioneering position. The City of Helsinki is among the first cities in the world to hire a Chief Design Officer (CDO). The objective is to utilize design knowledge and enforce experimentation culture. With more than 40,000 employees and dozens of large organisations in its tow, the City of Helsinki is one of the biggest employers in Finland. It is important to leverage existing knowledge and expertise.

Design instead of architecture

Anne Stenros has background in architectural theory. She completed her architectural studies in Finland and then she took a second Masters at Berkeley before doing her PhD in the theory of architecture. Afterwards, she saw glass everywhere, glass ceilings and glass walls and concluded that there weren't any positions for her in architectural education with the male-oriented focus. She turned to design instead. She became Managing Director of Design Forum Finland for nine years, promoting Finnish design nationally and internationally.

Being Design Director

There are three main tasks at the position of Design Director. One is branding the city in terms of design, the second: enhancing the positive consumer experience in the service

delivery. The third is future navigation and what ideas you can bring into city governance or functions in the recently reformed Helsinki City organization.

Put the people first

In Växjö Anne Stenros presented her future perspectives of leadership in cities. It consists of urban innovation, civic service design and city as a platform. The competition between cities will be growing. Civic service design is raising its head as a solution to disparities. Cities will be platforms, a sort of test-beds of new apps that can answer to the challenges of the sustainable future. They can grow to responsive cities in relation to citizens and even give a possibility to civic compassion.

As a female leader in male-dominating sectors Anne has gathered also experience. "The audience do not expect female panelist to make jokes and they get embarrassed and do not laugh. Horrible situation. If a woman does not behave according to the stereotypes, some male directors get heart and close their mouth. How childish", Anne states smiling.



Article based on "Helsinki Design Week" story.

UBC NEWS & FACES

Leadership for the Future – Cities as Leaders for Glocal Sustainable Development



by UBC Secretariat | info@ubc.net



- Photos of the XIV UBC General Conference available in UBC Flickr: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsm5fc2wb>
- Videos of the XIV UBC General Conference: www.bit.ly/ubc-youtube

The XIV Union of the Baltic Cities General Conference, held on 24–27 October 2017 in Växjö, Sweden, called for tackling populism and Euroscepticism. The General Conference also adopted a resolution on United Nations Agenda 2030 for sustainable development goals.

Nearly 300 high-level politicians, city officials, other experts and youth participated in the XIV Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) General Conference in Växjö, Sweden, on 24–27 October 2017. The conference adopted an appeal “Tackling Rising Populism and Euroscepticism” and “UBC Resolution on United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals”.

The theme of the XIV General Conference was “Leadership for the Future – Cities as Leaders for Global Sustainable Development”. Questions and issues tackled at the conference included leadership and cities pioneering in various fields of life, such as promoting digital start-up ecosystems, as well as preventing youth marginalization and fighting climate change.

The conference also held the 25th Anniversary session of the UBC, founded in 1991 in Gdańsk. In addition, the General Conference featured a strong involvement of over 60 youth representatives across the Baltic Sea Region, who gave their ideas for solutions to the common issues and problems affecting the whole region.

The next UBC General Conference will be held in 2019 in Kaunas, Lithuania.

Appeal on Tackling Rising Populism and Euroscepticism

The UBC General Conference, emphasizing the Baltic Sea Region cities’ attachment to the European values of freedom, democracy, equality, tolerance, and diversity, adopted the Appeal on Tackling Rising Populism and Euroscepticism.

“We are sharing the crossroads, both in and outside Europe. It is now that we are making vital choices, which will have long-lasting consequences. The question is which road we take: shall we opt for the winding path of values, or rather speed dangerously head first onto the motorway of populism”, states President of the UBC **Per Bødker Andersen**.

Resolution on UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals

The UBC General Conference adopted also the Resolution on UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals. The UBC has during its whole existence focused on making the Baltic Sea Region more sustainable, attractive and more resilient to challenges in our environment. Upon the 25th UBC anniversary, the importance of further mobilizing the potential and cooperation in achieving common goals is eminent. As outlined in UBC’s sustainability action programme 2016–2021 “Stairway towards Sustainable Baltic Cities”, cities are the key actors in making a positive change.

At the General Conference, a joint report by UBC and CDP on Climate Leadership from Baltic Sea Region Cities was launched.

“We need international cooperation and exchange more than ever. UBC as the leading city network in Northern Europe is the natural platform for this”
Per Bødker Andersen,
UBC President



Top-level speakers across the Baltic Sea Region

The General Conference hosted top-level speakers, such as Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the Committee of the Regions, Lena Ek, Senior Advisor in Sustainable Seas Foundation and Former Minister of Environment in Sweden, Peter Schenk, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy in European Commission, Krista Kampus, Senior Adviser/Head of the Baltic 2030 Unit at the Council of the Baltic Sea States, Anne Stenros, Design Director in the City of Helsinki, Alessandro Cenderello, Managing Partner for EU Institutions at Ernst & Young, Shirin Reuvers, Cities Manager at CDP, Pärtel-Peeter Pere, CEO and partner at Future Place Leadership, and Edgar Nazarenus and Vincent Weseloh from Capufaktur.

