

REPORTS AND ACTION PLANS OF THE UBC COMMISSIONS AND NETWORKS

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COMMISSION ON BUSINESS COOPERATION

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2002

The Meeting of the Business Commission was held in Tampere in the year of 2003. 28 participants from eight member cities attended the conference. The main topics for the meeting that year were "Support of local business" and "e-city".

During the meeting the city of Tampere was selected to make a project on the theme "How to develop successful technology parks/business incubators", which was based on know-know and excellence in developing a technology park and business incubator concept in Hermia. Hermia was selected as one of eight leading business and innovative centres in Europe. The City of Tampere together with its operative partner Hermia Business Development prepared the following project proposal to all interested UBC partners: the preliminary project proposal was based on the facts that there are different organs and organisations functioning in a fields of business and industry in one country and in one city the general aim of the project is to promote and support innovative entrepreneurship in selected Baltic cities, by improving the services of existing regional support structure. This is seen as a vital activity in order to develop the competitiveness in regions. The following participants are involved in project development since December 2002: Šiauliai University science and Technology Park, Panevėžys City Municipality, City Council of Gdańsk, Klaipėda City Municipality, Ministry of Economy of Lithuania, Klaipėda University, Hermia Business Development, Baltic Institute of Finland.

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2003

In 2003 May 15-17 Kaunas City has hosted the Annual Meeting of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation. The representatives from 18 cities all around the Baltic Sea (Luleå, Växjö, Gdańsk, Grodno, Cēsis, Pärnu, Maardu, Turku, Tampere, Kolding, Klaipėda, Palanga, Marijampolė, Panevėžys, Molėtai, Šiauliai, Vilnius and Kaunas).

The Commission on Business Cooperation this year focused mainly on its motto on the theme "E-dimension: Public and Private Partnership". Initially it was planned to discuss the three main topics, namely e-dimension, innovations via technological parks and business incubators, and formation of the Municipal budgets: Accumulation of funds for the EU investment projects.

The presentations and discussions concerning the e-dimension and the innovations via technological parks and business incubators provided new ideas for the participants, provided information about the progress of the on-going projects.

All the participants acknowledged that the three topics are very important for all the cities and should be developed in other meetings as well. The e-dimension issues can be discussed in cooperation with the IS Commission of the UBC.

Finally, this year it was proposed to establish the BCC Secretariat in Kaunas City, which was approved by the participants. The Administration of Kaunas City has appointed Ms. Vyginta Poderyte, Senior Executive of the EU Division of Kaunas City Municipality, as the contact person for the Business Commission Secretariat: vygintap@kaunas.sav.lt tel.: +370 37 42 47 66, fax.: +370 37 42 54 43. The Secretariat will seek to enhance the business cooperation among the member cities of the UBC and the coordinate various activities related to this field.

ACTION PLAN 2004-2005

The meeting of the Commission on Business Cooperation of the UBC in 2004 will be hosted by the city of Växjö. This meeting will continue to develop the topics started and discussed in the meeting in Kaunas City, focussing on the topic of e-dimension and business incubator and technological parks.

The city of Tallinn will be the place for the UBC Business Commission meeting in the year of 2005.

It is planned to develop the cooperation and relations among the cities of the UBC in the field of business cooperation concerning such themes as:

- Development of e-Services
- Young entrepreneurs
- Vocational re-education
- Creating links between different projects and organizations
- Business services for enterprises in tourism sector
- Interaction (UBC website)
- Establishing of Seed Fund
- Establishing of industrial/technology parks
- Improving the business climate in UBC member cities

Currently, in order to implement the aforementioned goals, the application of PHARE project was submitted in May, 2003, the focus and the aim of which is to promote innovative entrepreneurship by developing business incubation services and the regional business support structure. The cities co-operating in this project are Klaipėda, Panevėžys, Tampere. However, up till now there has not yet been an answer from PHARE regarding the project.

