

REPORTS AND ACTION PLANS OF THE UBC COMMISSIONS

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COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATION

ACTIVITY REPORT JANUARY 1996 - AUGUST 1997

Commission on Communication

Kalmar	Lars Malmborg, chairman
Riga	Viktors Buls
Gdansk	Elzbieta Stangret
Tampere	Sonja Hilavuo, Task Force, chairman

Activities 1996 - 1997

At the General Conference in Aarhus, Denmark 1995 the Commission pointed out six activities for the next period (numbers below). Since the general conference we have made priority to three major goals:

- To develop an internet solution for the UBC members and to connect this net to other interesting nets in the Baltic region.
- To set up an internal marketing team for the UBC called the Task Force.
- Establish a learning forum for the usage of Internet.

We have decided not to go further with the Geographic Information System, GIS.

Internet

The Internet solution has first been set up as a dummy to show the cities the way it might look. In the future each city has to take responsibility for its own home-page and the updating of it. The internal system is on its way and the intention is to connect this to other systems. See BSA.

Task Force

The Task Force, chaired by Sonja Hilavuo, Tampere, had their first meeting in Tampere in May 1996. This meeting was attended by many member cities and was very well implemented. After that meeting some steps has been made to develop this important network. A lot of the time for the chairman has been spent on the renewal of the UBC Bulletin.

Baltic Sea Alliance (BSA)

The first steps were taken shortly before and after the Baltic Sea States Subregional Conference (BSSSC) meeting in Vaasa 17-18 October 1996. In one of the work-shops, chaired by President Anders Engström, Sonja Hilavuo presented a new idea for cooperation in the Baltic region. The idea had been discussed within the UBC and with BSSSC and the Baltic Chamber of Commerce (BCCA) before the Vaasa meeting. In short, the idea was to create a Baltic sea network for organisations. In the Vaasa workshop this idea was accepted for further work.

I was asked by the President to represent UBC at the first meeting in Gdansk the 4th of December 1996 with the three major actors in the Baltic Sea; UBC, BSSSC and BCCA. At this meeting the idea was elaborated further and Sonja Hilavuo was appointed as Coordinator General for this new platform called the Baltic Sea Alliance (BSA). A steering group was set up with one person from each organisation. At the UBC board meeting in Stockholm in January I was appointed to be the UBC representative in the BSA.

The Gdansk meeting set out following points:

- The Baltic Sea Alliance is a functional body joining active Baltic organisations for cooperation in communication flows in the Baltic Sea Region
- The core organisation of the BSA consists of the steering group and the Coordinator General.

- The BSA aims to become the main information brokerage of the Baltic Sea Region with an easy access and free of charge Internet-system

Next meeting in the group was held in Kiel on the 26th of March 1997 where we made a division of tasks. As Sonja Hilavuo will take one year leave from the Baltic Institute of Finland the server will be set up in Kalmar until summer 1998. Sonja Hilavuo will still be responsible for marketing and developing the BSA, now working for the Commission as a representative for Tampere.

The Kiel meeting decided that the Coordinator General, together with Kalmar will work out the final form of the WWW-pages and start to work on a brochure for marketing.

All BSA partners agreed that they will work to find financing possibilities for a more permanent solution.

The server has been set up during the summer, a domain has been chosen and accepted, Balticsea.net, and a preliminary dummy has been worked out. The implementation is going on at the moment.

The three partners will have a meeting in Kalmar on the 3rd of September where further steps will be discussed.

Riga meeting

The Communication Commission met in Riga 10-11 of April where Viktors Buls had arranged for a very good meeting. The Commission had the possibility to talk to the new mayor of Riga, Mr Andris Berzins and delegates from Tallinn, Mrs Liisa Pakosta and Ventspils, Mrs Inese Ziedina. We also had a meeting with Kristine Kruma, head of the CBSS secretariat to inform her about the BSA.

In the Riga meeting the Internet Courses in Kalmar were discussed and we decided to make a common seminar for city employees responsible for Internet and for members of the Task Force in Kalmar the 5-7 October 1997.

ACTION PLAN 1998-1999

The commission has been under discussion at some time. But we suggest that the commission will be given the responsibility to fulfil the Baltic Sea Alliance. The Commission will also cooperate with the Task Force as the chairman of the Task Force is also a member of the Commission.

If the board meeting and the general conference agrees to our proposal we suggest the following goals for the next period.

- Developing the internal Internet system for UBC projects and events.
- Developing and marketing our part of the Baltic Sea Alliance. This will be done by giving courses about the BSA to the member cities and helping some of them to put up their links to the UBC home-page.
- Setting up, at least three seminars for people preparing home-pages, for people concerned with marketing and for leading politicians interested in Internet

The first seminars are planned for in October and November 1997. If there is a greater interest, further seminars could be held in 1998.

The commission will also be engaged in marketing the BSA through the Coordinator General Sonja Hilavuo and myself to other actors like Baltic organisations and Institutions.

Next step, in 1998, will probably be to develop contacts to interesting databases which are now built up around the Baltic and through EU-money enhance the capacity and quality of the network. A possibility is to develop a UBC database.

Internet and BSA give opportunities for a new commission.

