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# BALTIC CITIES BULLETIN

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## SUSTAINABLE AND CLIMATE-SMART BALTIC SEA REGION CITIES

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# BALTIC CITIES BULLETIN



Dear UBC friends and colleagues,

It is really amazing to think that a quarter of a century has passed since the founding conference of the Union of Baltic Cities in Gdańsk in the fall of 1991 and to consider how much interaction has been taking place between our cities since then. I am sure that the UBC has been of significant importance for the development of our Region, not only by bringing cities together, but also by contributing to the sense of regional unity.

As we shall meet in Växjö for the XIV UBC General Conference, we acknowledge that the UBC is as important now, as it was when we founded our network 25 years ago. In fact, since then, cities and local authorities have taken on an even more important role in leading the growth towards sustainable development, not only in our own cities but far beyond our city borders. In recent times, we have seen the dynamics of the Baltic Sea Region change, with many countries and cities having a more introverted perspective, at a time when a global perspective and cooperation beyond borders may be more important for many years to come.

The theme of the XIV General Conference in Växjö is: "Leadership for the future – Cities as Leaders for global sustainable development", which we believe is a very well-chosen theme for these times. Even if we have all reasons to remember and be proud of what we have achieved over the last 25 years, we also want to look to the future in order to be even more prepared to take on the role of leaders for sustainable development. This is also one of the reasons why we particularly want to involve younger people in this General Conference. We hope that many of our mayors and senior decision-makers within the Region will have the chance to take a couple days off from their busy schedules to meet and to reflect on how our cities, both individually and together, can take on this important leadership role.

Växjö welcomes everyone to our city in October. We will stage a conference which will highlight the important discussions, and we will also take the opportunity to show you "Växjö – the Greenest City in Europe" from its best possible side.

Hope to see you in Växjö in October!



Per Schöldberg  
Deputy Mayor of Växjö  
Representative of the UBC Executive Board

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EMPOWER THE KIDS WITH THE GAME!

# WELCOME TO THE UBC SUSTAINABLE CITIES COMMISSION

by Björn Grönholm, Head of the Secretariat | [bjorn.gronholm@turku.fi](mailto:bjorn.gronholm@turku.fi)



# THE POWER OF COOPERATION

The idea of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission is to address different challenges with smart solutions found in cooperation with the UBC cities. Our aim is to receive global recognition for making the UBC cities leaders in sustainable development and climate change, and marketing them as attractive examples of regional co-operation.

The ambitions are high, but our experience shows that co-operation brings expected results. Our Secretariat with a professional staff of 17 persons from Estonia, Germany, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Finland is at your disposal.

During the last two years, we have been successfully coordinating the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2016–2021 together with many UBC cities. More than 10 projects focusing on integrated urban development, storm water management and integrated wastewater and energy development are currently running. In these projects with relatively new topics and new city partners, together with Turku we are testing new ways of improving our practices to become more sustainable, as well as economically efficient and attractive for our inhabitants.

A new cooperating process with climate change experts and civil protection professionals has started as two UBC Commissions, the UBC Safe City Commission and Sustainable Cities Commission prepare a joint European project addressing challenges of climate change related risks and disasters. At the same time, we are planning processes with a focus on Circular Economy, Energy and Resource Efficiency, as well as restoration of shallow lakes and water bodies.

This spring our Commission meeting will take place on 16–18 May in Jyväskylä, Finland. The meeting will focus on formulating concrete resource efficiency measures and emphasizing how cities can benefit from the biosphere areas concept through strengthening cooperation with companies in building attractive environments. The cities will get an excellent chance to explore the Kangas area in Jyväskylä to see how smart solutions and service are organized – sensor infrastructure, smart parking and waste management, to name a few.

Finally, our ambition is to create possibilities to promote our cities globally, we are now building up new communication and expertise tools. We concentrate on bringing up good practice in water management, urban mobility, smart city planning, etc. The first communication tool will be launched back to back with the UBC General Conference in October 2017 in Växjö, Sweden. Please contact us if you are interested in becoming involved.

Another interesting activity is the cooperation between UBC and CDP, the leading global carbon disclosure organization. A CDP Cities Questionnaire has been sent out to all UBC member cities to enable them to reflect on the risks and opportunities, challenges and solutions regarding the impacts of the climate change. Through this network of contributors the cities are able to benchmark and get new ideas from others in the region that are struggling with the same issues. This is a great possibility to communicate work in the BSR cities.

**More: [www.ubc-sustainable.net](http://www.ubc-sustainable.net)**

A photograph of several offshore wind turbines in the ocean. The turbines are white with yellow bases and are arranged in a line, receding into the distance. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a lighter blue. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

**UN SUSTAINABLE**

**DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**& LOCALIZATION**

by Alan AtKisson | [AlanAtKisson.com](http://AlanAtKisson.com)



*Alan AtKisson is an author, keynote speaker, and senior advisor in the field of sustainability, organizational strategy, and transformative change. He has been advising the United Nations Secretariat in New York since 2009, and he served on the President's Science and Technology Advisory Council of the European Commission (2014–2015). A dual citizen of the USA and Sweden, Alan lives in Stockholm.*

**Every city is unique, and those I have observed are approaching the SDGs (UN Sustainable Development Goals) in their own unique way. Cities that have been working with whole-system sustainability for a long time — and there are many of these — can use the SDGs to “freshen the wind in the sails” and as a check to see if there is something new they previously overlooked. Cities who are just getting started (or restarted) with sustainability will find good resources available to them for applying the SDGs in an urban context. But the key is localization.**

Larger cities can use economies of scale to achieve bigger gains. They can even use the power of their “brands” to promote sustainability more powerfully. But smaller cities can reach agreement more quickly, innovate faster, and, if the leadership is right, set more ambitious goals on shorter timelines. The key aspect is not size, but political will, informed by the best available models and good communications. Telling the story to citizens and stakeholders about why this is an important thing to do is often the most important part of any city-based strategy. And that challenge is essentially the same, regardless of city size.

### **Regional “SDG X-Ray”**

Here in the Baltic Sea Region, we have some very clear “headline” issues, related to demographic changes, climate change, and of course the health of the Baltic Sea itself. But we have other issues, reflected in the SDGs, that are equally important but that get fewer headlines — such as gender equality (SDG 5). A quick look at the leadership structures in our countries, public and private, will quickly reveal that we have a long way to go on that topic.

However, every region has its own “SDG X-Ray” if you like. The United States is challenged on climate issues, and even access to clean water has emerged as a “headline” problem in some cities. Southeast Asia needs to pay special care to development opportunities for its poorer people and to preserving a rich heritage of biodiversity, both on land and in the sea.

### **“It’s all connected” approach**

What’s similar, and what’s new about the SDGs and 2030 Agenda, is the emphasis on systems and integration. Especially on the regional level, we are realizing that “it’s all con-

nected” — not just in theory, but in the day-to-day practice of working out transportation agreements, marine spatial planning, decarbonizing region-scale electricity grids, dealing with increasing movements of people across borders, and much more besides. These are global dynamics, but they felt with special keenness at the regional level.

### **Evolution instead of revolution**

We have mentioned many issues: climate and energy, demographics, migration and others. But there are some issues that I think will still catch people by surprise, even though we talk about them a lot, such as digitalization and automation. We don’t know what the effect will be of filling our cities with self-driving cars, for example. Combine that with the wildly unpredictable impact of the Internet on all our lives, linking together more and more people and things with computers, meters, cameras, and information on demand, and it is very possible that city life in ten years will look so different from today that it might seem like a revolutionary shift. But it will happen step by step, so we probably won’t notice the revolution!

Just one example: could anyone have predicted ten years ago that thousands of people and children would be hiking all over the city playing Pokemon Go? And that is just the beginning.

### **Cooperation and innovation**

I like to promote the idea of the Baltic Sea Region as a very large “incubator” for sustainability ideas — technologies, policies, business models, and collaboration programs. Ideas get hatched here. We are diverse enough that these ideas can then get tested in many different economic, social, and environmental contexts. Then they can spread to the rest of world, bringing benefits both out there, in the world, and in here, in this wonderful circle of countries, bejeweled with lovely cities, around a unique common treasure, the Baltic Sea.

### **Useful resources for the cities:**

- <http://sdgcities.guide/>
- <http://citiscopescope.org/topics/cities-and-sdgs>
- <http://citiesprogramme.org/sdg/>
- <http://17goals.org/toolbox-for-localizing-the-sdgs/>



# BENEFITS

# FROM CIRCULAR BIO ECONOMY

by Anne Holl Hansen | ahh@guldborgsund.dk

**Guldborgsund Municipality finds great value in working with circular bio economy as a foundation for new, local, climate friendly, bio value chains and for creating new local production and job places. Furthermore, circular bio economy strengthens bonds and positive interdependency between urban and rural areas.**

Biomass from fields and sea provide food, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, materials, cleaning agents and green energy. Biomass-based production in rural areas can make daily needs, also for urban citizens with a modern life style, who make sustainable choices from food to household cleaning agents or personal care products - all non-fossil and with low CO<sub>2</sub> footprint.

As the circular bio economy depends on the return of nutrients to the soil from all biological waste streams, including urban bio waste, that is why it is a rural-urban joint venture. The Municipality is dedicated to support the transition to a green circular bio economy through Global Covenant of Mayors commitment and by participating in projects and programmes that capture new knowledge, ready to implement into green cascade production and business symbioses. In cascade production high value ingredients are extracted from agricultural residuals, i.e. residual remains from one business become a resource for another. At the end, biogas production adds to the list of bio value chain products, and nutrients from digested biomass are returned to the soil for new plant production.

Our project themes include larvae production on a media of beach cast and agricultural residues. The larvae can be used

directly as an organic feed, or proteins can be extracted from them in order to optimize feed mixes. Another theme is development and documentation of extraction methods of high value ingredients from agricultural residues. Local enterprises and organizations are deeply involved in translating this knowledge into practice.

Through an applied international project, Guldborgsund aims at multiple services offered by "Low emission agriculture". This high biodiversity and carbon sequestering farm practice, that makes the soil more robust to heavy rain and drought by increasing the water retention capacity, may also be interesting for urban areas sensitive to hinterland surface water.

Guldborgsund Municipality has appointed a dedicated committee to focus on sustainable development, including UN's 17 sustainable development goals.



# COMBAT THE CLIMATE CHANGE

by Pranas Urbanavičius | [pranas.urbanavicius@kaunas.lt](mailto:pranas.urbanavicius@kaunas.lt)



**While fighting the climate change that threatens the entire planet, it is important to have not only the efforts of countries and international organizations, but also of local governments and individuals.**

In 2009, Kaunas City has signed the Covenant of Mayors committing to increase energy efficiency and use renewable energy sources on their territories. The goal of the members of this covenant is to surpass the official aim of the European Union to reduce the carbon dioxide emission by 20 per cent. Kaunas has the aim to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> by 70% compared to the data from 1990.

## Education first

Kaunas has committed to pay special attention to education about climate change. The biggest aim is to make every citizen aware of the consequences of the climate change for the planet and for the city.

In order to inform the society, each year Kaunas organizes Energy Days. During these events pupils, youngsters and teachers get to know the Covenant of Mayors and the commitments about sustainable development of the city. People learn about economic ways of energy usage – most of them do not know how they can contribute to a „greener“ city by their everyday activities.

## Aims will be reached

One of the biggest aims the industrial city faces is that most of the biggest power plants use natural gas that contaminate the environment. So, creating of bio-fuel boilers and

adjustment of technologies are our priorities. Most of power stations have been adjusted to bio-fuel, so in warm seasons Kaunas produces heat energy from bio-fuel.

The roof of Kaunas City Municipality building is covered with solar thermal collectors that produce 25 MWh of heat energy. There are solar collectors on other buildings, as well. In order to use energy for heating more effectively, there is a plan to renovate at least 50% of all multi-flat buildings until 2020.

At present, Kaunas public transport has 39 buses that use compressed natural gas. Nevertheless, Kaunas City aims to promote cycling as much as possible – right now there are 65 km of cycling paths in the city, but there are plans to build additional 100 km to make a bike the convenient mean of transport to reach any part of the city. Last year Kaunas built 19 places (about 10 bikes in each place) where bikes can be rented.





# LIEPĀJA

## DECREASES CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS

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Photo: City of Liepāja

**Liepāja is the first city in Latvia with energy management system certified according to ISO 50001 standard, where the heat consumption monitoring system and the system of distribution of saved resources are the most important elements in the control of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.**

Since signing the Covenant of Mayors in 2012, Liepāja is part of Latvian network of learning cities.