As speakers and panellists, esteemed Mayors and other representatives from UBC member cities took part in the discussions. Keynote speakers included Per Schöldberg, Deputy Mayor of Växjö Municipality, Piotr Grzelak, Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk, Jørgen Kristiansen, Deputy Mayor of Kristiansand, Gunars Ansins, Deputy Mayor of Liepāja, Janna Simula, Cultural Chief in the City of Pori, Wolfgang Röttgers, Councillor in the City of Kiel, Mantas Jurgutis, Member of Kaunas City Council, Carina Svensson, Chair of Environmental Board in Malmö, Jyrki Myllyvirta, Mayor of Lahti, and Oliver Rosengren, Deputy Mayor of Växjö Municipality.



Youth for participation, migration and leadership

by Carsten Adamsen | caad@kolding.dk

Active youth from the BSR contributes to work of the UBC commissions during the XIV General Conference.

Parallel to the XIV UBC General Conference the Youthful Cities Commission held a youth exchange, partly financed by the European program Erasmus+ for about 55 youth from 7 countries. The aim of our youth conference was to have youth work on the issues of participation and migration as well as also being an integral part of the General Conference.

Local participation: pro and cons

During the first two and a half day, we were acquainted and worked on participation and migration. The youth discussed pro and cons of their local participation – whether it be in their local sports club or local youth council on their school or in the city. They exchanged good (and bad) practices and tried to imagine their ideal setup for a city youth council. Many great ideas were brought up and will later be presented to the UBC. On the issue of migration each group – divided by country – explained the local situation, challenges and possibilities. The youth tried to come up with solutions to known challenges.

Tasks from the UBC Commissions

During the days of the General Conference youth participated actively in many of the workshops and seminars. Also on Wednesday 25 October, they were presented with tasks from each commission. During the following 24 hours the youth grouped up and worked hard to come up with comments and/or possible solutions to the given tasks. All youth were engaged in mostly all of the tasks as the groups interviewed each other on the different tasks. Comments and possible solutions were presented to the General Con-

ference on the Thursday session “Listening to the voices of tomorrow”. All results will be presented to UBC cities in written form within 2 weeks.

The leaders of the future

During the session “BSR organisations working together on youth issues” at the General Conference, the youth also was active. The goal of the session was to look into the possibilities of a more strategic approach to youth work in the Baltic Sea Region. On 14 November the UBC Youthful Cities Commission meets with Euroregion Baltic, Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation and Council of the Baltic Sea States in Stockholm to discuss involvement in the EU Strategy Forum in Tallinn, June 2018.

Finally, the youth exchange produced quite a lot of material and good ideas for future projects on issues of youth participation and engagement between UBC cities of the Youthful Cities Commission.





UBC Executive Board meeting in Berlin

by UBC Secretariat | info@ubc.net

UBC Executive Board met in Berlin on 15 June 2017 in European Commission's representation in Germany, in connection with the EUSBSR Annual Forum held on 13-14 June 2017. The XIV UBC General Conference, the outcome of this year's EUSBSR Forum, cooperation with EUSBSR Flagship School to Work, and proposal about a conference on the integration of refugees were among the issues discussed.

UBC co-organised altogether four seminars and back-to-back meetings before and during the EUSBSR Forum: Youth Conference as well as a youth seminar "Nothing about us without us", EUSBSR Participation Day, and seminar on Smart water sector.

UBC cooperates with EUSBSR Flagship School to Work

UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well Being has started a cooperation with the EUSBSR Flagship School to Work (S2W). The Flagship strengthens transnational co-operation between stakeholders in the BSR in the field of education and works to prevent early school leaving and to develop new support methods for vulnerable groups of youth. The Flagship has created a common platform of understanding and learning and dissemination of successful methods.

With 57 members from the Baltic Sea Region, the Flagship is coordinated by SALAR (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions).

Conference on integration of refugees in March 2018

In March 2016 the City of Rostock hosted the UBC Conference "The Impact of the European Refugees Crisis in the

Cities of the Baltic Sea Region". The conference discussed the role of municipalities, focused on best practices and analysed the needs, challenges and the chances faced by the cities in connection with the influx of the refugees. How has the integration been progressing for these two years? The City of Rostock has proposed to hold a follow-up conference on 12-14 March 2018.

During the XIV UBC General Conference, the statutory UBC General Assembly convened and, among other issues, elected UBC officials for the next two-year period.