The possibilities with Internet give rise to an old question. Over the years there has been a lot of discussion over the role of the UBC in business activities. Building the BSA network give new possibilities for the member cities to establish business contacts.

I therefore propose to the board that the UBC starts a discussion of starting a new commission for Business Activities with the following tasks:

- strengthen the status of the commercial officers in smaller cities
- exchange experiences about trade-fairs and convents
- start seminars and workshops for effective business contacts around the Baltic
- later develop business programs in certain fields and
- strengthen the UBC contacts in the EU

Such a commission could work closely to our commission, but where our major aim is to develop the use of the net and for marketing, this new commission could work more direct with business related activities.

Lars Malmborg, Kalmar
Chairman of the Commission

COMMISSION ON CULTURE

ACTIVITY REPORT JANUARY 1996 - AUGUST 1997

1. The Sessions II and III of the Commission on Culture

1.1. As it was established by the Commission every year its session on culture topics is organised by one of the UBC members. After I Session in Szczecin (1995) the II Session was held in Visby 3 - 5 May 1996 on the theme "Freedom of Expression-Information-Libraries". It was attended by 90 librarians, cultural officials, politicians, cultural workers and others from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. It was opened by the Swedish Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Pierre Schori and among the lecturers were Arne Ruth - editor in chief at Dagens Nyheter, Jaan Kaplinski, writer, Laimantas Jonusys, editor, Knuts Skujenieks, poet, Peter Curman, ex chairman of the Swedish Writers Union. During this conference, the UBC Commission held a special meeting. Another result was the establishment of the UBC Library Working Group which works from that time leaded by the city of Visby.

Documents of this Session are:

- The report on the conference "Freedom of Expression-Information-Libraries" 1996
- The Minutes from the Commission's meeting on 4 May 1996
- The Introduction of the UBC Library Working Group, dated 14 May 1997

1.2. The Session III is still at the stage of planning. Mr S. Szafranski and Mr O. Gibson, (Chairman and Co-chairman of the Commission) were in Kaliningrad in 11-14 March 1997 to discuss and establish the program of the Session III. The City of Kaliningrad was represented by Ms S. Gourova (Deputy Mayor), Ms Y. Matyushina (Foreign Relations Dept), Ms T. Shkurenko and Ms S. Vokalchuk (Municipal Enterprise "Festival UBC". The participants of the meeting, including two other persons involved in the cultural life of Szczecin and Visby, established the following program of the Session III, giving it the theme "Artistic Education"

- The systems of organisation of artistic schools in UBC towns
- Scholarship system in artistic education around the Baltic Sea
- Promotion of young, artistically talented pupils and students
- Project of a Catalogue of schools of fine arts, music, film, dance, etc in UBC towns
- The appointment of a Working Group that will establish network for artistic education initiate contacts and find ways for exchange of scholars etc.

The time and place of the Session III will be decided when some financial difficulties has been solved.

1.3 It is to decide by the Commission about the next Session which was previously planned to be held in Kalmar in 1998. The problem will be discussed by the Commission during the General Conference in Gdansk.

2. UBC Art and Culture Festivals

2.1 UBC Culture and Art Festivals were arranged firstly in Kaliningrad in 1993 and 1994, and later in Szczecin 1995.

The 4th UBC Festival "Art of Musica" was also arranged in Szczecin, 22 June - 3 July 1996. The total budget of the Festival was over 34 000 ECU, mostly from Szczecin's municipal funds. It was organised by cultural institutions in Szczecin with support from the Baltic Music Network. Very good concerts were given by ensembles from Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Norway, Russia and Estonia.

3. Mare Articum

The "Mare Articum"-project was initiated by Szczecin according to the action plan of the Commission for 1996-97. The first Mare Articum workshop was held in Szczecin in 14-15 November 1996. The seminar gathered over 20 participants artists, critics, publishers, city administration workers. The organisational and financial structure was discussed, and the content and the profile of the magazine was settled.

During 12-14 March 1997 the city of Szczecin hosted a meeting of the editorial board of the Mare Articum. The main purpose of the magazine is to create a joint discussion and promotion forum for the under-developed artistic movement in the Baltic Region. The sample issue of the magazine will be published in September 1997 and will focus on the theme of national identity within the context of the continuously developed universal art language. The magazine is devoted to the current phenomena and current events in visual arts. Both theoretical and historical articles on the art phenomena will be included. The connections, links and influences of art between the peoples around the Baltic Sea is also of interest.

4. The UBC Calendar of Cultural Festivals

The Calendar which was prepared by the city of Visby in 1995-1996 was actualised and presented in June 1997 on the new UBC Internet Home Address "www.ubc.net" by the Cultural Office in Visby in cooperation with Kalmar. It will be renewed twice a year with the aim to stimulate to new cultural meetings and experiences, to cultural innovation and cultural tourism.

5. The UBC Catalogue of Cultural Institutions

The Catalogue was first published in printed form in 1995 by Visby. It contains the names, addresses, telephone and fax and a short information about 654 municipal cultural offices, museums, libraries, art schools and many other cultural institutions. The aim is to give a practical tool for cultural administrators, cultural workers etc who want to find contacts or information on culture life around the Baltic Sea. This Catalogue of cultural Institutions is being actualised, enlarged and transferred by Visby and Kalmar to the UBC Internet Home page www.ubc.net.