Liepāja has focused the SEAP on the following directions: improving district heating; buildings; public lighting; transport; green procurement; information for inhabitants.

### Renovation of the public buildings

One of the most important activities of the city is renovation of public buildings, which additionally creates jobs, saves municipal money and increases security.

The City thinks not only about the heat consumption, but also about the health of its citizens, that is why it has equipped every municipality building with data loggers, recording temperature, humidity and CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in rooms. The largest savings are made from precise regulation of technical devices. Data loggers show this information and the manager of the building is responsible for it.

The staff of the buildings was trained together in three seminars, and individually in every building, to be able to analyse received data and give directions to companies that serve heating units and ventilation devices.

### Motivating people

Let us be honest, these are not private houses, so the staff of the municipal buildings initially was not interested to manage financial resources rationally, because the city council will always cover the heating costs.

So we got creative. As we know, the real estate requires regular investments. The council accepted that they would get from savings the resources for maintaining buildings or territories. Also, it was decided that up to 15% of savings, could be used for motivational bonuses.

The biggest benefit is health of our people, because, when we use data loggers daily, an optimal microclimate is provided in the rooms, especially relating to the ventilation of the rooms.

Liepāja has to fulfil the conditions of decreasing CO<sub>2</sub> for the next five years after finishing the renovation. The total reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2016 compared to the base year (2006) is 44% or 97,832 tons. The city's plan until 2020 is 35%.





# CITY ON DETOX

## NONHAZCITY PROJECT IN GDAŃSK

by Małgorzata Drewnowska | malgorzata.drewnowska@gdansk.gda.pl

Photo: GIWK Sp. z o.o.

**Hazardous substances are present everywhere in our daily life. They can be found in different product groups, where we often do not expect to find them - in personal care products, household cleaning agents, toys for children, furniture and many other articles we use every day.**

These substances provide specific properties to different products (plastic elasticity, water resistance, antibacterial properties, etc.), but as a side effect they can harm nature and human health.

NonHazCity project wants to address the small-scale emitters (municipalities, small and medium sized enterprises and private households) and encourage them to change habits to reduce the amount of hazardous substances discharged to the sewer system and, ultimately, to the Baltic Sea.

### Searching for an alternative

Recently, the SMEs, such as car washes, laundries, hairdresser saloons, hotels, etc. have been recruited to the project actions. The companies are going to substitute the products containing hazardous chemicals, used in their everyday professional work, with safer and more ecological alternatives. In the range of the NonHazCity project, experts are going to carry out free of charge inventory of products used in the companies at present, in order to identify, whether they contain some of hazardous substances or not. If problematic substances are identified, experts will help to find alternative products of the same properties and/or will give the information on what alternative substance can replace the hazardous one.

### Ecological solutions at home

The key issue is, however, to underline that all of us can do something for our health and for the environment. Therefore, on 22 March, on the occasion of World Water Day celebration, the campaign entitled "City on detox" (NonHazCity Polish equivalent) has started. The inauguration of awareness-raising activities were organized in the Kindergarten No. 32 in Gdańsk. The children gave the evidence that it is very easy to self-prepare effective cleaning products without using hazardous substances, but on the base of natural ones instead. The products were instantly used by children for ecological cleaning of their room.

### Gdańsk inhabitants change their habits

What is more, in June this year, the residents of Gdańsk will be invited to take part in the half-yearly pilot study. Five to ten families on voluntary agreement base, will try to change their habits using more ecological products and to get rid of things suspected to contain hazardous substances (e.g. toys or clothes).



Project NonHazCity is co-financed by the INTERREG Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020. The leader of the project is the City of Stockholm. Project actions will be implemented in Pärnu, Stockholm, Västerås, Turku, Riga, Kaunas district, Silale, Gdańsk, Lübeck and Hamburg. Gdańsk is represented by three institutions: Gdańsk Water Utilities (GIWK Sp. z o.o.), Municipality of Gdańsk and University of Gdańsk.

# SUSTAINABILITY

## THROUGH INNOVATIONS

by Niina Järvinen | [niina.n.jarvinen@espoo.fi](mailto:niina.n.jarvinen@espoo.fi)



**According to the international comparison completed in 2016\*, Espoo is the most sustainable city in Europe. Innovation and collaboration are the key elements in maintaining sustainable development.**

Espoo with its 270,000 residents is a growing city and integral part of metropolitan area, with the largest innovation hub in the Nordic countries. In Espoo nature is nearby. Besides the omnipresent nature, the city features 58 km of seaside and coastal routes, 165 islands and wilderness.

Sustainability is strongly emphasized in the city's strategy. Espoo wants to be a responsible pioneer. The goal is to increase Espoo's appeal and competitiveness in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

Sustainable urban solutions require working on collaborative relationships. The most important resources of Espoo are its active inhabitants, educational institutions, communities and businesses. The city is developed through interaction with the citizens. For example, over 100,000 people participated in sustainability events during the last four years.

### Reaching climate targets through collaboration

Espoo wants to be a partner and first user in the process of developing new sustainable solutions and also to provide a first-phase market platform. To further promote sustainability, Espoo is committed to a five-year project to drive the change: the Helsinki Metropolitan Smart & Clean Foundation. Smart and clean solutions are created and implement-

ed in mobility, building environment, energy, waste and water, consumer clean-tech. Solutions are being created across cities and business sectors.

There are several excellent examples of Espoo's collaboration with companies to increase sustainability. One of the latest cooperation is with energy company Fortum. The city's goal is to be carbon neutral by 2050. District heating covers almost half of Espoo's greenhouse gases. Thanks to the cooperation between Fortum and Espoo, in the last five years the proportion of renewable energy and waste heat recovery in the production of district heat in Espoo has increased from almost zero to around 30%. Similar development is anticipated in the coming years. The goal is to make district heating carbon neutral in Espoo by the year 2030.



\*The quantitative benchmark study of European cities was carried out by Telos, an academic centre for local and regional sustainability studies at Tilburg University in the Netherlands. The complete report can be downloaded at [telos.nl](http://telos.nl).



# TO BECOME A FOSSIL FUEL FREE CITY IN 2030

by Kristina Hägg-Blecher | kristina.hagg.blecher@oskarshamn.se

**Carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels has fallen by 50 percent since 1990 in Oskarshamn municipality. The main reason is an extensive decline in consumption of heating oil. This positive development is possible thanks to a close cooperation between residents, businesses, the energy-company Oskarshamn Energi and the municipality.**

Oskarshamn is now aiming at the next goal - to become a fossil fuel free city in 2030.

Today imported petroleum is replaced by biofuels, mainly from woods in Småland. In addition, the use of heat pumps and district heating is growing. More than 99% of district heating in the city centre is produced using renewable fuels.

Oskarshamn is one of more than 6,500 municipalities and cities in Europe that have signed the European Covenant of Mayors, and pledged to go further than the European climate change mitigation targets. Our target was to reduce carbon emissions by 50 percent by 2020, which we now have reached. The key is an ongoing dialogue with main stakeholders, both local and regional. Other success factors are well-known common climate goals, knowledge-sharing and incentives, as well as measuring and communicating the results.

### Fossil fuel free in 2030

Oskarshamn is now aiming towards the next goal: to become fossil fuel free by 2030. The challenges are to reduce

the use of petrol and diesel, use energy more efficiently and to increase the production and use of renewable energy from resources such as solar, wind and biomass.

In the municipal administration and related companies, there is a clear strategy to select vehicles running on biogas and green electricity. Today 50 percent of our vehicles are environmental friendly. Charging stations for electric vehicles are established. The majority of public transport and school buses will run on fossil fuels from autumn 2017. By 2020 the entire public transport fleet will be free from fossil fuels. Agreeing on regional common climate-goals and tough procurement requirements facilitates the shift to fossil free public transportation. Local food-waste contributes to local production of biogas used in the vehicles.

A national incentive based strategy and a new business cases are driving more and more residents to choose to heat their homes or generate electricity using solar energy.

**A travel policy promotes biking as the number one choice and cargo-bikes will be tested as a working tool for employees.**





# UMEÅ

## SMART CITY OF THE NORTH

by Carina Aschan | [www.greenumea.se](http://www.greenumea.se)

Photo: Brunberg & Forshed Arkitektkontor AB

**To become a Smart City, four million euro will be invested in the university and hospital area in Umeå. In a Smart City, technology, market and consumers collaborate for sustainable and smart technologies and solutions.**

A smart city has an energy efficient infrastructure that maximizes the interaction, interdependence, cooperation and collaboration. As everyone and everything is communicating with each other all the time, this communication will generate a lot of data that will be used to improve the rest of the city. It will be published as open data for anyone to use, for example as a decision support for citizens.

### Innovative city district

Within RUGGEDISED project, Umeå will focus on an Innovation District that is situated right in the east part of Umeå city centre, the university city area, including a mix of residential, academic and research facilities from two universities, a regional hospital, and communal, recreational and commercial buildings. The neighbourhood is characterised by its young, student-influenced, population with 40,000 of daily visitors. As such, it is one of the least car-dependent neighbourhoods in Umeå. The area will triple the number of its inhabitants during the time of the project. Amongst implemented smart solutions, the RUGGEDISED project will look at peak load variation management, shared use of energy and smart open data city decision platform.

### New ideas come up when people meet

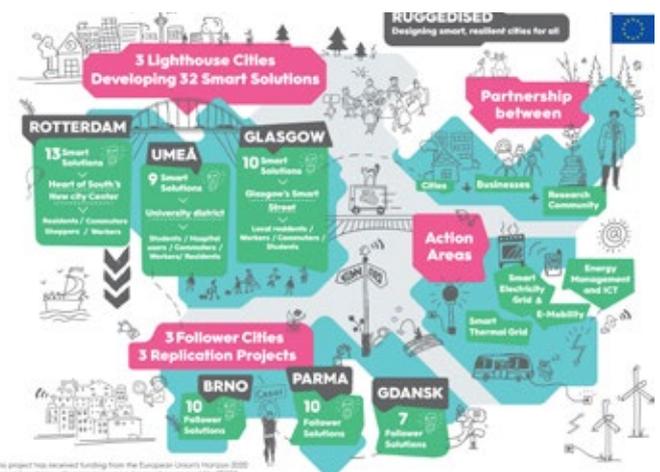
New business models and ways of collaboration will develop. An important part of the project is to start a café,

where citizens, students, public authorities and companies can meet to discuss new ideas, develop new projects and cooperate.

### Use of open data

By integrating already existing and also new ICT solutions, Umeå will go into a Smart City Data infrastructure based on Open Data principles, and connection to a City Decision Support platform. The infrastructure will provide data of the city's energy consumption, energy production, buildings and technologies involved and human behaviours, travels, complemented by non-technical artefacts such as business models, support processes, etc.

Umeå, Glasgow and Rotterdam are the so called Lighthouse cities and will work together in the project RUGGEDISED for 5 years, developing a smart district in each city. The project started in November 2016 and is funded by the Horizon 2020 Programme with a total budget of 18 million euro for the whole project. Parma, Brno and Gdańsk are follower cities in the project.





**In 2007 BBC wanted to do a story about The Greenest City in Europe and they ended up in Växjö. With a long history of successful environmental work, the city did not hesitate to make the nomination its own.**

With Agenda 2030 and the sustainable development goals the three dimensions of sustainability and the interaction between them became even clearer. In Växjö a decision was made to arrange the work in a way that synchronizes with the overall goal and aim with Agenda 2030. Namely that the 17 sustainable development goals are inseparable and that they call for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and the planet.

#### **A sustainability group**

Building on the successful environmental work on one hand and an early effort concerning work towards gender equality the City of Växjö formed a sustainability group consisting of a number of officials who all have responsibilities that connect to Agenda 2030. The group functions as a strategic resource for all of the different administrations in the municipality.

The group is still new and in the process of forming itself and the methods of work but the core of the work is the Brundtland definition of sustainability. The group is trying to find methods and projects that reach over all three dimensions of sustainability to make as much impact on society as possible.

#### **Towards 2030**

The City of Växjö has a long history of political consensus, braveness and long term strategy and measurable goals. These experiences are now merged into the path towards 2030 and maybe the nomination as the most Sustainable City in Europe.