UBC Executive Board 2017-2019

Næstved, Denmark
Keila, Estonia
Lahti, Finland
Rostock, Germany
Liepāja, Latvia
Tauragė, Lithuania
Kristiansand, Norway
Gdynia, Poland
St. Petersburg, Russia
Växjö, Sweden
Gdańsk, Poland – observer

President and Vice-Presidents 2017-2019

Per Bødker Andersen, City of Kolding – President
Marie-Louise Rönnmark, City of Umeå – 1st Vice-President
Mantas Jurgutis, City of Kaunas – Vice-President
Jarkko Virtanen, City of Turku – Vice-President



UBC Resolution on UN Agenda 2030 for SDGs

by Anna Kotaviita | anna.kotaviita@turku.fi

The UBC has during its whole existence focused on making the Baltic Sea Region more sustainable, attractive and more resilient to challenges in our environment. As outlined in the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2016–2021 “Stairway towards Sustainable Baltic Cities”, cities are the key actors in making a positive change.

Upon the 25th UBC Anniversary in Växjö, Sweden, the UBC Resolution on UN Agenda 2030 was launched. It is an important call for Baltic Sea Region city leadership! Global leadership of macro-regional sustainable development can be best filled through active co-operation between cities, civil society and innovative private companies.

UBC network of active members, with desire to improve strategic partnerships and common actions, will strive to become a leader in the sustainability and set an example for the rest of the world on the way to reaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It is UBC's firm belief that its member cities are to become climate change leaders in Europe and globally, implementing one of the most innovative and sustainable urban projects.

The Goal 11 “Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” is explicitly addressing cities

UBC's prime target is achieving low-emission and resource-wise Baltic Sea Region through smart city planning, capacity building and sharing of best practices.

The UBC will focus on using its potential even more and will help its members to benchmark and support each other to set and reach ambitious goals. At the General Conference, a joint report by UBC and CDP on Climate Leadership from Baltic Sea Region Cities was launched (*see the next page*).

The Union of the Baltic Cities commits to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and continues to focus on responding to climate change, in alignment with the Paris Agreement, by implementing and heavily promoting the concepts of green growth, circular economy, industrial symbiosis and sharing economy.

Together we can make a difference

by UBC Secretariat | info@ubc.net

At the 25th UBC anniversary session held on 25 October in Växjö, the General Conference endorsed the appeal “Tackling Rising Populism and Euroscepticism” calling for a stronger cities cooperation to combat radicalism, populism, and intolerance.

In the face of the fundamental challenges that Europe has to encounter today, such as the rise of populism and nationalism, the UBC General Conference emphasized the Baltic Sea Region cities' attachment to the European values of freedom, democracy, equality, tolerance, and diversity. This democratic shape must be based on the tripartite separation of powers, strong local government, and independent media and culture.

“We are sharing the crossroads, both in and outside Europe. It is now that we are making vital choices, which will have long-lasting consequences. The question is which road we take: shall we opt for the winding path of values, or rather speed dangerously head first onto the motorway of populism”, states President of the UBC **Per Bødker Andersen**.

A responsibility of cities and regions is to engage in building Europe of tomorrow that is based on trust and democratic values, where the voice of ordinary citizens is taken into account. Democracy is not given once and for good. The appeal promotes education as a fundamental and primary tool to be used in the struggle for democratic values.

The document calls also for involvement and solidarity when it comes to one of the most important challenges nowadays - migration. No one can release the local authorities from the obligation of following basic moral rules. Whatever is done, should be based on respect for human rights.

The whole text of the appeal is available at: <http://ubc.net/document/xiv-general-conference-vaxjo-24-27-october-2017/conference-documents>

Let us stand up and show leadership in this hour of uncertainty! Together, we can make the difference!

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Climate Leadership from BSR Cities report published

by Anna Kotaviita | anna.kotaviita@turku.fi

CDP, the global climate change disclosure non-profit, and the UBC have agreed on a two-year Memorandum Of Understanding to involve more cities in the development and reporting of target-oriented climate actions. The findings are now published in a final report Climate Leadership from Baltic Sea Region Cities!

The report Climate Leadership from Baltic Sea Region Cities was launched at the UBC General Conference in Växjö, Sweden, on 25 October 2017.

In general, UBC member cities are considerably more ambitious in setting carbon neutrality targets than the global average. Measured by the target year set in 2016 for achieving carbon neutrality, six cities in the global top-11 are from the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) of which two from UBC – Aarhus from Denmark and Turku From Finland.

“Over 50% the world’s population live in cities and it is here the transition to a sustainable future will be won or lost. But we are already seeing unprecedented engagement and action on climate change in our cities and Baltic cities are no exception. We are proud to be a partner of UBC and to jointly help cities learn from each other by showcasing their climate leadership in the region and beyond”, says **Kyra Appleby**, Head of CDP’s cities program.