Kari Loytty
Chairman of the Commission 2002
City of Tampere

Vytautas Juodagalvis
Chairman of the Commission 2003
City of Kaunas

COMMISSION ON CULTURE

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 – SEPTEMBER 2003

IV Biennial of Contemporary Art, Szczecin, Poland, November 2001

MARE ARTICUM editorial board recommended 30 artists from all countries around the Baltic Sea to the edition of the Biennial which was open on 26th of October 2001 in Szczecin under the title "**SYBARIS. The fatal attraction of civilisation**". The show was curated by Lech Karwowski and Magdalena Lewoc - Polish editors of Mare Articum and organised by National Museum in Szczecin, the Castle of Pomeranian Dukes and Secretariat of Commission on Culture of the Union of the Baltic Cities. The idea of the IV Baltic Biennial of Contemporary Art was to put on display in Szczecin sensual, intriguing, professional and carefully crafted art objects without limiting the artists to restrictions of form or genre. Biennial exhibition was accompanied by a series of seminars.

Meeting of the Board of UBC Commission on Culture, Bergen, Norway, 1-2 Feb. 2002

The main topic of this meeting was the preparation for the sixth CoC Session in Riga in April 2002. The representative from Riga City Council was invited to Bergen to discuss the program for the CoC annual meeting. As well current commission activities, the board discussed the CoC Action Plan for years 2002-2003.

6th Annual Session of the UBC Commission on Culture entitled "Culture Education in Latvia and the Significance of International Collaboration in Music and Art Education", Riga, Latvia, 11-13 April 2002

During the 5th Session of the Commission on Culture in Espoo and Helsinki on the theme "Art Education in the Baltic Cities", it was decided to continue this topic in occasion of the next CoC meeting. Riga hosted the Commission on Culture's 6th Annual Session, 11-13 April, 2002 entitled "Culture Education in Latvia and the Significance of International Collaboration in Music and Art Education". The session was open by Ms Karina Petersons, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Latvia. Some 40 persons from 8 Baltic countries took part.

The session in Riga was divided into three topics: Music, Folk Music and Visual Arts. During two days, 19 experts presented different aspects of art education in the Baltic region on both state and municipal levels. There were interesting debates on a number of problems connected with art education, as well as a look at international projects initiated by schools. Participants of the session were present at concerts during the 15th International Music School Festival and visited Bolderaja Art School and Riga Art School, which are the leading art centres for children and youth in Riga.

Meeting of the CoC Board, Viljandi, June, 7-9, 2002 in connection with the meeting of the UBC Board. During the meeting, future CoC projects were discussed. Mr Ilias Myssirys, project-coordinator from the Vaasa City, presented a report on the 'North European Youth Art Circle' project, an interdisciplinary workshop that took place in May in Vaasa, Finland.

ArtGenda, Hamburg, Germany, June 2002

ArtGenda is intended as a forum for the presentation of young artists of all traditional genres (literature, performance, fine arts, design, architecture, music, film, photography, media etc.) from 18 cities around the Baltic Sea.

Since 1996, ArtGenda has been organised every second year; each time in different city and each time focused on different themes. For each city so far 50 (Copenhagen'96), 20 (Stockholm'98) were invited after a selection by independent committees. For ArtGenda 2000 in Helsinki, interdisciplinary groups of artists from each city were invited to submit works.

ArtGenda 2002, hosted by Hamburg City, was staged without a theme. Instead, the biennial took the form of a gigantic, interdisciplinary artistic workshop, which attempted to both integrate the Baltic artists and at the same time involve them in the life of the city. Over two weeks, some 100 artists were permitted to carry out their own projects and were encouraged by the organisers to spontaneously join in and react to any of the other activities. The Hamburg ArtGenda featured many attractions each day, from artistic, through social, to 'pure' entertainment.

Meeting of the Board of UBC Commission on Culture, Gdańsk, Poland, 14-16 February 2003

The main topic of this meeting was discussion on the VII Annual Session of the UBC Commission on Culture in Szczecin, 3-5 Oct. 2003, entitled "Museums, Galleries, Artists Run Spaces in the Baltic Cities. Innovative Forms of Social Communication".

The City of Szczecin presented to the Board two new international projects, which could be realised under the auspices of the Union of the Baltic Cities. These were: "A strand of Baltic Pearls: A History of Cities in the Region" and "The Baltic Landscape. The Visual Imagery of the Baltic Sea".