▼ **In broad collaboration with universities, companies and organizations working for the municipality the Earth Week was organized on 20-25 March which was an opportunity to highlight environmental issues and meet around a green and sustainable future in Växjö.**





# SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH EDUCATION

by Tomasz Piszczek | t.piszczek@gdynia.pl

Photo: M. Sałatowski

To follow the principle of sustainability, Gdynia undertakes activities aimed at introducing environmentally-friendly, energy-efficient and climate-focused technologies and solutions. On 30 December 2015 Gdynia City Council adopted The low-emission economy plan for the Municipality of Gdynia for 2015–2020.

For 17 years now Gdynia has been carrying out a system of grants that enables the residents to replace heat sources in their households and installing facilities that obtain energy from renewable sources.

Gdynia pays great attention to the education level of its inhabitants, too. The City is trying to raise the level of ecological awareness and shape pro-ecological attitudes of the community. In 2016 the Municipality of Gdynia adopted The educational programme for reducing the energy consumption and support low-emission and circular economy between 2016–2018.

Numerous activities are carried out, e.g.:

- **Let us warm you up, join the heat-likers** – a campaign promoting municipal heat distribution network, implemented with OPEC Sp. z o.o. and EDF S.A.;
- **Gdynia Energy Picnic** – the first edition of the event will take place this year;
- **Clean Air of Pomerania** (this year called Clean Air of Tricity) – the programme implemented by Voivodship Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Gdańsk, which combines municipal grants with co-financing from the Fund. Part of the campaign is a Beat a Smog contest for the youngest inhabitants of Gdynia;

- **Every watt worth its weight in gold – Pomeranian kids and youth learn at school how to save energy effectively** (50/50 Methodology in 9 schools) or **Thermal testing – how to tighten up a household budget** (free thermal testing for inhabitants).

#### Other important activities:

- The implementation of a traffic management system TRISTAR;
- Group purchases of electric energy and gas as a leader, achieving significant savings;
- Modernisation of trolleybus fleet, installation of a supercapacitor and energy recuperation devices. Buses powered by CNG;
- Purchase of power consumption equipment that reduces consumption of capacitive reactive energy;
- Modernisation of public lighting so that it becomes energy-efficient;
- Thermomodernisation of municipal buildings which effectiveness will improve by circa 41% per building.

#### Aims for the future:

1. Construction of 3 photovoltaic installations at the trolleybus depot roofs with a total capacity of 616 kW;
2. Further thermomodernisation of public buildings and communal housing. 31 buildings are planned to be covered by the programme by 2022;
3. Development of a heating network to cover districts, which are currently not included.



# THE SOLAR REVOLUTION

by Sara Gripstrand & Karin Lövström | sara.gripstrand@kalmar.se, karin.lofstrom\_1@kalmar.se

**Kalmar aims at being completely fossil fuel free until 2030 and has already achieved this when it comes to heating and electricity. Mainly, it is because of the local thermal power plant fueled by biomass, but also thanks to large in-vestments in solar power.**

Kalmar is one of the sunniest cities in Sweden due to its geographic position. As prices of solar panels are dropping, the interest in installing panels on private properties is rising. To help inhabitants, a “sun map” showing which parts of what roofs are suitable for solar panels have been created. The map is digital, easy to use and can be downloaded for free from the Kalmar municipality’s webpage.

Those, who are not house owners and cannot put up solar panels on their own, can still take part in the solar revolution. Kalmar Energi – energy company partially owned by municipality, installed on a cow barn one of the largest co-owned solar panels in Sweden.

The solar plant was founded in a collaboration between Kalmar Energy, the farmers at Nöbble farm and the co-op organization Kalmarsund Sol. It has been such a huge success that Kalmar Energy is planning to build its second solar park at the local airport. The park will be founded in cooperation with Kalmar Öland Airport and Törneby solpark.

## NUTRIENT FOR AGRICULTURE

by Lina Wedin Hansson | lina.wedin-hansson@trelleborg.se

**Clean beautiful sand beaches and a clean and healthy Baltic Sea. These are two priority environmental goals for the Municipality of Trelleborg.**

Since 2012, the municipality operates a research facility, a biogas plant nearby the southernmost tip in Sweden, Smygehuk. The pilot plant is an important tool to achieve these priority goals. Algae collected from the beaches are transported into a digestion reactor where the residues turn into useful biogas.

High cadmium levels in the rest product is often tricky to handle. Algae collected during this specific summer season, 2016, turned surprisingly out to hold a radiant good quality! The cadmium levels in the residue was fine this time. The digestate from biogas plant has successfully been used as fertilizer on farmland. The nutrient could be used for agriculture instead of being a troublemaker in the Baltic Sea!

The purpose with the project is primarily to test methods to absorb nutrients from the overfed and sensitive Baltic Sea. Various donors have contributed over the years - the EU funds and the Nordic Investment Bank’s Baltic Fund.

This year the algae material have been mixed up with discarded tomatoes and plant residues from the tomato crops and grass clippings from several green areas. Even horse manure was used. Gas volumes are not sufficient for a real energy. For this, the plant must be significantly larger. At this moment, the plant is still a pilot project.

Collected algae in Trelleborg the summer of 2016 contained large amounts of nutrients – 773 kg of nitrogen and 127 kg of phosphorus. The nutrient flowing into the sea, leaking from farmland and other sources, creates an imbalance in the very fragile marine environment of the Baltic Sea. Trelleborg is in this way trying to find a method to heal the sickness of the sea.





# BIOSPHERE AREA SUPPORTS SUSTAINABILITY

by Lottie Dahl Ryde | [lottie.dahlryde@karlskrona.se](mailto:lottie.dahlryde@karlskrona.se)

**Biosphere Blekinge Archipelago (BBA) is located in the southeast part of Sweden. It covers the area of three municipalities – Karlskrona, Ronneby and Karlshamn – along a 100 km stretch of Blekinge coastline. Industrial, commercial and service activities are focused in to these more densely populated cities.**

In the rural and archipelago areas, villages with smaller businesses and local entrepreneurs are predominant. The established business networks focus on food production, culture, and experiencing industry, as well as on smaller industries within the concept of sustainability.

Our vision is to make Blekinge an attractive and sustainable destination for outdoor tourism. Some examples of ongoing activities that are supporting sustainable growth and development with the BBA can be founded below.

## **A route through the biosphere area**

The Archipelago route - a project that will establish “a route through the biosphere area”. The project starts in 2017 and will end in 2019. The aim of the project is to enhance the accessibility and availability of the biosphere area, with its unique nature and cultural environment. The project will establish a network of tracks and travelling opportunities through the coastal and archipelago landscape (e.g. by bicycle, canoe, sailing or hiking) within the biosphere. The main purpose is to support local enterprises.

## **A trademark development**

Karlskrona has an ambition to develop a trademark for the

companies within the BBA area by using their products or their communication/promotion efforts. The trademark should be a quality mark that will assist the companies to become more prosperous as well as to enhance their sustainability profile.

It will be necessary to design an information and training package in order to make the BBA known to the greater public, as well as to the entrepreneurs, on how they can use the BBA to make a sustainable business.

## **Training needed**

BBA has an ambassador training targeting volunteers, who wish to know more about the archipelago area and act as an ambassador, sharing their knowledge about the BBA.

Also, the staff at the tourist information office will be trained about the BBA. All of Karlskrona’s guided city tours start with an introduction about the two UNESCO-statuses in Karlskrona – the world heritage situated within the BBA area – making it a unique combination. The tourist information office also works with local tourism companies to encourage them to make business within the BBA, for example by designing guiding concepts for the archipelago.

All these initiatives will support Karlskrona and the Biosphere Blekinge Archipelago to achieve sustainable growth and development. More initiatives within the BBA project are planned and will be initiated in the future.



Photo: Jenny Tuliniemi

# BIOGAS BUSES

## IN VAASA

by Tiina Salonen | tiina.salonen@vaasa.fi

**The 12 brand-new biogas buses went into traffic on 13 February in the City of Vaasa. On the same day the first gas station for filling biogas into vehicles in the Vaasa region was opened at Stormossen.**

Chief planner Pertti Hällilä says the biogas bus project is the first of its kind in Finland.

“It significantly promotes the initialization of national clean technology in the whole area, in production, distribution as well as the traffic use of biogas. For this project we received an honourable mention from Motiva for promoting the initialization of cleantech”, Hällilä sums up.

The buses produced by Scania are modern, pro-environmental and accessible.

“These 12 biogas buses can substitute an equivalent of 280 000 litres of fossil diesel fuel every year. The carbon dioxide emissions are on the same level as fully electric cars, in which the electric power is produced with wind power”.

The biogas buses will be in traffic on the busiest lines, 1–4 as well as 7–10. During weekends and during the summer the biogas buses will be in traffic on all lines.

### The new buses are accessible

The front and middle parts of the buses are flat with no elevations, and by the middle door one can find a pull-out ramp, which can hold also heavier electric wheel chairs.

“The whole door side of the bus lowers 6 cm”, Hällilä describes.

The buses have 3 spaces for prams, of which one can be changed into a space for a wheel chair.

“From a separate push button you can ask the driver for help. In the middle part of the bus there’s also 4 seats reserved for senior citizens, and the bus also has a space for a guide dog”, Hällilä continues.

The gas buses can be recognized by the orange city silhouette of Vaasa and the theme Cleaner by biogas. The buses are numbered and marked by A1-A12.

According to Hällilä the buses have been bought to the city by a leasing contract, and the buses are owned by a finance company. After the contract runs out the city can, if it wishes, buy the buses for own ownership.

### Banana peels into the tank through Stormossen

A slow fuelling station for gas buses was opened near Stormossen, the regional waste management company. Here the buses will fill up the tanks during night time.

The organic waste of the households in the Vaasa region as well as the sludge from the waste water of Vaasan Vesi Stormossen can produce biogas for about 1000 cars in addition to the buses.

“Together with the bus refuelling station there will also be a fast fuelling station for cars, the managing director of Stormossen”, Leif Åkers, tells.

# UBC NEWS & FACES

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

by UBC Secretariat | [info@ubc.net](mailto:info@ubc.net)

Photo: Mats Samuelsson

**Challenging times require cities to stand up and show leadership. The XIV UBC General Conference in Växjö, celebrating the UBC's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and achievements, is the natural forum to seek solutions for common challenges, such as climate, sustainability, jobs, growth, integration and security – and finding leaders who will drive the transformation.**

The XIV General Conference will take place on 24–27 October 2017 in Växjö, the 'Greenest City in Europe'. The main theme of the conference is "Leadership for the Future – Cities as Leaders for Glocal Sustainable Development".

The conference will underline the role and responsibility of cities in shaping and building the Europe of tomorrow that bases on trust and democratic values and where the voice of ordinary citizens is heard. Taking into account the current situation, this year the UBC highlights especially the importance of the political representation of cities.

Moreover, the UBC emphasizes the role of youth and listening to the voices of tomorrow. The UBC Youth Conference will be organized simultaneously with the UBC General Conference, featuring a strong involvement of the BSR youth representatives. UBC member cities have received an official invitation in April to attend the bi-annual General Conference. Please remember to include at least 1–2 youth representatives in your delegation!

### General Assembly elects the cities' UBC representatives for 2017–2018

The statutory General Assembly of the UBC will take place on 26 October 2017. The General Assembly elects the UBC Presidium, consisting of the President and three Vice-Presidents, as well as the Executive Board member cities for a two-year period.

Registration to the General Conference will open soon at [www.vaxjo.se/ubc](http://www.vaxjo.se/ubc). We encourage the cities to register and book as early as possible to get the best possible travel and accommodation prices.

See you in Växjö!

## XIV UBC General Conference

24–27 October 2017 in Växjö

Leadership for the Future  
Cities as Leaders for Glocal  
Sustainable Development

UBC

UNION  
OF THE BALTIC  
CITIES

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## The 78<sup>th</sup> UBC Board meeting hosted by Kristiansand

by UBC Secretariat | [info@ubc.net](mailto:info@ubc.net)

**The 78<sup>th</sup> meeting of the UBC Executive Board took place in the city of Kristiansand. Among the main topics there were preparations to the next UBC General Conference in Växjö, 25–26 October 2017 and discussion between the Board and the Commissions on UBC strategy and activities.**

The Board welcomed a new member in the UBC, the City of Tauragė, Lithuania.

The XIV UBC General Conference will be held this autumn in the City of Växjö. Mikko Lohikoski, chair of the Task Force reminded the theme of the conference is “Leadership for the future. Cities as leaders for global sustainable development”.