20 UBC cities reported

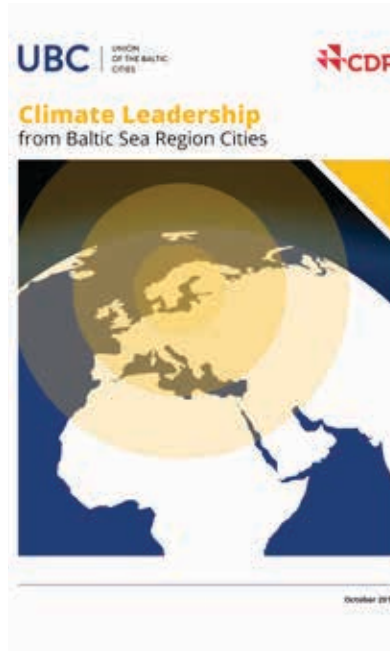
The CDP and UBC co-campaigned this spring to get more cities in the Baltic Sea Region join the reporting. The number of BSR cities that disclosure is 57 of which 20 are the UBC member cities:

Aarhus from Denmark

Hiiu, Jõhvi, Pärnu, Tartu from Estonia

Espoo, Helsinki, Lahti, Turku from Finland
Greifswald from Germany
Jelgava, Riga from Latvia
Šiauliai from Lithuania
Arendal, Kristiansand from Norway
Gdańsk, Gdynia from Poland
Malmö, Umeå, Visby from Sweden.

“The Baltic Sea Region has been a forerunner in sustainable development during the last 25 years – and so we wish in the future. Our cooperation with CDP aims at supporting our UBC members with more information and contacts on the global arena, important for an efficient transaction into becoming carbon free, smarter and more attractive cities”, comments **Björn Grönholm**, Head of Sustainable Cities Commission Secretariat that has been coordinating the work with CDP.



Read the final report:
http://ubc.net/sites/default/files/climate_leadership_from_bsr_cities_2017_ubc.pdf



We Share, We Learn, We Develop

by Matti Mäkelä | matti.makela@turku.fi

Photo: www.s2wflagship.eu

UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being started a cooperation with the EUSBSR (EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region) Flagship School to Work (S2W) last spring. The Flagship offers transnational platforms to strengthen connections between stakeholders in the BSR, as well as to jointly develop methods and policy recommendations in the field of education and work.

The purpose is to develop support for vulnerable groups of young people, specifically NEETs, early school leavers and newly arrived refugees.

The cooperation has already been a great success. Here are some examples:

- study visits (Hamburg in April, Turku in November, and Tartu in November)
- seminars (Stockholm in June, Tartu in November)
- ESF funded project to support the integration of newly arrived refugees
- ESF funded project to support the integration of NEETs
- Youth Guarantee workshop as a part of the UBC General Conference in Växjö

As a result of this cooperation we have built three Knowledge Platforms of understanding and learning, and dissemination of different successful methods to address and to work with issues related to prevention of early school leaving, and integration of NEETs and newly arrived refugees.

Knowledge platforms

Knowledge platforms offer opportunities to share your own best practices, to learn from the others and also to cooper-

ate with other actors and projects in order to start new development processes and to have an impact on the national, regional and EU-level activities and policies. All Knowledge Platforms can be found at: www.s2wflagship.eu.

All stakeholders invited

We invite all the stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region to join the cooperation with The Flagship School to Work. You can work with us in different ways:

- ▶ order our newsletter and information about, for example, study visits, workshops and seminars,
- ▶ share your good practices,
- ▶ learn from the best practices of the others,
- ▶ search peer development partners for your new project ideas,
- ▶ join the Flagship as a full member.

Flagship School to Work is coordinated by SALAR (The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions). UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being and City of Turku's education division coordinate the Knowledge Platforms of Early School Leaving and Newly Arrived Refugees.



Safe Cities Commission on crisis management in Tallinn

by Kaspars Vārpiņš | kaspars.varpins@liepaja.lv

On 7–9 June 2017 the UBC Safe Cities Commission met in Tallinn to hold its second meeting this year and to elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. Theme of this meeting was: Crisis management in emergency situation.

Official working session began with warm welcome words from Kalle Klandorf, Tallinn Deputy Mayor, who expressed his pleasure to host the UBC Safe Cities Commission in Tallinn. During these 3 days, the participants from Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Poland had the possibility to get information on how Tallinn Municipal Police is prepared for the new task – crisis management. After the introduction, other cities presented their crisis management processes and how they really work during an emergency situation.

Study visit

Following the presentation and discussions, meeting participants visited one of the Estonians Emergency Centers to see in reality how the work is carried out in Tallinn. Also, the UBC General Conference workshop run by the Commission was discussed. It was decided, that during the workshop work groups will develop general data collection principles for civil protection prevention activities. According to the developed outcomes, a project initiative is planned to organize common data collection principles regarding civil protection and safety in cities around the Baltic Sea Region.