During the meeting in Gdansk, the CoC Board was informed as well about Mare Articum plans for this year and forthcoming Baltic Biennial of Contemporary Art. "Extra Strong-Super Light", October 2003 in Szczecin.

MARE ARTICUM the Baltic Art Magazine

In 2001, two issues were published. October's Gender Entropy issue presented articles focusing on the cultural definition of gender. And in December, a special issue entitled Sybaris. The Fatal Attraction of Civilisation accompanied the IV Biennial of Baltic Contemporary Art in Szczecin and presented examinations of current hedonistic and pop-culture trends in contemporary art.

Two issues also were published in 2002. MA's Globalisation issue investigated the way in the globalisation processes is leading to new ways of perceiving social reality. Articles explored

'transculture' and the evolution of hitherto existing cultural patterns, moving on to the manner in which political decisions receive cultural and historical legitimisation. The issue also touched on the risks of the expansive "Euro-American" model of culture to those cultures that are not familiar with Western institutions of public life, including, seemingly, the most valuable ones, such as democracy and human rights.

In Art & Politics, MA examined the use of art and its definitions as a tool for stimulating social debate and as a form of engagement with the public.

In 2003, a new issue entitled "New Art in St. Petersburg", was edited in collaboration with Ekaterina Andreeva, curator of the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg.

The 7th CoC working session, Szczecin on 2-5 October 2003

The purpose of this session was to elect a new CoC Board, the Board's election of its chairman and vice chairman, and a discussion about the functions of the Board, and the strategy and activities of the CoC in the forthcoming years.

Furthermore, we discussed how contemporary art exists in social consciousness and the role that museums, galleries and artists can play in creating better relations with their audience.

The session was timed to coincide with the opening of the V International Contemporary Art Exhibition "Extra Strong-Super Light", which was held in Szczecin. Also, participants were invited for a one-day trip to ArtForum Berlin in Berlin.

ACTION PLAN 2004 – 2005

Annual sessions of the UBC Commission on Culture – place and topics of these sessions must be discussed among the interested UBC member cities within this and next years.

The new Board of the CoC, elected during the 7th annual session in Szczecin, 3-5 Oct.2003 will continue the main aim of the Commission on Culture which is to devise and co-ordinate culture and art projects, events and co-operation in the field of culture. Among UBC members, the commission works to foster contacts and develop joint projects. Cultural collaboration is a perfect tool for sharing knowledge of history and heritage of the different Baltic countries and for creating mutual understanding.

MARE ARTICUM – continuation of editing the magazine of Baltic contemporary art.

There are two issues that will be planned to be edited in the year 2004: 'Tested on Art' and 'Metropolis'. The editorial board of MARE ARTICUM, designed as a forum for artistic exchange in the Baltic region will keep initiated a series of exhibitions, seminars and public promotions of the magazine. In 2005 it is going to be organised the 6th international contemporary art exhibition (previously called the Baltic Biennial of Contemporary Art) under the auspices of the UBC.

A Strand of Baltic Pearls. A History of Cities in the Region

The newest undertaking of CoC, which will be developed within 2 years, is going to explore the rich and diverse heritage of the Baltic region. It is entitled A Strand of Baltic Pearls. A History of Cities in the Region.

The project will look at the roles played by key cities throughout the centuries in a series of essays. Written by scholars from around the Baltic, each essay will be devoted to a century of Baltic history and the city or cities that exerted the most influence during the period.

The essays will examine the rise to prominence of each city and the ways it influenced regional development during its century of dominion and will provide detailed accounts of maritime activities,

daily life, the roles of women in those societies, as well as the relations among ethnic segments of the population.

The commission will then publish these essays in book form, as well as leading symposia in each of the cities profiled in the essays. The book will also include a geologic and topographic history of the sea and the lands around it. The book will conclude with a timeline of Baltic history and predictions for the future of the region, including the environmental, political and social threats it faces as it enters this new era.