“Europe is facing internal and external challenges, like populism, questioning the democracy, security and relations - he said. “The cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region seems to be even more important now than previously. We are building the future so also the voice of young people must be heard”.

The Board discussed the program of the conference and proposed keynote speakers.

Matti Mäkelä from the Task Force on Youth Employment expressed an interest in cooperation within the EUSBSR PA Education flagship process called “School to Work”. Inta Simanska from SALAR (Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions), who is a flagship Coordinator, introduced the project. The Board encouraged the cities to join the process.

The leaders of the Commissions expressed their views on commissions’ roles in the implementation of the UBC Strategy and discussed them with the Board. The Commissions also presented their activities and action plans.

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the UBC financial report 2016 and the proposed budget for 2017. The Board got acquainted with the report and adopted the budget.

Communication Manager Irene Pendolin informed that the new UBC e-newsletter will be launched after the meeting in Kristiansand. She also informed that UBC was present on Twitter and soon would be activated on LinkedIn.

The latest information on UBC cooperation with CDP was presented by Risto Veivo, Chair of the Sustainable Cities Commission.

Jørgen Kristiansen, Deputy Mayor of Kristiansand, introduced the Port of Kristiansand initiative aimed at reducing cruise ships emissions in European ports. Making shore power available for cruise ships will result in significant reductions in the emissions. The Board recommended the development of international regulations on the implementation of shore power to cruise ships in the Baltic Sea, English Channel, North Sea and the Norwegian Sea.





## New forms of supporting youth employment and well-being

by Matti Mäkelä  
Chair, UBC Task Force  
on Youth Employment  
and Well-Being  
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### **UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being has started the cooperation with the EUBSR Flagship School to Work (S2W).**

The Flagship aims to strengthen transnational cooperation between stakeholders in the BSR in the field of education and work in order to prevent early school leaving and to develop new support methods for vulnerable groups of students/youth, especially NEETs and newly-arrived refugees.

#### **Together it is much easier**

The Flagship has created a common platform of understanding and learning, and dissemination of different successful methods to deal with the issues around drop outs and NEETs. It arranges study visits and workshops, and supports cooperation and creation of joint projects. This means that Flagship goals are parallel to the goals set by the UBC

Board meeting in Kaunas last year to the Task Force: co-operation within the UBC, joint projects, surveys, workshops and seminars. Together, it is much easier to arrange and market workshops and seminars, do the follow-up surveys about the youth employment and well-being, start new and cooperate more intensively within the ongoing projects. Co-operation can also support the work of the Task Force on Refugees and Youthful Cities Commission.

#### **Join the cooperation**

The cooperation has already taken off. BSR Integrate Now, a joint ESF project that supports the integration of newly arrived refugees, started in Turku, Stockholm and Malmö on March. In April, the Task Force and Flagship arranged a study visit to Hamburg and they are already planning new projects, study visits and other activities for the autumn.

Flagship is coordinated by SALAR (The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions). Presently, there are 57 members from the Baltic Sea Region. UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being and the City of Turku's education division coordinate the Knowledge Platforms of Early School Leaving and Newly Arrived Refugees. The Knowledge platform's main idea is to support projects and other development work among the main target group - youth at risk of dropping out of education and labour market. Measures are divided under two titles: Support and Development.

Task Force and the Flagship invite the UBC cities, other entities and projects to join the cooperation with The Flagship School to Work.

# More BSR cities to act for climate-smart leadership

by Anna Kotaviita | [anna.kotaviita@turku.fi](mailto:anna.kotaviita@turku.fi)



Photo: CDP Hermann Traub

**CDP, the global climate change disclosure non-profit and Union of the Baltic Cities agreed on a two-year cooperation to involve more cities in the development and reporting of target-oriented climate actions earlier this year.**

UBC and CDP aim to increase the number of BSR cities using systematic reporting of their climate change related actions. Currently, over 500 cities, 100 states and regions, and more than 5800 companies use CDP's system to report, share and take action on climate change every year.

## **To manage, you need measures**

"We look forward to partnering with one of the world's leading city networks – the Union of Baltic Cities. Our partnership means that even more cities in the Baltic Sea region will be able to measure, manage, and report accurately on their climate change data every year. Baltic cities deserve high-quality, comparable data on climate action", Maia Kutner, head of CDP's cities programme commented.

"Many cities in our region are well known from their climate expertise, and this should be visible globally. Today, less than ten UBC cities are now reporting to CDP. Our goal is to reach 100 percent", envisions the President of the UBC, Per Bødker Andersen.

## **Comparable data to identify opportunities**

Climate-smart leadership is also one of the main operational goals in the UBC, adds Per Bødker Andersen.

"We encourage all cities in the region to join this shared cause. Firstly, we strongly believe that the CDP's systematic

benchmarking reporting tool provides cities with the opportunity to create useful data and share their tested examples with other parts of the world. Secondly, the new data from the cities helps us to identify new improvement opportunities and innovations to increase our cities' attractiveness for new investment. And finally, all data that will be collected and analyzed can be used in strategic decision making".

The invitations went out to cities this spring 2017. During the spring and summer 2017, cities will report their findings to CDP and UBC. The final report will be launched at the next UBC General Conference in Växjö, Sweden, in October 2017.



**CDP, formerly Carbon Disclosure Project, is an international, not-for-profit organization providing the global system for companies, cities, states and regions to measure, disclose, manage and share vital information on their environmental performance. Follow @CDP to find out more and visit [www.cdp.net/en](http://www.cdp.net/en)**

# City personnel 2016



Mayor's Scope of Activities	73,8 %	26,2 %
City Planning and Real Estate	50,2 %	49,8 %
Construction and Environment	42,4 %	57,6 %
Education and Cultural Affairs	72,0 %	28,0 %
Social Services, Health Care and Education		
Total		

## UBC to take a lead in promoting gender equality

by Mikko Lohikoski | [mikko.lohikoski@turku.fi](mailto:mikko.lohikoski@turku.fi)

Photo: Grzegorz Mehring/www.gdansk.pl

**UBC has remained committed to the democratic values throughout the quarter century of its work. At the same time, it is fair to say that the gender dimension has not always received the attention as it should have.**

One of the reasons may be found in the fact that while some countries and cities – for example the Nordics and Germany – were at least in principle emphasizing its importance, many others felt the gender issue was not among their first priorities.

### Gender equality in UBC

When the new UBC was created recently, it was natural to ensure that the gender issues would be also emphasized by a separate working group which would work horizontally. Equality, in general, is a value to be taken care in each field of life, and so these issues must be included in the work of all thematic UBC Commissions.

The Working Group on Gender Equality and the UBC Commissions should establish close working ties to address common issues. Likewise, the Working Group must energetically engage the Member Cities to ensure they address the equality issues. One important step can be inviting the cities to sign the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local life – and put it into practice.

### Concrete steps towards signing of the European Charter

These issues were discussed in Gdańsk on 11 April 2017, at a successful and lively conference organized by the city of Gdańsk and the UBC. It became clear that while consid-

erable progress has been achieved, much remains to be done. Especially, the example of Gdańsk taking concrete steps towards signing of the European Charter was much appreciated. The importance of work for human rights and democratic values has special importance now, when these are questioned and Europe is seeking its way forward.

### Gender equality is still a challenge

Everywhere in the Baltic Sea Region, we can do much more for gender equality. While there are quite many female members in city councils, the number of women mayors or deputy mayors is still very small. The same is true in wider society. Recent studies show that internationally, only 25% of senior managers in big companies are women. On the other hand, studies show that those with diverse workforce and leadership are doing better than others.

And there is still a considerable pay gap between women and men. According to the International Labour Organisation of the UN to be globally around 23%. With present speed, it will take 70 years to close – far too long.

UBC can be in the forefront in advancing equality between men and women in the Baltic Sea Region. The European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region recognizes the importance of gender equality and using talents of both men and women as essential for our success.

Maybe the UBC could take the lead in these issues – by ensuring that gender equality is promoted on all levels and by inviting others on the macro-regional level to cooperate.

# Does gender equality foster development?

by Małgorzata Tarasiewicz | tarasiewicz@neww.org.pl

**The UBC Gender Equality Working Group in partnership with the city of Gdańsk and the European Solidarity Centre organized the conference on Attractive and Inclusive Cities - Promotion of Equality of Men and Women in Local Life in Gdańsk on 11 April 2017.**

Its aim was to get more cities to sign the European Charter of Equality of Women and Men on the Local Level by informing the participants what it means in practice.

The event gathered around 50 participants including the representatives of the local authorities, namely Ritva Viljanen, Deputy Mayor of Helsinki, Piotr Kowalczyk, Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk, and Andrzej Cieśla, Mayor of Aleksandrów Kujawski (representative of one of two Polish cities that signed the Charter). Mikko Lohikoski, UBC Strategy Coordinator, Marion Boeker, co-founder of the "Initiative for a Gender Sensitive Budget in Berlin", Jaimie Just, Policy Officer - Gender Equality and Diversity, Council of European Municipalities and Regions, Kaspars Varpnis, Chair of the UBC Safe Cities Commission were among the speakers.

The discussions focused on the questions: Why the European Charter on Equality between Women and Men at the Local Level is the right tool to achieve equality between women and men on the level of the cities? Does gender equality foster development of the city? Jaimie Just clarified that after signing the European Charter, a city or a municipality has two years to implement it. In practice it means designing an action plan by using the inspiration and ideas of the different articles in the European Charter.

The participants of the conference were informed that the Mayor of Gdańsk Paweł Adamowicz had obliged the Council of Equal Treatment of Gdańsk to prepare the indicators and timetable for the implementation of the Charter.

The participants supported by acclamation the final declaration of the conference which states that despite many legal changes, equality between women and men still does not exist in practice.

The UBC Gender Equality Working Group will continue its work on using the European Charter as a tool in the promotion of gender equality in the cities also at the XIV UBC General Conference in Växjö, Sweden, 24-27 October 2017.



## Digital Renewal

by Lena Hernandez Modin | lena.hernandez\_modin@gavle.se

**On 4-7 April UBC Youthful Cities Commission held its first meeting in 2017, hosted by the city of Gävle, chairing the Commission. The meeting on "Digital Renewal" took place at the Culture School and was attended by 31 youth and officials from 11 member cities from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Germany.**

While inviting participants, Mayor of Gävle Inger Källgren Sawela, wrote: "We are constantly working on development in all kinds of areas. One of the most important field is the digital renewal. In Gävle we work to adopt digitalization opportunities and challenges with the social upheaval we are facing".

On 5 April the Commission started with news, after which the teacher Martin Alexandersson and two of his pupils Edwin and Bjarne from Polhemsskolan, an Upper Secondary School, took us through their work on creating map of Gävle in Minecraft. With Marie Nilsson from the IT-department we got an update on the digital renewal in Gävle and then we had workshops with the same agenda.

In the evening the Commission was invited to the city hall for a dinner with politicians and civil servants. Municipal Commissioner Jan Myléus welcomed the participants in Gävle and talked about the importance of the work of Youthful Cities Commission, not just for Gävle, but for the whole Baltic Sea area. The politicians and civil servants had also time to meet youth representatives from the Commission and to discuss issues of mutual interest.

The third day theme focused around the upcoming Växjö UBC General Conference, the Youth Conference and the interaction between them. Also other ongoing projects and future ideas were put on the table for an open discussion.

We had also an inverted study visit (El Sistema) and 2 cultural workshops (animation and ukulele's) followed by a historical city tour.

The meeting ended with workshops about future cooperation with BSSSC and ERB and meeting evaluation. The next Commission meeting will be during the GC in Växjö.

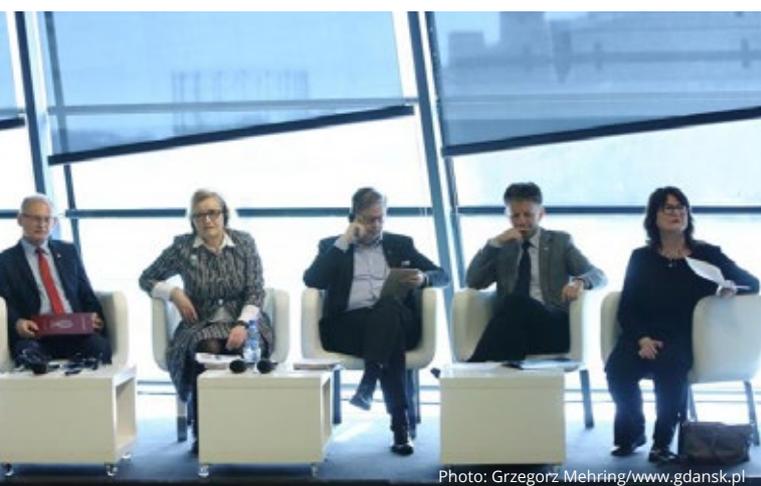


Photo: Grzegorz Mehring/www.gdansk.pl

# Culture and Sustainability in Pori

by Jaana Simula | jaana.simula@pori.fi  
& Kati Fager | kati.fager@pori.fi



Photo: Kati Fager

## UBC Cultural Cities Commission held a working meeting during the Culturability II seminar that took place in Pori on 1–3 March 2017.