Chairmanship still in Liepāja

In the last day the election of a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman was held. The participating members decided that current Chairman Kaspars Vārpiņš from Liepāja Municipal

Police and current Vice-Chairman Torbjörn Lindström from Southwest Finland Emergency Services in Turku should continue their duties as Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

UBC Safe Cities Commission becomes a full member of EUSBSR PA Secure

UBC Safe Cities Commission received a full membership in the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) Policy Area Secure (PA Secure) Steering Group. That means that the Commission can now even better represent the Baltic Sea Region cities on the regional and EU levels. The Safe Cities Commission together with the Sustainable Cities Commission have been invited to prepare project application with other PA Secure involved stakeholders.

PA Secure is a Policy Area under the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region addressing protection from emergencies and accidents on land. EUSBSR is the first EU macro-regional strategy. It is a framework which brings EU Member States across region together so they could coordinate their actions aiming to achieve common goals for the whole region. The strategy calls these goals three objectives: to save the sea, to connect the region, and to increase prosperity.



Kaunas 2022 – European Cultural Capital in making

by Jaana Simula | jaana.simula@pori.fi

The Cultural Cities Commission meeting on 26–27 September 2017 was hosted by the city of Kaunas. We explored more in depth Kaunas 2022, Kaunas Modernistic Architecture, the Biennale and community cultural project in Šilainiai.

Kaunas was the temporary capital of Lithuania during the inter-war period. Kaunas – European Capital of Culture 2022 explores how the temporary becomes contemporary. The artistic director of the project **Virginija Vitkienė** presented the three CONs of Kaunas in this way:

“By CONTEMPORARY, we mean being CONnected with the rest of Europe, to be in CONtext and to create a new CONtent for our city, our country and our Europe”.

More: <http://kaunas2022.eu/en/>

Modernism in architecture

The next step was to get to know modernism in Kaunas architecture. During the inter-war period Kaunas became base for public authorities and intelligentsia. Lot of prominent buildings were needed and built.

Modernistic buildings in Bauhaus style and in Lithuanian nationalism along the longest pedestrian street in Europe makes Kaunas unique. The city still has the same problem as all the cities in UBC. How to keep the houses intact when the original purpose they were built for is gone?

From architecture to art

Kaunas Biennale is this time touching the same discussion, but with monuments. What becomes of monuments when the reason they were raised is gone. With 25 art works, a lot of them conceptual, the (im)possibility of a monument is explored. The question arises: Do we need monuments and what monuments do we really need? (www.biennial.lt)

Developing the potential

The residential area of Šilainiai is about high rise soviet era buildings. The plan was to make an area with lot of green and cultural spaces. The result was an area cut by a street with heavy traffic and less area for recreation. Lithuanian artist and photographer Evelina Šimkutė grew up in Šilainiai. After years of studying and working in London she is now doing artistic work with the community. She runs a number of artistic and voluntary projects. The aim is to develop the potential and creativity of the people of Šilainiai. And the potential is huge. (<https://silainiaiproject.com/about/>)

Commission's meeting

The Commission also held a working meeting in Kaunas. The plans and ideas were brought up: UBC Cultural City proposal by Kiel and ABCD ARS BALTICA Creative Dialogue project. The election of next chairperson was also on the agenda and the Commission hopes to find a new lead soon.

Towards an intergenerational city

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Katarzyna Stec | k.stec@mopsgdynia.pl



This year's annual meeting of the Inclusive and Healthy Cities Commission was combined with two-day international conference entitled "Intergenerational City - Challenges in Demography and Opportunities for Sustainable Development".

The event took place on 9–10 October 2017 in Pomeranian Science and Technology Park in Gdynia, Poland, and was attended by 230 participants from Poland and abroad - politicians, city officials, academics, experts, representatives of various organisations, youth and senior citizens.

How to build an open city?

It was a time to present current undertakings on intergenerational local policies implemented in three UBC member cities. Per-Inge Liden, Chairman of the Labour and Social Council and Vice chairman of Karlstads Stadhus AB – Karlstad, Sweden, gave the presentation "The voice of the young in an intergenerational city". Martti Merra, Director of Sports and Youth Services in Espoo, Finland, explained how sport and recreation activities can be used as a tool on intergenerational actions. And first conclusions from Gdynia Intergenerational Dialogue and Social Innovation Incubator were presented by representatives of City of Gdynia, Poland. It was time very well spent on seeking collectively answers how to build a city open to citizens of all ages - a city that recognizes the needs, potential and prospects of people creating a local community at every stage of their life. The plenary sessions were streamed live and visual notes were taken.

Annual Commission's meeting

During the second day of the conference, the annual meeting of the Commission took place. Five member cities and representative of the UBC Secretariat participated. Activity report 2017 and Activity plan 2018 were presented. This year the Commission held two meetings: a workshop meeting in Trelleborg in March (service design method has been implemented to sketch the idea of possible common projects and Open social spaces has been a key theme for this workshops to develop) and the annual meeting in Gdynia. One of the upcoming events is a study visit during White Ribbon Campaign - eight social workers from Karlstad will visit Gdynia in December 2017.