ACTION PLAN 1998-1999

The aim of the Commission is to stimulate and realise culture and art projects, events and cooperation especially (though not only) among UBC members to enrich contacts and knowledge on Homo Balticus. We do believe that culture is a perfect tool to understand better who are our neighbours, what is our history and our cultural background on the Baltic. The knowledge of the contemporary art and artists and the historical and cultural traditions in 10 different Baltic countries could help us, as we hope, to break walls which are still in our minds between countries, nations, cities and ordinary people on the Baltic. Each of our Actions Plans tries, as we think, to put one step forward to destroy slowly these walls and create new and better ways of communications in the region.

The Commission on Culture needs more and more better cooperation within UBC city members. In July this year we have sent questionnaires to all 70 city members (departments of culture) asking them about their opinions on our work, undergoing and past projects and to present their own suggestions, solutions to make our efforts more effective. But unfortunately we have got only a few responses until now. We will give once again these questionnaires to all representatives of UBC members who are in Gdansk to send us back responses by departments of culture in their cities.

The Commission has prepared the following projects for forthcoming years:

1. Mare Articum - Baltic contemporary art magazine.

After two years of hard work you could see first number of MARE ARTICUM printed last week in Szczecin. We want this magazine, first such issue on the Baltic, to print quarterly. To do this we need more help from the cities which are partners in this project. The money support should be better solved than it is now - 90% of all costs are from Szczecin's municipal funds. The editorial board will make more efforts to find other solutions and new sources of money in EU.

2. Off-Theatre Days - Klaipeda, Lithuania, August 1-14, 1998.

Klaipeda will invite 50 actors and producers from small troupes of alternative theatres from UBC towns. Each group should consist of 4-6 members. All guests will show their performances in the town and during the first 10 days together with Lithuanian performers they will stage a joint performance in various places of the city. Klaipeda city will bear the expenses of 50 participant's accommodation, brochure publication of the Days, payment for the producer. It is expected that cities from which Theatre groups come to Klaipeda will help artists to participate in this project.

3. Baltic Theatre Meetings

From 1998 the city of Szczecin will organise every second year presentations of modern dramas of writers from Baltic countries. Every meeting will be accompanied by seminar on the modern drama to which writers, theatre critics and other persons will be invited. In 1998 the project will start in the last week of September and its topic will be SWEDISH DRAMA.

In 1998 Theatres from Gdańsk, Malmö and Sztokholm are expected to come to Szczecin. The details of the 1998' program will be presented soon by the Commission.

4. UBC Art Festival

In 1998 the city of Kalmar will organise the traditional UBC event. Information like program, rules of participation and other necessary details are expected soon from the city of Kalmar. The host cities of the next UBC Festivals are to be found during the meeting of the Commission in 1998. We hope that Helsinki and Bergen - which are among cultural capitals in Europe in year 2000 - could include in their programs the idea of UBC Art Festival. We would like to know their decision about these matters.

5. Working Session of the Commission

From our 4-year experience we think that it is necessary to have once a year a meeting on culture topics and problems. The sessions are open forum to discuss with our Baltic partners also new ideas, possible solutions, establish better cooperation among as well culture departments as institutions, associations, groups etc. The topics which need such a great forum should be proposed by UBC cities - departments of culture.

6. Others

Commission is open and declares its help to include into this Action Plan other ideas, projects on art and culture prepared by UBC partners

Sławomir Szafranski, Szczecin
Chairman of the Commission

Olov Gibson, Visby
Co-Chairman of the Commission

COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT

ACTIVITY REPORT JANUARY 1996 - AUGUST 1997

During January 1996 - August 1997 UBC's Commission on Environment continued its work, which aims at increasing the cooperation and flow of information between UBC's member cities in the field of environmental protection. The main activities have been:

- establishment of the Secretariat in Turku, Finland
- Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin
- Training programme: "Institutional Strengthening and Human Resource Development in Baltic Cities"
- Baltic Municipal Environmental Auditing project

Secretariat

The prerequisites for the daily work of the commission were greatly improved as the City of Turku, Finland allocated funds for establishing a secretariat for the Commission on Environment. Mr Esko Sorakunnas was employed as UBC's environmental coordinator in April 1996 and the secretariat of the Commission on Environment was established in Turku, Finland in April 1996. In addition to Esko Sorakunnas Mrs Antonia Sucksdorff-Selkämä was employed in October 1996 to assist in the office work of the secretariat as well as the Municipal Environmental Auditing -project. The City of Turku financed the establishment of the secretariat and its running costs. The total contribution from the city has been USD 60,000 for 1996 and USD 48,000 for 1997. Other sources of finance have to be found after this two-year starting period.

Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin

The Commission on Environment has started to publish an environmental bulletin that focuses on environmental problems relevant to the Baltic Sea cities. It aims at increasing the flow of information between UBC's member cities and also informing outside parties of UBC's environmental activities. So far about 30 UBC member cities have contributed to the bulletin. UBC's environmental coordinator is responsible for the bulletin together with an international Editorial Board with members from Riga, Sundsvall, Tampere, Turku, Aarhus, Panevezys and Gdansk.