Among the matters discussed there were the up-to-date of the action plan, news from the 78<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting in Kristiansand and Culturability II Cultural Tourism workshop in Gdańsk.

Agenda 21 Culture was brought into focus at this meeting. City of Kaunas was one of the winners of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the International Award UCLG and Cēsis was chosen as a city with good practice to promote Agenda 21 Culture. UBC Cultural Cities Commission aims to get all the UBC cities to join Agenda 21 Culture.

## Cultural Planning Days

Seminar's first part "A Training part on Cultural Mapping and Planning" gathered local university students and international BSR guests around the subject of Cultural Mapping. After some basic facts and views from the city and the stakeholders, the participants rode a bus to the two target areas: the Karjaranta Housing Fair 2018 area and Hevosluoto Delta area. Formal industry area Karjaranta slowly shaping into an urban single-family houses area on one side and Hevosluoto with the National Urban Park and allotment gardens on the other presented a good challenge for the seminar participants: how to use cultural mapping when the community has not evolved at all yet or it consists only of summer residents?

Work on SWOT analysis, suggestions for strategic development models and recommended actions continued on the

next day. Lots of ideas came up for the city planners and for the Baltic cities' representatives.

More participants gathered for the "Workshop on Urban Social Inclusion/Cultural Planning" where keynotes, vivid panel discussion and six cases from communities in UBC countries were introduced. A game as a tool to get people's insights attracted interest and the professor of Gamification, Juho Hamari accelerated the concept with the idea that cultural planning should be played in survival mode – including the excitement factor.

On Friday morning these themes were summed up and developed towards application for EUSBSR Seed Funding. Culturability II is a set of meetings and workshops in 2016-2017 with experts from cultural and non-cultural stakeholders, including policy-makers, academia and entrepreneurs from culture and creative sectors. The final meeting of Culturability II will be held in Skåne, Sweden in May 2017.

**At the target area, Karjaranta. Trevor Davies is talking with Susanna Kivimäki, Project Coordinator of the Housing Fair 2018.**



Photo: Kati Fager

# Learning through creative thinking

by Ingrid Wall | [ingrid.wall@trelleborg.se](mailto:ingrid.wall@trelleborg.se)

**In the end of March, the UBC Inclusive and Healthy Commission, met in Trelleborg, Sweden, for a three-day sitting.**

Day one was devoted to the concept of service design. Design thinking is a process that starts with what people need. It is about understanding culture and the context, before starting to design the solutions, learning by making, through prototyping, and a movement from consumption to participation.

A group exercise that introduced the participants in a leisurely manner was also conducted.

Day two covered workshop sessions. Various tools were used to get the participants to work through objectives for inclusive and healthy cities and potential projects within the lead theme of open social spaces.

Active participation, litres of coffee and a great support and encouragement from the Moderator ensured the workshops were concluded in two concrete ideas to bring home for further development in the coming Commission meetings.

The day ended with a sneak peek of the uncut version of the film produced by Trelleborg regarding the refugee influx in the town in the autumn of 2015, followed by a dinner with the Mayor of Trelleborg Torbjörn Karlsson.

Day three summed up the ideas from workshops and an action plan for the coming Commission meetings was developed.

The City of Karlstad took over the chairmanship in 2017.

**Four countries and seven cities were represented: Sweden (Trelleborg, Karlskrona, Karlstad), Finland (Espoo), Poland (Gdynia, Gdańsk) and Latvia (Jūrmala).**



## Discussing safety in Kaunas

by Kaspars Varpins | [kaspars.varpins@pp.liepaja.lv](mailto:kaspars.varpins@pp.liepaja.lv)

**For UBC Safe Cities Commission this year started with the meeting in Kaunas, Lithuania on 11-13 January.**

Kaunas welcomed participants from Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania with real winter conditions. During the three days of meeting, safety specialists from different fields – municipal police, fire and rescue services, civil protection and other municipal institutions – discussed issues on safety, upcoming project ideas, gender equality, etc.

Kaunas City Council and UBC Executive Board member Mantas Jurgutis welcomed everyone with insight into Kaunas City and possible safety issues in Kaunas. UBC Safe Cities Commission Chairman Kaspars Vārpiņš briefed on the latest information regarding UBC and “Cities Resilient to Climate Change” project. Vice-Chairman Torbjörn Lindström informed about upcoming project “FiRe Concept”.

The meeting was followed up by planning of a project initiative on the data collection principles for civil protection prevention activities, with the workshops, organized by the Head of Jelgava City Strategic Information Centre Gints Reinsons. All meeting participants agreed that the data collection principles for civil protection prevention activities are important even in everyday life. It was decided that this issue has to be investigated further by the Commission.

**The next Commission meeting will take place in Tallinn (Estonia) on 7-9 June 2017.**

**UBC Safe Cities Commission produced three short animations about safety at home. See: <http://ej.uz/2tqy> and shared.**





# Together UBC Commissions can make the world better

by Kaspars Vārpiņš | [kaspars.varpins@pp.liepaja.lv](mailto:kaspars.varpins@pp.liepaja.lv)

**Currently, the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission together with the Safe Cities Commission have started a new initiative, in collaboration with the Council of the Baltic Sea States and other organisations.**

The climate change is expected to increase the probability of the extreme weather events occurring at a shorter interval of time in the future. The natural disasters like floods, storms or heat waves with cascading effects are growing by magnitude and number in all regions, including the Baltic Sea Region. This phenomenon can exert negative impact on the prosperity in the BSR, if the appropriate actions to prevent or minimize damages will not be undertaken.

## **Adaptation is cheaper**

It has been proven that early adaptation actions saved money and lives. It is estimated that failure in adapting to the climate change will cost 100 billion Euros per year in 2020 and may increase to 250 billion in 2050. 1 Euro spent on flood protection could save 6 Euros in damage costs.

It is necessary to take the advantage and to merge the civil protection approach with the sustainable development paradigm. Civil protection agencies have outstanding knowledge on how to assess the risks and how to respond to the man-made accidents, and to the natural disasters like major wildfires, storms and flooding. By possible networking and teaming up civil protection stakeholders with regional development stakeholders and municipalities, both sectors could create synergies and increase capacities of both on tackling new and emerging risks caused by the climate change.

## **Creating synergies to increase the risk**

At this point, a project concept is developed to improve resilience of local societies to the climate change. The result project "CASCADE: Community Safety Action for Supporting Climate Adaptation and Development" would bring together climate change adaptation and civil protection specialists from different countries and cities to increase risk assessment cooperation between the national and local levels. The UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is one of the cornerstones in the upcoming project.

The specific goals of the project will be:

- to develop a risk assessment methodology related to the climate change, focusing on and tailored to the local (city) level in the BSR;
- to instruct the trainers, as well as to test the approach by running one macro-regional pilot course for the local level entities, such as spatial planners, developers, critical infrastructure operators, rescue services, and, most of all, city administrations, to familiarize with this methodology and to learn how to adjust it to their own conditions.

By developing good macro-regional practices or guidelines, it is expected that the cities will create synergy and learn from each other.

We hope that the collaboration of two UBC Commissions with other external partners can make the world a better and safer place to live.

A teaser of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission meeting on 16-18 May 2017 in Jyväskylä, Finland. The meeting has two guiding theme: *Resource Wisdom solutions* and *Biosphere regions as promoters of competitiveness and sustainability*. In addition, the SCC Advisory Board will meet on 16 May prior the joint programme. More: [www.ubc-sustainable.net/events/](http://www.ubc-sustainable.net/events/)



by Riikka Leskinen  
Valonia  
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## Towards circular economy

**The purpose of the Roadmap to a Circular Economy in Southwest Finland is to understand the regional potentials, strengths, resources and needs in creating a sustainable future.**

The roadmap has three main themes: sustainable food system, technical loops and transport and logistics. In addition it has three cross cutting themes: smart chemistry, public planning and service design.

### Recovering of side streams into new value

Circular economy is a complex system that requires a new mindset. There will be no such thing as waste. It is all about resources and side streams instead. People will no longer have their own vehicles, pieces of furniture or even clothes. Products are transformed into services and one pays for the use, not the actual product. It is essential to understand how the resources and potentials meet the needs of the consumers or

the users. Recovering of side streams into new value requires new technology, smart logistics and open platforms.

### Municipalities are the key players

According to the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, the added value provided by a circular economy for Finland's national economy could be at least 3 billion Euros per year by 2030. Municipalities are the key players in building a sustainable society, and the public sector is responsible for decisions that either strengthen or hinder its creation. Following the roadmap, the municipalities will benefit in many ways, since they are not only procurers but also planners, developers, educators and providers. The roadmap gives concrete hints on how to proceed.

### Good practices

There is a growing number of successful examples of circular economy activities. One example of a closed loop is Sybimar that has developed a bioenergy and food production solution based on closed circulation, where waste, waste heat, nutrients and CO<sub>2</sub> are used and recycled back to energy and food production. Some interesting projects also focus on reuse and recycling opportunities in car and ship demolition, other concern platforms for sharing food, apartments or vehicles.

### How to create the added value?

Finland has plenty of technological know-how for building a circular economy. Naturally, other UBC cities can benefit from its expertise. However, the challenge of scaling is probably the bottleneck. The true winners see the potential in-between the lines.

# Interactive Water Management

by Mariia Andreeva | mariia.andreeva@turku.fi  
& Agnieszka Ilola | agnieszka.ilola@turku.fi



Last year, the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission, together with 16 partners and 12 associated partners from the BSR, have launched the “Interactive Water Management” IWAMA project. IWAMA focuses on improving the resource efficiency in wastewater management by developing the capacity of operators in the water sector and implementing pilot investments for smart energy and sludge management.

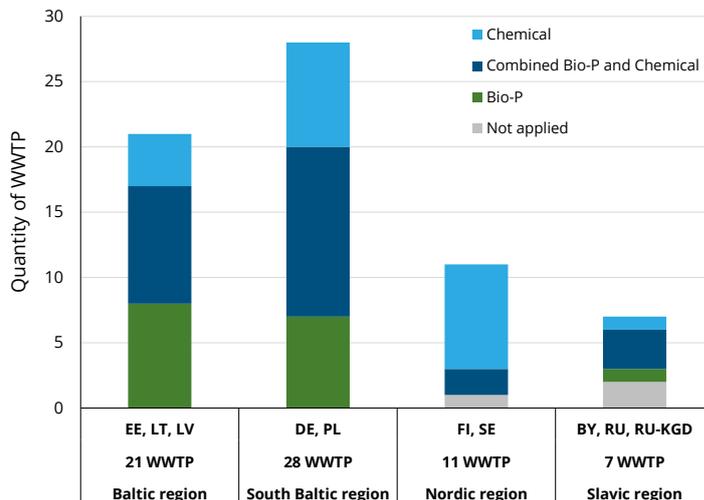
IWAMA addresses municipal wastewater treatment plants in the activities by performing pilot investments as well as energy and sludge audits on the local plants in Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, and producing comprehensive training materials. Moreover, the project builds up a strong network of water expert organizations around the Baltic Sea disseminating project results on the national level and contributing to the development of structured lifelong learning practices. At the same time, on the international level, IWAMA launches the Baltic Smart Water Hub to host the knowledge about new available technologies, solutions and trainings. Data in the Hub will be available for accessing by water experts, academia community and other interested parties to promote technological development and competitiveness of the water sector in the region.

### Benchmark shows the efficiency of technologies

One of the prerequisites to the successful resource efficiency management is the evaluation of the general conditions of the WWTPs in the region. For that, in the framework of IWAMA, partners from the Technical University of Berlin and the University of Tartu developed a benchmark based on the key figure data received from the plants of different sizes, locations and used technologies.