According to members decision, the chairmanship of the Commission will be held for two years: Gdynia will take responsibility for chairing the Commission (Jarosław Józefczyk) and co-chair will be held by Karlstad (Lina Helgerud).





Sharing the European Dream – Invitation to Rostock

by Karin Wohlgemuth | karin.wohlgemuth@rostock.de

The sudden influx of thousands of persons in 2015/16, fleeing from war or bad economical possibilities, led the UBC cities to discuss the challenge in March 2016 at the UBC Conference on the Impact of the European Refugees Crisis in Baltic Cities. Its follow-up, "Baltic Sea Cities - Sharing the European Dream. UBC Conference on Integration of New Citizens" will be held on 12-14 March 2018 in Rostock.

Today, it should be clear that most of new citizens will not return to their homeland, not even if they have a chance to do so. Their lives go on: children are going to schools and adults are striving to get, or already have a job, and can feed their families on their own, without dependence on social relief. Now the main challenge is to help the Newcomers to integrate into our civil societies with all duties and rights. How could we all-together master their integration as full members of the society?

Migration – a common experience

Many European families have migration experiences in their history. Last century, due to wars, millions of people in whole Europe were displaced and had to be newly settled. Migration was one of the most important factors in forming today's cities. So, why do not take another look on it, from future, for example, within twenty years?

Our cities in the future

So, the Conference will also illuminate the question: How should our cities be in 20 years and how can we achieve it together? During eight workshops, using modern analytical

methods, equipped with the lessons of the past, and using all the experience available, participants from the Baltic Sea Region and Newcomers are expected to find interesting concepts. Trained moderators will handle the discussions. At a plenary, after one day of work, all groups will be interviewed by a journalist. This way, all the fresh knowledge will be reflected to the entire audience.

Join the Conference in Rostock!

All UBC member cities are invited to join the Conference. In your delegation there should be one or two integration workers as well as at least one migrant, who has started to live in your city. We do not want to talk about them but with them to build a common future. Delegates will be asked to send in a photo along with a very short description of her/his family's migration background (recent or maybe some generations behind). The conference will be accompanied by examples of cultural influences which would only be possible via the Newcomers.



UBC takes new steps in social media

by Irene Pendolin | irene.pendolin@ubc.net



As a new element in the XIV UBC General Conference, held on 24–27 October 2017 in Växjö, and in the whole UBC, we have started to utilize YouTube and Instagram in UBC's communication and marketing.

All the participants in the General Conference were encouraged to post about the conference in social media by using the UBC hashtag #UBC_BSR. Twitter and Instagram posts showed on screens in the lobby of the conference venue.

Youth actively involved in shaping the conference

The UBC Youth Conference, with nearly 60 participants, was held parallel to the General Conference. The youth engaged enthusiastically in the discussions in all sessions, in the social media and overall in making the General Conference to the lively event that it was. Youth participants posted dozens of photos in Instagram during the week that they stayed in Växjö, and commented on the conference in Twitter and Facebook.

During the conference, an Instagram competition was launched where the best Instagram photo about Youth Leadership would be awarded. See the back cover of this Bulletin for the winning photo! The plenaries, the UBC General Assembly and two thematic meetings were streamed live from the conference and can be watched on UBC's YouTube channel at www.bit.ly/ubc-youtube.

UBC Communications Network seminar and workshop

UBC Communications Network held a joint seminar and workshop "City Branding in the Baltic Sea Region" during the General Conference. The seminar explored current

trends in city marketing, led by **Pärtel-Peeter Pere**, CEO and partner of Future Place Leadership.

In the workshop, the participants brainstormed ideas and needs for the network for the next 1–2 year period. The results of the brainstorming session will be sent to the participants and the whole Communications Network by the end of November.

Follow UBC in social media:



www.twitter.com/UBC_BSR



www.facebook.com/UnionoftheBalticCities/



Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC)



www.bit.ly/ubc-youtube

Group discussions on how everyone can play an active role in city branding and image branding of the UBC.



CITY NEWS



Photo: Maria Kanevskaja

OPENING SILLAMÄE TO THE SEA

The town of Sillamäe opens the seaside boulevard Mere in December 2017. The works on its reconstruction started in 2015. The boulevard will be supplemented by a kilometer-long promenade along the sea. Every citizen and guest of the town can enjoy spending time in this beautiful place, that is a visit card of the town, and will understand why the Sillamäe town is called the city of fresh sea winds.

The project primarily aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the town centre for tourists and business, to promote the revitalization of small business in the old town. For the reconstruction of the boulevard the city received a support of 1,45 million euro from the European Regional Development Fund and the 15% of total budget (total budget is 1,7 million euro) laid on the city.