The bulletin is intended to come out four times a year. The following issues have been published:

- 1 / 1996 in December 1996
- 1 / 1997 in March 1997
- 2 / 1997 in June 1997

The next issue will be published in September 1997.

The bulletin is distributed to UBC's member cities as well as institutions, universities, etc. that work with environmental issues in the Baltic Sea Region. The bulletin is also available on the Internet at www.ubc.net/environment/begin.htm.

UBC's training programme: "Institutional Strengthening and Human Resource Development in Baltic Cities"

During 1996 UBC carried out a training programme with financial support from the Nordic Council of Ministers. This was the first concrete input from UBC as a lead party in implementing HELCOM's Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme (JCP). UBC's training program consisted of the following events:

- Seminar on Physical Planning and the Environment, Klaipeda 17 - 19 February
- Seminar on Recycling as an Element of Solid Waste Management, Riga 7 - 8 March
- Course on Recycling as an Element of Solid Waste Management, Gdansk 28 - 31 August
- Course on Physical Planning and the Environment, Liepaja 24 - 27 October

Altogether 214 environmental specialists and decision-makers from UBC's member cities participated in these four events.

Municipal Environmental Auditing -project

This MEA-project was launched on 1 March 1996 with financial support from EU's Life-fund, the World Bank and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment. It is implemented jointly by the cities of Turku and Helsinki in Finland and Tallinn in Estonia. The aim is to develop a model for conducting environmental audits in Baltic Sea cities. In addition, MEA will be an important tool and base for Local Agenda work in Baltic Cities.

The first phase of the project, the auditing of Tallinn was completed in February 1997 and the following publications have been written:

- Manual for Municipal Environmental Auditing (MEA) in Baltic Cities
- MEA Workbook
- Conclusions and Recommendations of the MEA Project in Tallinn
- The Initial Environmental Review of the City of Tallinn
- MEA Pilot Project in Tallinn

UBC cities will be trained and encouraged to adopt the model and use it to audit their own city's environmental performance. This will be achieved by organising the national MEA seminars during September - October 1997.

Other activities

Baltic 21, the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, is an initiative taken by the region's Prime Ministers at their meeting in Visby in May 1996. UBC has been accepted as a full member to the Baltic 21 steering group (Senior Officials Group, SOG). Mr Peter Gavelin from Sundsvall has represented UBC in the SOG meetings.

Project on Harbours and the Environment in Finnish-Swedish Archipelago

During spring 1997 UBC's Commission on Environment was greatly involved in planning this project and preparing the application to the EU's Interreg II A programme. The application was approved in April 1997 and the project was started in August 1997. The project aims at unifying the environmental policies of the participating harbours.

The total budget for the project is approximately USD 63 000 of which 50 % comes from EU's Interreg II A programme for the Archipelago Area and 50 % from the participating cities. The first working session was held in Mariehamn on 26 August 1997. The project is estimated to last until April 1998.

Cooperation with Keep Baltic Tidy

The Commission on Environment Secretariat has, since June 1996, functioned as the Secretariat for Keep Baltic Tidy (KBT) as well. KBT is a network established in 1992 on the initiative of Keep Sweden Tidy Association and Keep the Archipelago Tidy Association. It consists of similar organisations from six countries around the Baltic Sea and focuses its activities on reducing the environmental consequences of leisure boating, carrying out anti-littering campaigns and arranging environmental education for children.

Meetings of the Commission on Environment

The Commission on Environment has had the following working meetings:

Kaunas, 13 - 15 September 1996 (25 participants from 11 cities)

Tallinn, 18 - 19 April 1997 (31 participants from 15 cities)

ACTION PLAN 1998 - 1999

The coming activities of the Commission on Environment will focus on:

- Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin
- Municipal Environmental Auditing Project
- completion of the training programme
- Local Agenda 21

Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin

Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin will be published four times a year. If needed, the bulletin may be complemented by a more frequently published internal infoletter.

Municipal Environmental Auditing (MEA) - project

The first phase of the project, the auditing of Tallinn was completed in February 1997. In the second phase, UBC cities will be trained and encouraged to adopt the model and use it to audit their own city's environmental performance. This will be achieved by organising the national MEA seminars during September - October 1997 as follows:

- Panevezys 22 - 23 September
- Riga 24 - 25 September
- Kaliningrad 29 - 30 September
- Gdynia 1 - 2 October

Thereafter the Commission on Environment shall support the MEA processes in UBC's member cities by providing information on the auditing and helping cities in finding financing for the audits. The Commission on Environment shall supervise the new audits by validating them after the auditing has been done.

UBC's training programme: „Institutional Strengthening and Human Resource Development in Baltic Cities”

During 1996 four training events were organised and a total of over 200 decision-makers and environmental specialists participated in them. The last event in this series of seminars and courses will be a Seminar on the Treatment of Contaminated Soils. This seminar will take place in autumn 1997 but the venue is still open. The training programme will be completed after this event in the end of 1997.

Baltic 21 and Local Agenda 21

The Commission on Environment is going to actively participate in and contribute to the Baltic 21 process. It will also engage itself in promoting Local Agenda 21 activities in the member cities.

Secretariat

The Commission on Environment intends to keep its Secretariat in Turku, Finland. As the financing from the City of Turku ends in the end of 1997, new sources of finance are at present sought.