Over the second period of the IWAMA project implementation, the key figure data has been collected and carefully evaluated to examine the efficiency of applied technologies. Over 65 plants from the BSR countries shared their information with IWAMA specialists: many of the plants are located in the UBC member cities. The contribution of regions is as follows: 42% of the answers come from the South Baltic countries – Germany and Poland, 31% from the Baltic States, 16% from Nordic countries and 11% – from Belarus and Russia.

### Phosphorous removal process

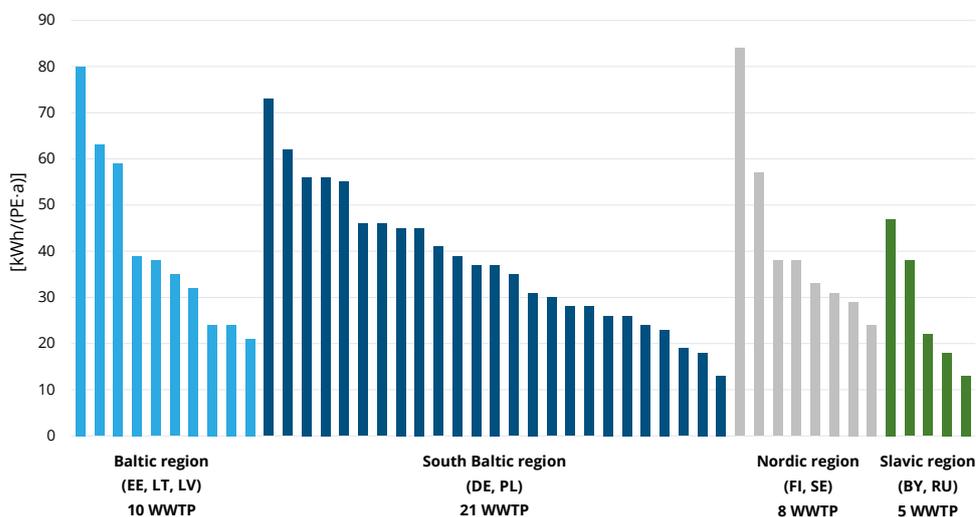


Presently, the benchmark is still under development, but preliminary results are already visible in the metrics. Thus, in terms of technology, 85% of the examined plants prefer to use the activated sludge process with nitrification/denitrification in their wastewater treatment, leaving only 1-3% for aerated lagoons, cyclic sludge activated technology and other systems. Phosphorous removal is applied in 96% of the plants that provided this information, and the choice of the removal technology is distributed almost evenly between chemical, biological and combined types.

### IWAMA opens doors for new opportunities

The results of the key figure data collection will be published later, but the data is being actively used during the technical audits launched on the partnering plants to further formulate audit concepts. The activities under the IWAMA project will support the wastewater treatment sector in the development of efficient and environmentally smart operation to save costs by smart process optimisation and investments. This opens doors for new business opportunities and innovative, cost and energy efficient technology development in the UBC member cities.

### Specific total energy consumption



### EUSBSR Flagship status for Priority Area “Nutri”

**Budget:**  
EUR 4.6 million  
**Duration:**  
March 2016 – February 2019

If your city is interested in smart wastewater management solutions, please join the IWAMA session on the upcoming EUSBSR Strategy Forum: <http://www.iwama.eu/event/8th-strategy-forum-eusbsr>.

# iWater: Storm waters – from waste to resource!

by Anna Kotaviita | anna.kotaviita@turku.fi

**Climate change has led to more frequent and intense storm and rainfall events along with increased flooding, storm water runoff, and soil erosion. Seven UBC cities rolled up the sleeves to meet the challenge.**

iWater – Integrated storm water management project aims to improve the urban planning in the cities of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) via developing integrated storm water management system. It brings together seven cities in the Central Baltic, the Aalto University from Helsinki and the Union of the Baltic Cities via Sustainable Cities Commission.

Recently UN water came out with a new analysis where European air temperature data from January through December conformed that 2016 was on tract to the region's fourth warmest year on record, marked by warm nights and major floods.

The current planning and management practices of the storm waters have proven to be weak in meeting these challenges, also in the Baltic Sea Region.

To reach its goals, the iWater develops guidelines and tools for integrated storm water management and introduces practices into urban planning process. One of the main tool is Green Area Factor Tool (GAF). The GAF tool promotes maintaining, and developing efficiency of the vegetation and using green elements in planning.

## **Pilot sites allow testing and experiments**

All seven cities have their specific pilot sites where testing and experimenting are taking place.

Riga's pilot site (Torņakalns) is located on the West bank of the Daugava River, in a walking distance from Old Riga. The pilot site is part of bigger deprived area of the city, but with a potential to become a new multi-functional centre of Riga and, at the same time, lively and green neighborhood.

The iWater sees students as important resource. Last summer several summer schools were organized in the partner cities to train students and increase their knowledge on storm waters. As a result, students produced innovative storm water solutions, which have been taken account also in real life when planning the pilot sites.

**In Söderhamn, the pilot site (Söderhamnsporten) is located by the main traffic connections, with a parking and travel centre. The land use covers retail and vacant green fields. The site is covered by the long-term city comprehensive plan.**

## **The Flagships status – Increasing resilience to climate change**

As a recognition for the iWater work for transnational co-operation within urban planning and integrated storm water management, the project was granted with the EU Strategy for the BSR HA Climate Flagship status in February this year.

"iWater is a good example of transnational co-operation aiming to increase resilience to the negative effects of climate change by increasing local government's capacity to prevent damage to the infrastructure and economic losses in cities caused by flashfloods", stated Krista Kampus, Head of Baltic 2030 Unit of Council of the Baltic Sea States, Coordinator of HA Climate.

Krista Kampus says that integrated approaches and practical solutions elaborated by the project partners could be successfully applied by other cities and benefit citizens of the region.

"The uniqueness of the iWater project is in the holistic approach, which addresses many challenges of urban sustainability and corresponding Sustainable Development Goals: storm water management, erosion prevention, air quality, local climate regulation, maintenance of genetic diversity, public health, etc."

Kampus stresses that by the end of its term, iWater will have accumulated a great amount of theoretical and practical expertise.

"This expertise and especially the connections between the urban planners from all the project cities should not be lost when the project ends. The tools and the lessons learned from the project should be spread through the whole BSR region and beyond", Krista Kampus continued.

**"The uniqueness of the iWater project is in the holistic approach, which addresses many challenges of urban sustainability and corresponding Sustainable Development Goals",  
Krista Kampus, CBSS**



7  
cities

7  
ISWM  
plans

From  
waste to  
resource

**Funding programme:**  
Interreg Central Baltic Programme 2014–2020  
Granted with EUSBSR Flagship HA Climate  
**Project lifetime:**  
2015 – 2018  
**Budget:**  
2 350 000 €  
**Partners:**

City of Riga, Lead partner (LV), City of Jelgava (LV), Municipality of Söderhamn (SE), Municipality of Gävle (SE), City of Tartu (EST), City of Helsinki (FI), City of Turku (FI), Aalto University (FI), Union of the Baltic Cities, Sustainable Cities Commission

#### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

iWater organizes several workshop to cities and other stakeholders on ISWM. You are warmly welcomed to the workshops. [www.integratedstormwater.eu](http://www.integratedstormwater.eu)  
Contact: Agnieszka Ilola, Coordinator, UBC SCC  
[agnieszka.ilola@ubc.net](mailto:agnieszka.ilola@ubc.net), +358 445002133

#### WHAT IS INTEGRATED STORM WATER MANAGEMENT?

A holistic approach to management, integrate the management of land, water, and biological resources across the catchment to balance the environmental, economic, and social uses of resources.

#### WHAT IS GREEN AREA FACTOR?

The goal of the green factor approach is to mitigate the effects of construction by maintaining a sufficient level of green infrastructure while enhancing the quality of the remaining vegetation. Vegetation mitigates the risk of flooding, reserves carbon dioxide, cools down the heat islands of built environments and increases the pleasantness and beneficial health-effects of the urban spaces.



THE CIVITAS INITIATIVE IS CO-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

# Up with your SUMP!

by Esther Kreutz | esther.kreutz@ubc.net

**Is your city working on sustainable urban mobility? Are you developing or already implementing a sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP)? Do you need support during the process? Or do you, as a transport and mobility user, want to learn more about SUMP? Then, the SUMPS-UP project is for you!**

Funded by the CIVITAS Initiative under EU Horizon 2020 Programme, SUMPS-UP started last autumn with a broad consortium of the European city networks, cities and mobility consultants.

### It is not too late to join!

The project offers to European cities a wide range of different capacity building activities on SUMP development and implementation and also facilitates mutual learning and exchange between participants from different countries.

To conform to the development activities that SUMPS-UP offers, the project conducted a comprehensive survey, together with other projects, to find out the state of art in European cities concerning SUMP and to find out what needs cities have in terms of training.

We received totally 441 answers, whereof around 70 cities that answered on the survey form the BSR. It became clear that many cities (around 45%) are working on sustainable urban mobility, but not necessarily in a systematic way.

### How can you benefit and participate?

During the next years, SUMPS-UP will launch three calls to join the Innovation Pilot Pool (IPP). A total of 100 planning authorities will receive funding, technical services and support to apply SUMP tools and methodologies in local conditions. Through the SUMP Learning Programme (SLP), the participants will be offered a variety of learning activities, like workshops, webinars and on-line learning, as well as creating a small community for exchange between colleagues.

Apart from these intensive learning programmes, SUMPS-UP will also offer, to a wider group of mobility experts and participants, the opportunity to take part in e-learning, webinars and trainings on SUMP development and implementation.

1<sup>st</sup> IPP call: 7 April-5 May 2017  
2<sup>nd</sup> IPP call: late winter 2018  
3<sup>rd</sup> IPP call: late winter 2019  
More info on:  
<http://www.eltis.org/resources/eu-funding/sumps-innovation-pilot-pool>  
You can sign up for reminder e-mails for upcoming calls!



# The Brownfield regeneration – a key towards sustainable urban development

by Maija Rusanen | [maija.rusanen@turku.fi](mailto:maija.rusanen@turku.fi)  
 & Kristiina Paju | [kristiina.paju@turku.fi](mailto:kristiina.paju@turku.fi)

**Baltic Urban Lab project, funded by the Central Baltic Programme, seeks for new, integrated approaches for brownfield redevelopment. Baltic Urban Lab has planned activities that will influence all pillars of sustainable development: revitalization of urban spaces and improved planning practices which will have positive social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts.**

## Different planning contexts, similar challenges

Brownfield redevelopment is a key topic for urban planning and development in all of the BSR countries. A country overview Planning Systems and Legislation for Brownfield Development in the Central Baltic Countries conducted by Baltic Urban Lab partner Nordregio, revealed that there was no long tradition of national policy approached to the brownfield redevelopment in Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Sweden. In addition, the national preconditions and policy responses vary between the countries. However, some common challenges have been identified and a space for mutual learning.

Due to privatisation of the land in the post-soviet countries, complex land ownership structure is a major challenge compared to the Nordic countries where the municipalities are better enabled to steer of the land use policy and planning, and therefore also brownfield development. Co-operation between public entities, landowners and developers is a key issue in brownfield redevelopment in all countries, not only because of the plurality of landowners, but also because of the costly procedures of cleaning the contaminated land.

For this reason, the Baltic Urban Lab cities: Norrköping (Sweden), Tallinn (Estonia), Turku (Finland) and Riga (Latvia) are now testing new ways of cooperating with the public and private entities - from the early stages of the brownfield planning process, in order to direct all available knowledge and resources for the development, to find common visions and goals together.

## Support for knowledge exchange and learning

The 1<sup>st</sup> Baltic Urban Lab Workshop *Designing integrated planning processes - towards more efficient cooperation and partnerships between cities and private sector* which took place in Tallinn on 2 March 2017 concluded that the open dialogue and well-managed cooperation with different stakeholders from the very beginning of planning, as well as a clarification of roles and responsibilities, were necessities for successful brownfield development projects. However, working towards more inclusive and integrated urban planning also requires new skills, knowledge and mindset from local administrations who can be seen as facilitators of a dialogue between different entities in the society – a role somehow new to the urban planners. This means testing and piloting new ways of working (also within the local administration) and new tools.