Soon everyone can see the renovated street from the Centre of the Culture of Sillamäe to the sea. It also includes the famous city stairs, which is an important sight of Sillamäe. Also, there will be a wide alley, historical elements, new facilities and better access to the seacoast. Along with the improvement of the urban environment, the boulevard will

become more functional and attractive to new visitors, fostering the development of entrepreneurship through creation of new walking routes and playgrounds.

The Sillamäe Maritime Days

In July 2018 there will be an important cultural event – The fifth jubilee Sillamäe Maritime Days. There are a lot of cultural and sport events planned. On the open stage there will be guests from Estonian cities of Tallinn, Maardu, Pärnu, Kuressaare, Kärdla, Narva-Jõesuu. The main evening guest will be a legendary Estonian ensemble. Beautiful fireworks, concert of folk and classical music, and different workshops of cultural institutions and communities will be also held. The event is the opportunity to visit a legendary ship in the port of Sillamäe.

by Maria Kanevskaja | kanevskaja@sillamae.ee



Photo: Maria Kanevskaja



FROM INSTITUTIONAL TO COMMUNITY-BASED CARE

Kaunas city municipality is implementing a sustained reform of transition from institutional care to family-based and community-based alternatives for children.

The aim of the reform is to ensure a sustainable environment and conditions for each child (including children with disabilities) to grow in his/her biological family. If it is not possible – to ensure growth of each deprived of parental care child in guardians' families, adoptive or foster families.

Reform in ten steps

The transition strategy and action plan are based on the ten-step logic approach:

1. Political and professional leadership
2. Development of the alternative children care forms (standing, temporary, re-breathe caregivers).
3. Increasing benefits for caregivers, foster families and for child needs.
4. Improving the services-assistance carers for foster families and caregivers.

5. Preventing institutionalisation, developing community-based services, more intensive and coordinated work with risk families and focus on preventive services.
6. Developing the workforce to act in community-based service regime.
7. Promotion of childcare and adoption in among city community.
8. Strategical partnership and collaboration between Kaunas city municipality, the Church, NGO and business sector.
9. Reorganisation of big institutional children care houses and there transformation into small group homes.
10. Developing policies and strategies for monitoring and evaluation of services quality.

The process of the transition in Kaunas started in autumn 2015. The reform is accelerating, but there are still major challenges: methodological aspect of social work with children with emotional and behavioral disorders, service quality, workforce competence to work in community style, communities and NGOs are not enough prepared to deliver high quality community-based services, a big need for foster families and we still need a big change of attitude of public on children care.

The Government of Lithuania and city of Kaunas are seeking to fully complete transformation of social care and child protection systems towards prevention and development of community-based services by 2023.

by Irena Segalovičienė | irena.segalovicene@kaunas.lt



FIRST OPENING OF THE LIEPĀJA'S RESTAURANTS WEEK

On 4-10 December 2017 in Liepāja, the Restaurants' week will take place for the first time. All week long local residents and city guests will have an opportunity to taste and enjoy posh menu meals for the very friendly prices, in addition to take part in culinary classes, attend lectures and musical performances.

Twenty-eight catering places in Liepāja and Liepāja region will open their doors for gourmets during the Restaurants week. Restaurants and cafes will come up with a special menu, which will differ from the usual meal offers and bring the exclusive experience to the guests. Meals in the week's menu will reflect the distinctive culinary offer of the various countries, including Latvian, Central Asian, Japanese, Mexican, Italian, French, American, Russian and other cuisines.