Carl Nielsen, Aarhus
Co-Chairman of the Commission

Mikko Jokinen, Turku
Co-Chairman of the Commission

COMMISSION ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ACTIVITY REPORT JANUARY 1996 - AUGUST 1997

The Commission on Social Affairs is developing into a communication point for all other commissions and departments of the city administration and institutions in the city of Rostock.

Main tasks are to analyse EU Programmes and other funding possibilities, designing of international projects in co-operation with different departments of the city administration and for the benefit of the inhabitants of our region, project applications and project leadership or supervision.

1. Local changes

The city of Rostock decided to connect our Office to the Department of Press and City Marketing, which is directly connected to the Mayor's office. Mail, phone, fax and e-mail connections remain the same ones.

2. German UBC meetings

Rostock is the representative of all German UBC cities in the Executive Board. We are trying to build a closer network between the German cities Lübeck, Wismar and Kiel. We realised that it is important to distribute all information we can get and to find common tasks and maybe common projects for communal Baltic Sea cooperation.

The first meeting was held in Lübeck in January 1997. It was decided:

- to meet regularly before and sometimes after the Executive Board Meetings, that means at least twice a year in one of the German member cities.
- after Board Meetings written reports will be send to all partners by the Office Rostock.
- Rostock will inform the President and the Secretary about the meetings.
- Kiel wants from now on to co-operate with Lübeck, Rostock and Social Hansa in the Commission on Social Affairs.

The second meeting was held in Rostock in August 1997. Not only member cities were represented but also non-member cities Greifswald and Stralsund. We used the opportunity to promote the idea of UBC and to talk about UBC activities in general and of our Commission.

3. Some of the project activities

Different projects were designed and applied for funding by EU Programmes. Some were rejected and some accepted. A few new projects are designed and partners were found, ideas developed and applications are written.

3.1 The EU PACTE Project "Baltic Cities"

In May 1996 we started the first activities.

Participants: Communities of Helsinki, Storstroem, Kalmar, Lübeck and Rostock.
Main objective: Exchange of experience in transnational employment development between Baltic Sea Cities.
Lead city: Rostock
Total budget: ECU 131 900
Local contribution: ECU 34 565
Period: May 96 - September 97
Activities: Seminars in each partner's city, workshop, conference, exhibition, brochure

Conference on "Labour Market and Social Policy" in the Baltic region took place in March 1997 which was part and the highlight of the above mentioned project. This time a wider public was invited to take part in the project. All UBC member cities got invitations to participate at this conference and some contributed actively to the success. 120 participants from 9 Baltic Sea Countries and approximately 35 Cities were united in Rostock.

3.2 "Growing Europe - Groovy Europe"

In May 1996 during the European week the youth project, which gave young musicians from Baltic Cities the possibility to gather together, to give public concerts took place in Rostock on board of the Project vessel "Stubnitz". It was organised and financed by help of our Commission together with the Baltic Music network.

Total budget: ECU 12 500
Local contribution: ECU 2 000

3.3 EU ECOS-Ouverture project „Distance Education“

The city administration and our office are together with the Bildungszentrum Rostock an institution for adult education partner in this project. Partners are Sweden, Norrtälje; Finland, Varsinais Suomi region and Estonia, Hiiumaa, Saaremaa, Läänemaa. For October 97 a jointly dissemination conference has to be organised.

Total budget: ECU 464 028
Local contribution: ECU 31 835
Period: October 96 - October 97 or March 98

3.4 EU ECOS-Ouverture project „Baltic City Tourism“

As from July a new project application is prepared with the help of our office in respect of project design and funding consultation. The aims were developed directly from the results of the BALTIC

TREFF workshop. The Baltic Events' Calendar "**What happens in the Baltic?**" (see Baltic Cities Bulletin 1/1997, page 33) shall be distributed around the Baltic Sea with publications of all partners of interest. We expect to obtain EU grants in order to perform this project as from the beginning of 1998.

Total budget: ECU 1 300 000
Local contribution: ECU 125 000
Period: January 98 - December 99

3.5 Baltic Bicycle Ride for Charity

This bicycle ride around the Baltic Sea, through Germany, Poland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Finland, Sweden and Germany, was prepared by the UBC office. A group of Rostock citizens started on 16 June 1997 taking with them goods dedicated to three orphanages in Stegna / Poland, in Kaliningrad/ Russia and Riga/ Latvia. The goods came from inhabitants all around the city of Rostock and were successfully delivered and gratefully accepted.

ACTION PLAN 1998 - 1999

One of the main tasks of our office will be the continuation of project work. More emphasis will be put on project design in the field of social life which means living and working conditions (not only job promotion), also for socially disadvantaged people.

Partner search will be done throughout UBC member cities.

The cooperation with other German cities will be strengthened in order to motivate more German cities to join the Union.

The work of our commission will be reorganised. We will try to attract more UBC cities to work jointly in our commission. The beginning was done with cooperation with Social Hansa.

Within the Rostock city administration we will try to find partners for co-operation with all UBC commissions. That will make it easier for the commissions and for us to approach competent persons and to develop common projects.