Baltic Urban Lab project is supporting exchange and learning between BSR cities on integrated planning approaches and successful brownfield redevelopment methods through workshops and webinars that are open to all interested parties. More: [www.balticurbalab.eu](http://www.balticurbalab.eu)



**CiViTAS**  
Cleaner and better transport in cities  
**ECCENTRIC**

# Encouraging sustainable urban mobility planning in suburban areas



by Kristiina Paju | kristiina.paju@turku.fi

**The new CIVITAS project ECCENTRIC focuses on sustainable urban mobility in the suburban areas that have been often neglected in the previous projects.**

Additionally, the project will ease testing and developing new innovative solutions in the urban freight logistics, clean vehicles and fuels with the goal of replicating the tested activities in other cities.

The “living lab” cities consisting of Madrid as the lead partner (Spain), Munich (Germany), Turku (Finland), Stockholm (Sweden) and Ruse (Bulgaria), work alongside with 29 other project partners, such as public organizations, higher education institutions and private companies. The four-year project (2016–2020) began in early October 2016 in Madrid.

## UBC network brings benefit for the project

The Sustainable Cities Commission is responsible for the project dissemination and knowledge exchange and will arrange workshops, peer reviews, site visits and webinars in order to simplify the exchange of good practices, ideas and solutions, and the project results.

The living lab cities cooperate in 50 different measures, divided into six thematic work packages, focusing on different aspects of the sustainable mobility.

Turku promotes sustainable urban mobility by testing and piloting bike and car sharing systems, improving cycling conditions throughout the year with a focus on winter bicy-

cling, developing a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) concept, including the on-line and mobile service interfaces, introducing electric buses and bus lines, and by promoting biogas in freight vehicles. Kupittaa is Turku’s living lab area, that is currently under reconstruction. It is a multifunctional district, with numerous businesses, a student campus and a train station with a straight connection to Helsinki. This provides good conditions to test new mobility solutions, for example a mobile point that connects public transportation, shared bicycles and cars.

CIVITAS ECCENTRIC is funded by the Horizon 2020. More information: [www.civitas.eu/eccentric](http://www.civitas.eu/eccentric)



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# From a growing to a great city

[www.smallships.eu](http://www.smallships.eu)

Planning Cities and Smart&Prospering Cities Commissions together with the Interreg JOHANN project network organize the workshop "A joint approach to guide a growing Baltic city into a great Baltic city" on 14-17 May 2017 in Rostock.

Six international workshop teams will be formed to elaborate three perspectives:

- Entire City,
- Inner City and its "Old Harbour",
- "Old Harbour" with a focus on small cruise liner area.

The workshop participants will be working on how Rostock could meet its residents' needs better, how the economic growth and innovation capability can be ensured in the future. One of the challenging questions will be cruising tourism.



Nothing about us  
without us –  
making it work!

**Hey, listen up! The youth of the BSR have real opinions and want to share their approaches and models for more and better involvement in the discussions. It's all about communication!**

This is the message the organizers of seminar "Nothing about us without us – making it work" plan to spread around during the 8<sup>th</sup> EUSBSR Annual Forum on 13-14 June 2017 in Berlin.

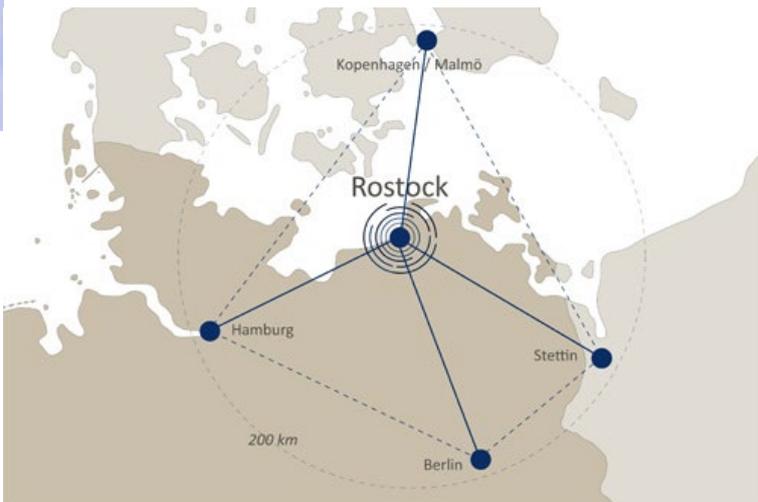
The seminar, which will be held on 13 June, will focus on sharing good practises on youth involvement and empowerment on the local and regional levels in the BSR, and on discussing different approaches to active youth involvement in each of the ten Baltic Sea Region countries.

There will be three interventions on good practises with regard to youth inclusion in political processes. The invited speakers are: Mr Roger Ryberg, Chairman of BSSSC, Ms Akko Karlsson, President of ERB and a representative from the UBC Board (President or Vice-President). An expert panel of youth representatives from the BSSSC and ERB youth networks and the UBC Youthful Cities Commission will comment and challenge the speakers.

Also, a youth conference is under preparation on 12-13 June 2017 (lunch to lunch) in the Nordic Embassies in Berlin. It will be a side event to prepare and support the seminar during EUSBSR Forum. The conference will gather around 30 youth participants and civil servants working with youth from all countries around the Baltic Sea.

The seminar will be organised by Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) (coordinator), Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) and EuroRegion Baltic (ERB).

More: [www.ubc.net/ubc-events/nothing-about-us-without-us-making-it-work](http://www.ubc.net/ubc-events/nothing-about-us-without-us-making-it-work)



by Irene Pendolin  
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## Follow UBC in social media

**Essentially, communication is a set of tools that needs to be constantly updated if organisations wish to stay up-to-date and achieve their goals. The UBC has done exactly that during the last couple of years by our extensive communications renewal. This spring we have extended our presence in social media: besides Facebook, UBC is now active on both Twitter and LinkedIn. Moreover, a UBC newsletter is published approximately four times a year.**

One of the modern trends in communications is the so-called 'employee or stakeholder ambassadors': the success of an organisation in delivering its messages is largely due to those who share these messages on their own channels, especially in social media. Therefore, we encourage all UBC members and partners to get updated on current BSR issues by following and working together with us in social media!

On Twitter you can find UBC as @UBC\_BSR. UBC hashtags are #UBC\_BSR and #UnionoftheBalticCities. The former LinkedIn pages of UBC Sustainable Cities Commission have been updated into Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) pages. The new UBC pages can now feature updates from all seven UBC Commissions.

The UBC newsletter is sent out approximately four times a year, keeping our member cities and partners up-to-date with UBC news, interesting developments in the BSR and other current UBC matters. If you wish to receive the newsletter, please send an email to irene.pendolin@ubc.net. All the newsletters are available at <http://ubc.net/publications>

UBC's XIV General Conference is also approaching. We are looking forward to an outstanding event, made possible together with our colleagues in the host city of Växjö! Stay tuned to the UBC website and social media for updates on the conference.



UnionoftheBalticCities



UBC\_BSR #UBC\_BSR #UnionoftheBalticCities



Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC)



Photo: Irene Pendolin

## Leadership for the Future of the Baltic Sea

by Irene Pendolin | irene.pendolin@ubc.net  
& Anna Kotaviita | anna.kotaviita@turku.fi

**"My ancestors talked about the perils of the sea. Today, man is a danger to the sea. Now we must work together across the sea that unites us for sustainable development. When it comes to the future of the Baltic Sea, there is no time to waste. The survival of the Baltic Sea depends on us, not only when it comes to sustainability but also economically by creating jobs. Let us take these responsibilities and catch the opportunities for Blue Growth".**

These were words by Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria during her opening speech in the first Baltic Sea Future conference in Stockholm on 6–7 March 2017. The conference is to be an annual event and UBC was one of the organizing partners.

In the conference, action-orientated municipalities came together to meet researchers, entrepreneurs and investors to discuss a long-term sustainable collaboration for the Baltic Sea. Subjects covered included sharing best practices and connecting, finding new financial solutions for local sustainability projects, Baltic Sea's future challenges and calls for local action.

### Municipalities are the key for change

During the two-day event, several UBC member cities, including Słupsk, Helsinki, Växjö and Turku, held inspiring speeches and presentations for a both environmentally and economically sustainable Baltic Sea Region as well as for innovative and visionary leadership.

"We need to reconnect the 85 million people living in the Baltic Sea Region and change our thinking from "not in my backyard" to "yes, in my backyard", stated Dariusz Szwed, Head of Programme in Council of the Green Institute in Słupsk, while talking about implementing water democracy.



# CITY NEWS



Photo: Hannu Vallas

## COMPETENCE, SAFETY AND NATURE

**In a study conducted last year, Espoo was found to be the most economically, socioculturally and ecologically sustainable city in Europe. According to a recent follow-up study, Espoo has maintained its position as the top city in Europe in terms of sustainability.**

The 2016 study of the Telos research institute operating in conjunction with the Dutch Tilburg University covered more than 140 European cities, whose sustainability was measured by means of sociocultural and ecological metrics for sustainable development. The study was commissioned by the Dutch EU Presidency.

Competence, safety and nature remained Espoo's strengths in the study. The top positions after Espoo were taken by Helsinki, Stockholm, Linköping and Innsbruck. The Telos institute conducted the follow-up study by commission of Espoo and covered 15 cities: the top ten of last year's study and, of the following ten, five growing cities that were most comparable with Espoo.

### The climate programme steers green development

"For a city of its size, Espoo is exceptionally green. The abundance of nature in the city is one of its key features. Other green elements include the Nuuksio wilderness, the Central Park and the seaside location", Mayor Jukka Mäkelä says.

Sustainability in the growing Espoo is also supported by the grid-like structure of five urban centres which is woven together by railway lines. Last August, the City Council approved a climate programme for the city, according to which the fastest emission reductions can be achieved in traffic – particularly by improving the service level for public transport and cycling – and through promoting renovation construction in the suburbs and increasing local energy production using renewable sources.

In addition to ecological metrics, the follow-up study also examined sociocultural and economic sustainability. The education, income level and health of Espoo residents are among the best in Europe. The population is growing and the residents feel that the city is safe.

Among other things, the city has invested in smart and clean solutions and trials, such as MaaS, School-as-a-Service and the Iso Omena Service Centre.

By Tiina Kasvi | [tiina.kasvi@espoo.fi](mailto:tiina.kasvi@espoo.fi)

# COLOSSUSES 2017

The annual event of Travellers, Sailors and Mountain Climbers "Colossuses" dedicated to travelling took place in Gdynia on 10-12 March 2017.

Their first national meeting took place by the end of February 1999 alongside the Kaszuby tourism fair in Gdynia. Outstanding mountain climbers, sailors and wanderers not only presented their achievements in person, but were also available for the audience eager for direct reports and inspirations during the entire event. This innovative approach proved to be successful and contributed to attracting more than ten thousand people from Poland and abroad every March.

During the three days at the turn of winter and spring a real travellers' festival takes place here. The timing is perfect as it is getting really beautiful at the Baltic Sea then. 'Colossuses' is the biggest event of this kind in Europe. Since the very beginning the event has been organised by the City of Gdynia and the MART agency from Cracow.

Presentations (in forms of reports, slide shows or films) of the most interesting travel achievements from the previous year take place in a large indoor sports arena, which can be used as a screening room (with a capacity of up to 4 000 people), and in the Conference Centre of the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park Gdynia.

Also, numerous accompanying events, such as photo exhibitions, specialist seminars, meetings with books' authors or an outdoor equipment fair take place. The highlight of the programme is always the ceremony during which the awards (Colossuses) and acknowledgements in 5 different categories (yachting, mountaineering, journeys, cave explorations, achievement of the year), as well as the Super Colossus, Andrzej Zawada Award and Forever Young Award, founded by the Mayor of Gdynia, are presented.

by Agnieszka Krasińska | [www.kolosy.pl](http://www.kolosy.pl)



## A YOUTH COUNCIL IN ROSTOCK

**What does a city need to be attractive, appropriate and sustainable for young people? In fact, youngsters are the best experts themselves in what they want and what they need to feel comfortable in the city they live in. And there are young people who are willing to develop and to present their own ideas and wishes.**

Intending to do that, several youngsters from the Rostocker Freizeitzentrum (RFZ) had the idea of founding a youth council. Since participation of youth has always been a main issue at the RFZ, we welcomed the idea and supported the initiators to bring the founding of that council on the way.

A lot of preparation had to be done until the founding could finally happen in April 2016. The youngsters met since September 2015 to collect ideas, plans and material. The main concern was to find interested adolescents to join the council. To prevent a scarcity of members, the youngsters created the plan to produce a promotional film to make their idea of a youth council public, which was a very successful one.