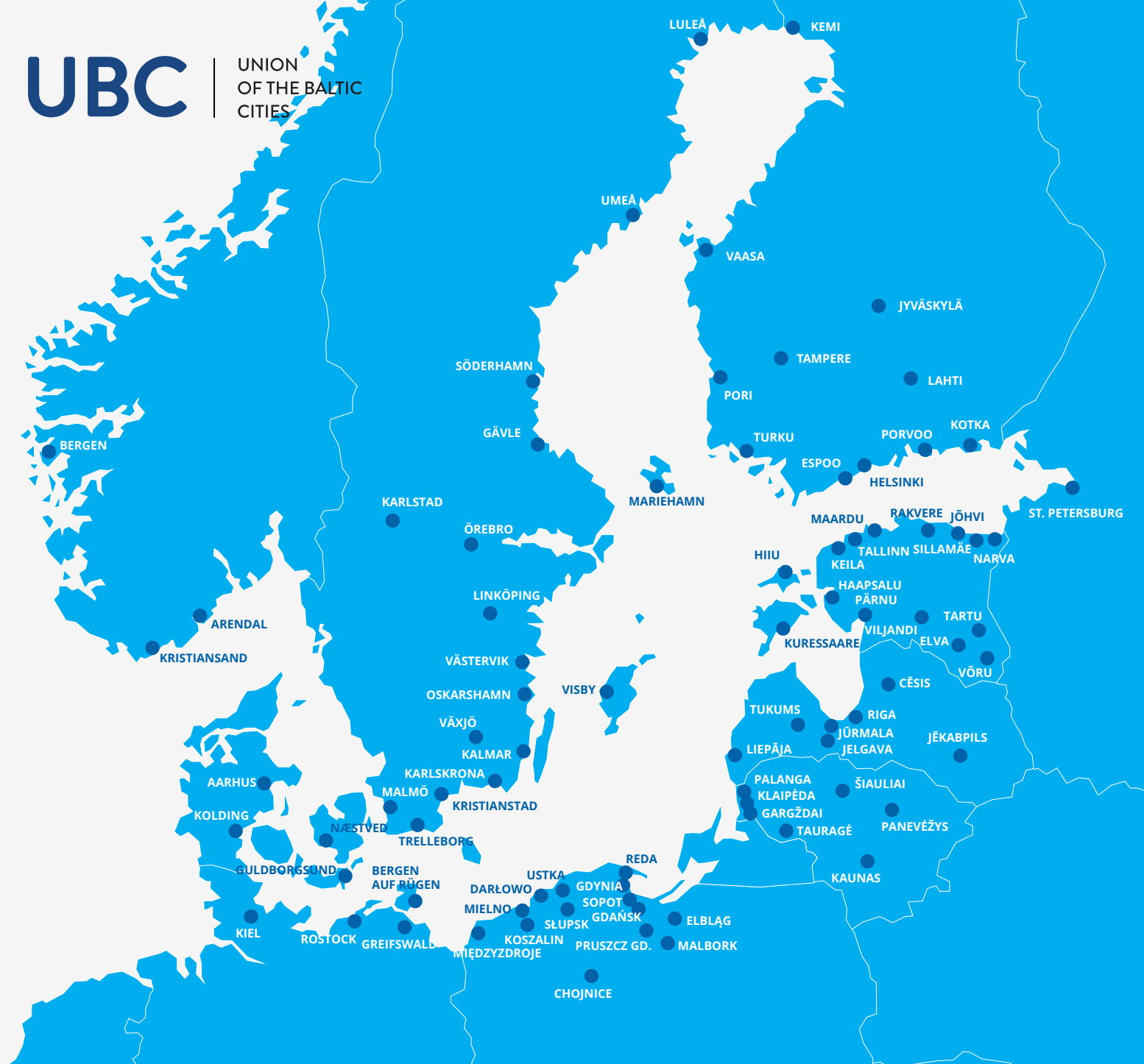
"Local entrepreneurs have come up with the initiative to create Liepāja's Restaurants week and it was embraced by virtually every single Liepāja's cafe and restaurant. Looking

at the menus that shall be offered to the guests during this particular week, we can say, that from 4 to 10 December Liepāja will eventually become the home for worldwide cuisine! Menus include meals from many different countries, yet accentuating also Latvian taste made of local goodies", stated the head of Liepāja Region tourism information office, **Inta Šoriņa**.

In addition to gourmet cuisine, restaurants and cafes will offer special cooking classes, tasting sessions and lectures. To make culinary experience even more enjoyable, restaurants plan variety of musical evenings.

Summing up the Restaurants' week tasty adventure, all residents and city guests are welcome to attend the Icelandic Weekend at the concert hall "The Great Amber". Four series concerts will introduce with the rich musical background of Iceland, both classical and alternative styles, and bring to the listeners the authentic and unique Northern Land's music.

by Kristīne Čabikina | kristine.cabikina@dome.liepaja.lv



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UBC – working together to foster sustainable, smart and safe cities

Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is the leading network of cities in the Baltic Sea Region with around 100 members from all ten Baltic Sea countries. Founded in 1991 in Gdańsk, UBC is a voluntary, proactive network mobilizing the shared potential of its member cities for a safe, smart and sustainable Baltic Sea Region. The UBC cooperates with numerous Baltic and European organisations.

The UBC's practical work is carried out through active cooperation of the member cities in seven thematic Commissions: Cultural Cities, Inclusive and Healthy Cities, Planning Cities, Safe Cities, Smart and Prospering Cities, Sustainable Cities, and Youthful Cities. The Commissions coordinate and execute specific projects, activities and events.

In addition to the Commissions, significant work is carried out in the UBC Working Group on Gender Equality and UBC Communications Network.

Any coastal city or any other city interested in the development of the Baltic Sea Region may become a member of the UBC – please contact the UBC Secretariat.

www.ubc.net



The youth got heard at the XIV UBC General Conference in Växjö presenting their ideas and solutions to the most burning issues!



Instagram competition on “Youth Leadership”

UBC General Conference
24–27 October 2017, Växjö

Winner: Philip Eskildsen, Kristiansand

“Philip’s photo shows that leadership and the future are things that nobody can do alone, they are made together. It also demonstrates the energy and drive that we need for that future to happen”, states the jury.

Congratulations Philip!