The commission has begun the first step in the process and is currently working to empanel an editorial board of authors from each city and create an administrative secretariat to support the project. The board then will collect commissioned and historical writings, photographs, drawings and other significant archive materials that will be entered into a computer database. This information-gathering phase will provide an opportunity to stage seminars and symposiums on local history in those cities. The first edition of the book will comprise English- and Polish- language versions and will be launched at ceremonies in cities around the region.

The project 'A Strand of Baltic Pearls' were presented during the UBC Executive Board Meeting in Umeå, Sweden, March 2003 by the CoC Chairman Sławomir Szafrąński, where was previously kindly accepted by the Board, but till now the CoC Secretariat have not received any official confirmation that the UBC will support this project.

Beside of expecting financial support from the UBC and cities involved in the project, the Secretariat of the Commission on Culture will apply for a grant within 'Culture 2000' program.

Sławomir Szafrąński
Chairman of the Commission
City of Szczecin

Marlena Chybowska
Secretariat of the Commission on Culture
City of Szczecin

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 - SEPTEMBER 2003

I. Introduction

Mr. Kurt Pettersson, Norrtälje and Mr. Ivo Eesmaa, Kärđla chair the Commission. The Secretariat of the Commission on Education is located in Kärđla, Estonia.

Since the last General Conference in Rostock, the activities of the Commission on Education has been focused on projects with young people. First, the "UBC Classes" project idea was discussed in the meetings of the Commission. The project called "The Meeting Point of Different Cultures" built upon this idea. Secondly, the project idea of Summer School, for young researchers in the field of aquatic ecology, was discussed in the meetings and was favoured by meeting participants.

Exchange of experiences has been a part of every meeting. The teachers and politicians/ civil servants have been active to share their experiences in the field of education. There were discussions about the needs of seminars for the teachers but no final decisions were made.

There was an idea to organise an international adult education conference on the subject of lifelong learning. Commission's secretariat asked support from EU Commission concerning the financing and keynote speakers. Unfortunately, EU Commission does not dispose of budgetary resources covering

this type of activities and commission was not able to organise this kind of conference without external support and commission disclaimed from the idea.

II. Meetings

2.1 Meeting of the Commission on Education in Norrtälje, January 18-20, 2002

The meeting of the Commission took place nearby Norrtälje, in the Erken Laboratory in Norr Malma that belongs to the Uppsala University.

19 participants from Denmark, Finland, Poland, Sweden and Estonia were presented at the meeting.

There were 4 issues discussed:

1. Commission on Education – general discussion/views and experiences of other exchange activities
2. The project "Summer School for potential researchers in the field of aquatic ecology", Summer 2002
3. The project "Meeting Point of Different Cultures", Summer 2002
4. International Adult Education Conference, October 2002

In summary, the issues which the commission discussed:

- Educational planning co-ordination –educational boards, professionals; co-operation in teaching of languages as important subjects;
- Internet conference – Commission on Education team (Kärdla and Norrtälje) must discuss how it is possible to use this idea in the commission work; the idea is important today and will be important in the future;
- Internal environment – to inform each other, what we are doing, attitudes towards drugs and use of alcohol;
- School democracy – is very important in Sweden today. This can be interesting for other countries as well;
- Three activities of the Commission on Education, which were presented in the meeting to be organised during 2002 – the commission finds them very interesting and needed.

2.2 Meeting of the Commission on Education team in Norrtälje, February 27, 2003

9 people from Norrtälje and Kärdla had a meeting to discuss Commission's activities in 2003. The Chairman Mr. Kurt Pettersson and Vice-Chairman Mr. Ivo Eesmaa took part in the meeting. They decided to go on with 2 Summer School projects in year 2003. The practical matters of the Commission on Education were decided.

2.3 Meeting of the Commission on Education in Keila, May 26, 2003

Commission on Education – general discussion/views and experiences of exchange activities

Mr. Eesmaa proposed to make a contact seminar for adult education specialists to find out the common interests and needs. We need a contact person responsible to find out the interested groups. Then the commission is ready to organise seminars. Ms. Ulanova from Tartu will ask the needs among teachers in Tartu and inform the Commission.