Ulrich Bauermeister, Rostock
Chairman of the Commission

COMMISSION ON SPORT

ACTIVITY REPORT JANUARY 1996 - AUGUST 1997

During the period Commission on Sport met on 29th February - 1st March 1996 in Karlskrona, and on 21st/22nd March in Cetniewo near Gdynia. Two other planned meetings had to be cancelled due to situation beyond our control (in Łeba on 7th/8th June and in Kurresarre on 8th/9th November 1996).

Since decision in Gdynia this year-one meeting in a year will be held only. During the meeting in Karlskrona 3 new cities were accepted as the Members of the Commission: Kaunas, Kurressaare and Tallin. There was elected the Working Group of the Commission, to elaborate goals and rules for our Commission, and ways of using Internet System by Commission, and to submit it to acceptance on the next meetings. In Gdynia this year 4 new cities became the Members of the Commission: Baltijsk, Panevezys, Siauliai, Elbl'g.

The Commission also accepted:

1. Proposal of Lubeck to have acceptance of the Commission to use UBC sign during the 100th anniversary of sportclubs in 1989.
2. Proposal of St. Petersburg to enable wider range of ages to take part in sporting competitions organised under sign of UBC Commission on Sport
i.e. older the 20 years old participants as it had been accepted in September 1995 in Gdynia.
3. Next unformal meeting of the Commission during General Assembly on 12th September in Gdańsk.
4. Invitation of Mr Perko (Turku) to the next meeting of the Commission at the end of 1997 or the beginning of 1998 (to be decided in Gdańsk)
5. From next meeting of the Commission the all participants will pay for the accomodation. The former decision that during the sport event the accomodation is in charge of the host town is kept in force.
6. The Cities will be informing about the sporting event via internet themselves, due to all the Members has been in internet yet.
Both in year 1996 and 1997 several sport events took place under the flag of UBC Commission on Sport. Among the bigger are: Grand Prix Regatta in windsurfing in Łeba, Christmas Football Games in Karlskrona in 1996, Twin Cities Sporting Competition, both in 1996 and 1997 in Gdynia.
7. The new Working Group was elected: Helena Kempas (Kotka), Przemysław Bartnicki (Gdynia), Mats Persson (Karlskrona), Kestutis Petraitis (Siauliai) to hang on the work.

Now the 20 following cities are members of the Commission of Sport: Baltijsk, Elbl'g, Gdynia, Kaliningrad, Karlskrona, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Kurressaare, Kotka, Łeba, Panavezys, Riga, Siauliai, Sopot, St. Petersburg, Szczecin, Ćwinoujście, Tallinn, Turku, Vilnius.

ACTION PLAN 1998 - 1999

The Working Group, which has started its work in Karlskrona in February 1996 and after changes in Gdynia (Cetniewo) in March 1997, will continue their work to submit proposals to the next Meeting of the Commission in Kotka.

The next planned action in 1998 is to prepare one bigger official UBC Commission on Sport Games and continue to have several smaller events under the flag of UBC Commission on Sport, which both last and this year took place.

The other official Action Plan shall be decided after discussions and approval of the proposals of Working Group, what is planned to take place in Turku in the end of 1997 or beginning of 1998.

Zdzislaw Urla, Gdynia
Chairman of the Commission

COMMISSION ON TOURISM

ACTIVITY REPORT JANUARY 1996 - AUGUST 1997

1. Meetings

UBC Commission

We had plans for four meeting within the commission during 1996 and 1997. We are able to have only two to three during the period. First meeting took place in Riga in April 1997 and the outcome you will find below. The second meeting will be after the UBC General Conference in Gdansk in September 1997. We are also planning for a meeting in Kalmar during in the autumn. The Commission has been represented during ordinary UBC Executive meetings in Pärnu, Estonia, Kotka, Finland and Stockholm, Sweden.

UBC Cities

During the period the Commission has participated in some meetings in Rostock and in close co-operation with the Commission on Social Affairs. Discussions have been about co-operation in the field of EU projects. During the period the Commission has participated in some meetings in and in close co-operation with the Tourism Authority discussed co-operation in the field of EU projects.

BTC

During the period the Commission has participated in some meetings and has had discussions mainly about education. Furthermore we have given general information to the board of BTC about the work within the Commission. BTC supporting the plans for education under the umbrella of the Commission on tourism (Baltic Tourism Academy). The Commission participated in the BTC exhibition (fair) in Copenhagen autumn 1996.

Hansa Sail

During the period the Commission has participated in some meetings/seminars in Rostock. It is difficult to separate those meetings from the meetings with Commission on Social Affairs.

Other

During the period the Commission has participated in one seminar organised by Rationalisierungs Kuratorium für Wirtschaft, Germany. The seminar took place in Rostock and was about tourism and employment.

2. Projects

During the period the Commission has worked with three EU project proposals. First was in close co-operation with Danish Development authorities and Germany WWF a EU-LIFE project in two areas, Curonian Spit and Vistula Spit in the Kaliningrad oblast. Second was an Ecos-Overture project in co-operation with the Commission on Social Affairs. The project is called "Baltic Point".

Third proposal is about courses within BTA and this is also a EU project.

3. Education

During the period the Commission has participate in some field excursions meetings in Haapsalu (2 times) and Tallinn. The excursions have been carried out in close cooperation with the tourism authorities.