Since April 2016 the council has been meeting at least every four weeks to work on its issues. Much has happened since then, for example several cooking evenings, some parties (Founding, Halloween), the mentioned film project, participation in the UBC Youth Conference in Gdynia in October 2015, the UBC Youthful Cities Commission meetings in Turku and Elva, as well as international youth exchanges in Weimar and Szczecin, especially highly welcomed among our adolescents.

So, how will it go on in the near future? One big wish would be the participation in the next UBC Youth Conference in Växjö in October to work further on international youth issues.

The youth council is at the very beginning of its work, but the adults of Rostock can be excited about the things to come. All we have to do is to let the youngsters work and to give them a voice. If we do so and offer them possibilities to express their wishes and ideas, Rostock can stay or become an attractive and sustainable city for young people to live in.

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# BALTIC MEETING POINT KARLSKRONA

Baltic Meeting Point Karlskrona is a new forum dedicated to the Baltic cities exchange and business development, cooperation and networking, learning and understanding. It is an initiative to develop and encourage the exchange and cooperation between Karlskrona Twin Cities and members of Baltic Sail on an annual basis. The ambition is to find key persons and organizations for a long-term development and sustainable cooperation in a wide range of areas.

**Save the dates on 2-4 August 2017**

Experience Karlskrona at its best. Baltic Meeting Point takes place during the Karlskrona Archipelago Festival, an annual event, showing the city at its best. Activities take place in every corner and on every island. The sea is full of boats, the main square with food, music and party all night long with more than 100 000 visitors.

Welcome to Karlskrona!

More: [karlskrona.se/balticmeetingpoint](http://karlskrona.se/balticmeetingpoint)

by Marcus Fredriksson | [marcus.fredriksson@karlskrona.se](mailto:marcus.fredriksson@karlskrona.se)

## MEMORIAL LIME KILNS ATTRACTIVE DESTINATION

**The old memorial lime kiln nearby the southernmost tip in Sweden, Smygehuk, is a true cultural gem, a well-preserved memory of the lime industry that took place here from the mid-1800s and into the 1900s.**

The municipality of Trelleborg now wants to increase the attractiveness of the whole area and begins the process of inventory of vegetation and wildlife close to the kilns.

By finding out which plant species grow in the areas and which animal species are staying around, the value of the entire area will increase. The memorial lime kiln area will become a much more valuable place for visitors when the results are presented in an interesting way. It will be worthwhile to discover for visitors interested in history, as well as for other who enjoy learning more about species and nature.

Just 100 meters from the lime kilns is also the Delling high situated, an ancient burial mound from the Bronze Age. Obviously, people have lived and travelled in this region for several thousands of years!

In 2017, the area will be inventoried and examined carefully. Money has been granted by the County Administrative Board, known as LONA funds. LONA grants to local conservation projects around Sweden are considered to have been very valuable to provide support to municipalities that want to protect and develop local nature spots and areas. The County Administrative Boards are also working continuously with guidance to local authorities concerning issues of development of urban nature.

by Lina Wedin Hansson | [lina.wedin-hansson@trelleborg.se](mailto:lina.wedin-hansson@trelleborg.se)





# SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING NEW

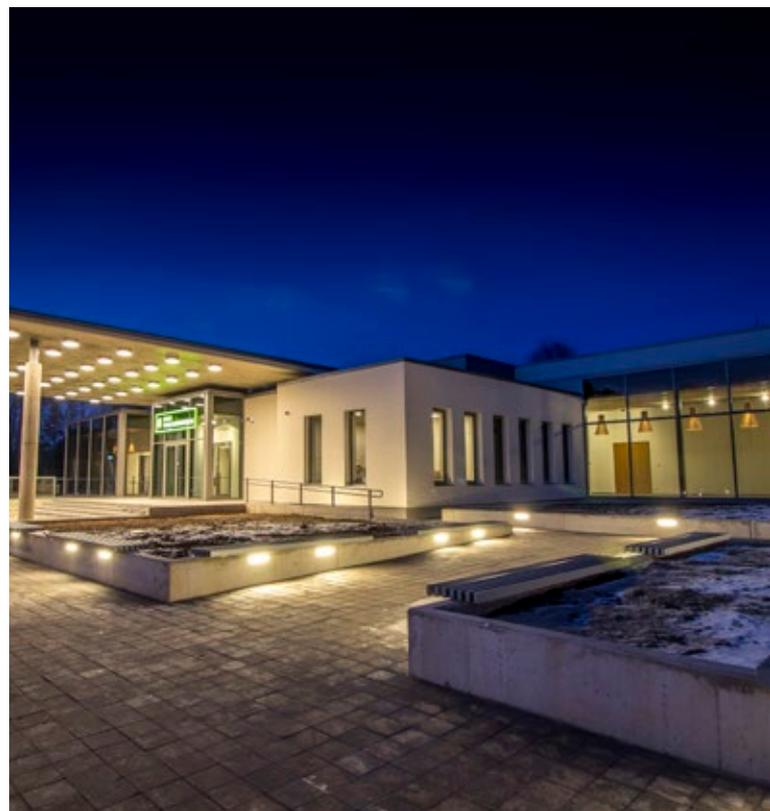
Almost a year ago, the reconstruction works on Elva culture centre began. The old building, built in 1984–1985, looked like a shipwreck. In July 2016, Elva Municipality created Elva Culture Foundation, with the purpose of culture and tourism management in Elva.

In autumn the construction work continued, meanwhile the events were performed in different locations in the town. The building was ready on time but the elaboration took almost two months. In January 2017, the decision was clear – the new centre must be ready for visitors before the Estonian Independence Day 2017. On 18 February, Elva Culture Centre was opened up.

The new Centre is around 1300m<sup>2</sup>, its hall has 256 seats, natural acoustics, modern sound and illumination solutions. Seating system in the hall is one of the kind in the Baltics. There is also a gallery for art exhibitions inside. Soundproof band room offers opportunity to practice even during concert. The backstage rooms offer comfortable space for performers. The whole reconstruction was financed by bank loan taken by the Municipality. The total cost of investment was 1,1 million Euros.

Elva has struggled to offer quality culture events for years due to the lack of the conditions in the old centre. A lot of organizers and entrepreneurs have already shown the interest in using the new space. So did also the locals and visitors – the most popular events are sold out a month or weeks prior to the event. The Elva Culture Foundation has a mission to offer the best possible entertainment for locals and visitors.

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## EMPOWER THE KIDS WITH THE GAME!

**How can we empower a child to take healthy decisions daily and make health education more fun? These questions are in the centre of the cross-border project “EmpowerKids – Health education and social advice for low-income families with young children”.**

EmpowerKids is an initiative of City of Jūrmala, Tallinn University Rakvere College and University of Turku, coordinated by Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association. The project deals with a very well-known problem relevant to all BSR countries – children from families of low income households experience bigger challenges in maintaining a healthy lifestyle than those who are better off. This may have a great impact on their whole life, e.g. excluding them from peer groups. Another problem is the lack of effective and attractive methods that could be used by teachers and social workers to promote healthy lifestyle among this group.

The EmpowerKids project acknowledges those challenges and proposes a solution – an EmpowerKids Tool, a user-friendly, empowering and fun game-based application targeted at children aged 6-12.

“The idea is that with this game the children can be approached in a different, more playful way and they can receive targeted health information and social advice, which really addresses their needs”, says Anni Pakarinen, PhD candidate and researcher at the University of Turku, leading the work on the tool.

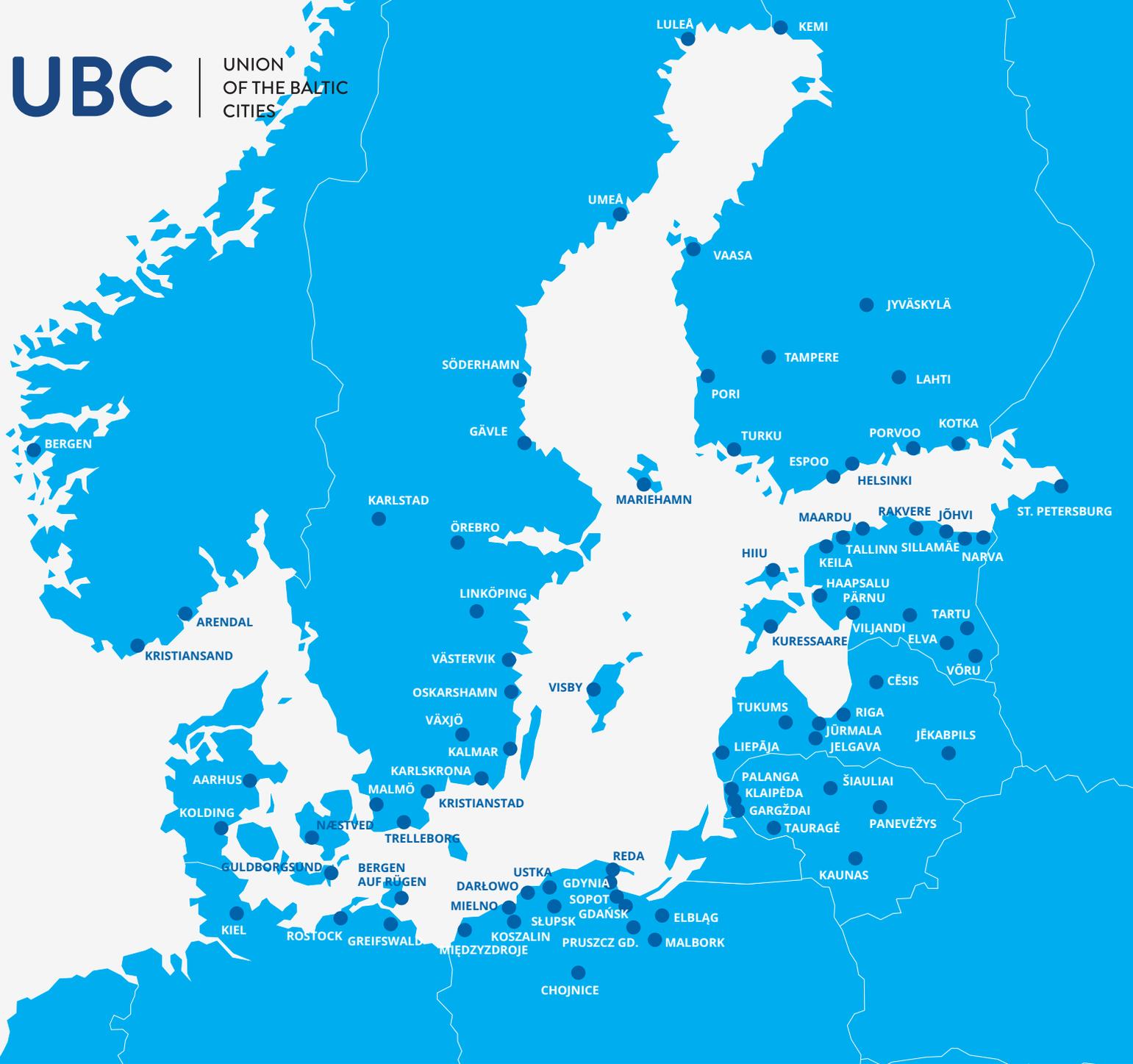
The first round of pilot interviews with 116 children was conducted in February 2017 in the kindergartens, schools and social centers in Jūrmala, Rakvere and Parainen. The results are very encouraging.

All feedback will be used to further develop the EmpowerKids, which will be tested in a second round of interviews in September 2017 in the project cities. Moreover, healthy workshops for children and events for families will be organized in spring and summer.

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# UBC

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OF THE BALTIC  
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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](http://www.ubc.net)

**The Baltic Sea Region Youth Conference “Nothing about us without us” will be held on 12–13 June 2017 in Berlin, in connection with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum.**

It’s a joint event of the UBC, the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation and the Euroregion Baltic.

**More: <http://ubc.net/ubc-events/youth-conference-nothing-about-us-without-us>**

**Hey, listen up! The youth of the BSR have real opinions and want to share their approaches and models for more and better involvement in the discussions. It’s all about communication!**



# XIV UBC General Conference

**LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE**

Cities as Leaders for Glocal Sustainable Development

**VÄXJÖ, SWEDEN, 24–27 OCTOBER 2017**



Photo: Mats Samuelsson



Photo: Brian Mannarski



Photo: Mikko Koskiva



Photo: Mats Samuelsson