Summary of Riga meeting

- The chairman of the commission will write some short guide lines for starting up department of tourism just to clarify the importance of tourism.
- The chairman of the commission will write shortly to clarify the importance of tourism and that cities can make a good revenue out of tourism.
- The commission shall work to improve better connections by using computer network systems. Coordinator within the commission is Liisa Pakosta and she shall cooperate with Sonja Hilavuo who is working in the commission on communication.
- Deputy chairman Dambergs, Liepaja, shall investigate the possibilities to find ways of corporation within the fields of education on lower levels.
- The chairman shall try to find ways of cooperation in the academic fields of "carrying capacity and feasibility studies" in close collaborations with universities.
- The chairman will coordinate the work within the commission all the time with Baltic Tourism Cooperation - BTC.
- The chairman will investigate how to find grants/fundings to finance projects within the commission.
- The commission will work in the spirit of and believe in "sustainable tourism development".

ACTION PLAN 1998 - 1999

1. Meetings

UBC Commission

We had plans for four meeting within the commission during 1998 and 1999. In the autumn 1997 we plan for meeting in at least one city maybe two. If possible we can arrange meeting at the same time as other UBC meetings take place.

UBC Cities

During the period the Commission will participate if possible in meetings arranged by member cities.

BTC

During the period the Commission will participate if possible in meetings arranged by BTC give general information to the board of BTC about the work within the Commission.

Hansa Sail

During the period the Commission will participate if possible in meetings arranged by the organisation and give general information about the work within the Commission.

Other

During the period the Commission will participate in one seminar organised by Rationalisings Kuratorium für Wirtschaft, Germany. The seminar will take place in Rostock 1997 or Spring 1998.

2. Projects

Ecos-Overture project in cooperation with the Commission on Social Affairs. The project proposal called "Baltic Point" will hopefully be a success. Proposal about courses within BTA also hopefully can be a success. The Commission will work with a new proposal in the Kaliningrad oblast - in the city of Baltijsk. The project is about sustainable tourism development but also and sustainable society development. It will be fruitful if other cities will work with EU-project proposals.

3. Education

Some courses in tourism planning are going to start in late 1997 or early 1998. The project will be a cooperation between Haapsalu, Estonia, Vaasa, Finland and Kalmar, Sweden.

Leif Nilsson, Kalmar
Chairman of the Commission

COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION

ACTIVITY REPORT JANUARY 1996 - AUGUST 1997

The transport system in the Baltic Region needs to be improved, integrated and better connected with the Trans - European Network. The substantial problem destined for the implementation of the Commission on Transportation was the waterborne transit chains in the Baltic Sea connected with the elaboration of closer links of the inland transportation system with the Baltic ports and operating shipping services.

From the beginning of 1996 the Commission has continued the implementation of recommendation of the UBC Conference on Actual Problems of the Sea- Land Transportation System of the Baltic Region - Gdańsk / Poland 27- 28 April 1995 concerning the following sea- land transport corridors: Trans. European North South Motorway /TEM/, via Baltica, TEM- Scandinavia, and via Hanseatica.

The Commission has also supported the creation of an administrative capacity for road and rail maintenance and the timely and consistent implementation of the Border- Crossing Programme elaborated by the European Commission under the heading of the "Baltic Sea Region Initiative" - Brussels 10.04.1996.

The question concerning the Transit Chains in the Baltic Sea Region has been discussed and analysed at the international conference organized by the members of the Commission in Helsinki 5- 7 June 1996. The Chairman of the commission submitted a conference paper on: "Development of land transport systems linking a hinterland with the Baltic ports". The conference concluded that there were some subregions where transit transport was especially significant: Trade and transport of the Nordic countries / Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark /which go to or come from middle, western and southern Europe. In the eastern part of the Baltic area, the foreground is a foreign trade in Russia and transport with the landlocked countries. In transit transport Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish ports as well as inland are going to increase. The participants of the conference have underlined that the capacity of border station / Crossing points / is not sufficient and customs and border procedures take a lot of time, in comparison with the border crossing procedure used in Western Europe. In the Eastern part of the Region the quality of infrastructure is not sufficient and adaptation, improvement and enlargement of transport infrastructure are badly needed.

The second problem concerning the elaboration of the closer links between the different modes of transport creating efficient multimodal and logistic system was presented at the international conference organized by the City of Helsinki and the European Commission in Brussels -Finland Hall - Helsinki- 10 September 1996. The Chairman of the Commission presented the conference paper on Short Sea Shipping and Land Transportation Systems in the Baltic Region. The mentioned form of transportation has been recommended by the European Commission in order to diminish the traffic

congestions existing in many high developed European countries. The suggestion and recommendations to the report of the Commission presented at the 16th Executive Board Meeting - Stockholm 25 January 1997 underlined the necessity of including the further studies on the short shipping and on the city transport to the programme of the Commission. The problem of the city transportation has been submitted by the Baltic Republic.

Following these demands the Presidium of the Commission scheduled at 26 February 1997 the meeting of delegates and experts representing cities: Bergen, Gdańsk, Kaliningrad, Karlshamn and Karlskrona which has established two working groups on:

- promotion of the short sea shipping operation on the Baltic Sea - led by Gdańsk and Kaliningrad
- activation of works on municipal transport organisation - led by Bergen and Gdańsk

The extended problem of the coastal and short sea shipping has been also presented by the representation of the Commission at the International Liner Shipping Conference in Hamburg 12- 13 April 1997. The conference papers were prepared based on studies of the commission concerning the activation of the Baltic Sea. The modern types of the fast ferries doubling the speed / about 40 knots in comparison with the traditional ones. The pilot papers were elaborated for the presentation at the conference in November 1997.

ACTION PLAN 1998-1999

Approaching the end of the century, it should be emphasized that the Baltic Region is just about to regain its historical position as an important area of trade in Europe. In order to secure the right economic development an effective transport system is needed within the region linking the land transportation net with the air and sea communication systems.

The transportation problems which will be elaborated by the Commission starting from the beginning of 1998 concern:

- 1/ the improvement and development of the coastal, short sea shipping and fast ferries operated on the Baltic Sea and calling also ports of the Danish Straits and the North Sea.
- 2/ the elaboration of the modern methods of organising of the city transportation system based on logistic management and modern technologies
- 3/ promotion of organisation of logistic centres representing multimodal terminals, operating significant cargo streams giving access for a wide variety of transport units serving regional, domestic and an international market, moving the burden of transit traffic out of town. The centres should possess an easy access to existing and planned highways, railways adapted to the intermodal transport, as well as sea- land transport corridors.

A well-developed distribution network, disposal system providing high quality of services and possibilities to make repairs of transport means, handling, storage, repackaging area is constituting modern logistic centres. The Baltic traffic depends on the development of the multimodal sea- born trade of the Baltic countries and their links with the ocean- born international trade. The total Baltic countries' turnover amounts to about 300 mln tons of cargo annually, 60% of which consists of traffic across the Baltic and 40% of intra Baltic traffic. The closer cooperation between Baltic countries is effecting the growth of the intra Baltic traffic. The realisation of that subject will be the main field of the activity of our Commission in the nearest.

Maciej Krzyżanowski, Gdansk

TASK FORCE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

ACTIVITY REPORT 1996 - 1997

Status report

Every UBC member city is entitled to nominate one representative to the UBC Task Force for Public Relations and Communication (TF). TF is a functional group of contact persons who have the will and the skill to promote practical and project-level cooperation among the member cities. TF joins together all UBC cities forming a highly flexible human network which is capable of rapidly targeting new opportunities, threats and emerging needs and issues within the Baltic Sea cooperation

The Task Force members are typically city officials responsible for international relations and/or public relations in their cities, as the aim of the TF is essentially to develop communication about international projects, partnerships, events and other developments regarding cities and the region. More than half of the UBC cities are already actively involved and the updating process for new members is currently going on.

The Tampere meeting

More than 50 Task Force participants from 29 member cities met in Tampere, Finland on May 31 - June 1, 1996 to discuss communication flow and public relations within and about the Union of the Baltic Cities. The two-day seminar included expert lectures on internal and external marketing and communication, publicity and press relations as well as Internet and World Wide Web implementations. Afterwards specific working groups convened to discuss the practical methods of improving the UBC in respect of these issues. A joint action plan was formed with the following results.

Results of the work

- UBC now has a team of dedicated contact persons, a network within a network, which is essential to all internal and external communication work. All achievements listed below are based on the open discussions, consultations and brainstorming among TF members during and after the TF meeting.
- The UBC Newsletter has been transformed into very presentable Baltic Cities Bulletin, which will be the most important publicity tool for the UBC.
- TF has given plenty of useful input into the technical realisation of the Baltic Sea Alliance WWW-cooperation. Also the UBC WWW-pages have been completely renewed. I would like to extend a special thank you to Lars Malmborg, the Chairman of the Communication Commission, for facilitating these projects. Now the cities can be joined together by an e-mail network and a common World Wide Web platform for several practical operations.
- A new UBC information package with slides, contact numbers and other useful background and presentation material has been developed and forwarded to cities.

- The old UBC brochure has been updated and a new UBC folder has been created jointly with the UBC secretariat and with the superb assistance of the UBC Environmental Coordinator.
- Each Task Force member has been responsible of organizing a UBC Information Session in their cities for other city officials and also preferably to media.

ACTION PLAN 1998 - 1999

The UBC is growing rapidly and so is the importance of the role of the TF. The future work will focus on the following four priority areas:

1. Expansion of the TF membership to all UBC cities
2. Utilisation of the TF e-mail Hotline and the Baltic Sea Alliance platform for rapid and efficient communication among member cities.
3. Improvement and facilitation of project formation and management among the UBC member cities. This includes creating mini-Directorias, targeting training needs and opening direct cooperation channels.
4. Lift of the UBC profile in the Baltic Sea Region. The constant development of the Baltic Cities Bulletin as well as more dynamic internal and external marketing are needed. Active cities in this respect will also benefit the most.

The Kick-off Meeting

All cities are invited to send a delegate to the next TF meeting in Kalmar, Sweden on October 5-7, 1997. The theme of the meeting is "Project Management and Communication" and several practical implementations will be introduced to the TF members. In addition, a joint action plan will be formed in Kalmar, so it is essential also for the new members to be involved at the very beginning.

I look forward to continuing this very productive cooperation with your city!

Sonja Hilavuo, Tampere
Chairman of the Task Force