Mr. Pettersson talked about a programme in Sweden, called Water Day. Uppsala University Norr Malma Field Station manages the programme. There are many different programmes for different ages. People are invited to spend a day at various activities connected to water - boating, lectures etc. The students can understand there is an ecosystem in the water and how much our environment is connected to the water.

There were 2 main activities of the Commission on Education introduced in the meeting:

- The project "Meeting Point of Different Cultures" (August 20-25, 2003) - see below the introduction of the project (3.1).

- The project "Summer School for potential researchers in the field of aquatic ecology" (June 2003) - see below the introduction of the project (3.2).

III. Activities of the Commission on Education

3.1 The project " Meeting Point of Different Cultures" (August 20-25, 2003)

The project has been organised 3 times: in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

The aim of the project is to become aware of participants` own roots and to understand the differences between different cultures. In present year they study the history and culture of native places from the period 1940s to 1960s. It's a possibility for communication, the development of English speaking skills and motivation for learning foreign languages. It is also important for mutual understanding of European cultures.

In 2003 five schools participated in the project: Norrtälje Rodengymnasiet, Tartu Hugo Treffner's Gymnasium, Tukums Vidusskola NR 2, Šiauliai Didzdvaris Gymnasium, Kärđla School.

Step 1.

Each applicant UBC city formed a group of students called a UBC class. Each UBC class, together with its leader, studied the culture and history of the period between the 1940s-1960s. The 4 students from each group prepared a cultural programme. Each student chose one of these topics: education, music, dance, fashion, and prepared to participate in the workshop during the camp on their chosen topic. Each group prepared a photo exhibition of architecture of the named period in their city/region/country. The joint exhibition was opened during the camp in Kärđla Culture Centre.

Step 2.

4 students (2 boys, 2 girls) were chosen from each UBC class. Together these 20 students participated in the camp. The camp took place on the island of Hiiumaa, in Kõpu Boarding School. There were workshops, presentations and excursions around Hiiumaa. The young people of Kärđla School showed the sights of Hiiumaa. The joint photo exhibition was opened during the camp.

Each group covered the travel expenses to Tallinn and back. Other costs were covered by project budget. The Cultural Endowment of Estonia, Swedish Institute and Commission on Education of the UBC sponsor the project.

The terms of the project: age 15-18, able to speak and work in English.

3.2 The project "Summer School for potential researchers in the field of aquatic ecology" (June 2003)

The research school was organised by the Erken Laboratory, which is situated in the countryside of Norrtälje, Sweden. The students stayed for 4 weeks; they lived together at the laboratory site. The organisers hope that scientific discussions will become a part of life for students. In the research school 15 students participated.

In the research school the students had lectures in general limnology and a concluding week where they summarised the students' work. In between, the students worked independently with their research project under the protective wings of international supervisors. The primary objective of the research school is to let the students work with scientific research.

The terms of the research school: age 18-20, must have a background in science but should not yet have started their studies at the university; to be able to read and speak English.

Uppsala University, Swedish Institute, Commission on Education of the UBC and several companies sponsor the project.

ACTION PLAN 2004 - 2005

The Commission on Education was established to work with aims:

- to offer the member cities good possibilities for exchange of experiences,
- to bring up new initiatives for joint EU-projects on competence improvement.

According to the named aims, the Commission on Education is going to work with following activities during 2004-2005:

- The two running activities of the Commission on Education, research school in Norrtälje, Sweden and summer camp in Hiiumaa, Estonia
- Commission on Education - to make an e-mail list of participants (in all meetings on the commission) in order to have an active network.
- Adult education - to find out the interest and needs in this field and to organise a contact seminar.
- Initiative of the students - to encourage students to take the initiative to new projects.
- Water Days for school classes - a possibility for teachers to come to Norr Malma Field Station in Sweden and to look what is happening there, get new ideas how to organise such kind of programmes at home.
- Best Practice Award - schools in UBC cities can manage health and environmental programmes, contact to other schools by Internet. Best practice can be rewarded.
- Practical training for students - it is a possibility for twin-cities, but there are many problems to find interested companies.

Kurt Pettersson
Chairman of the Commission
City of Norrtälje

Mirje Auksmann
Secretary of the Commission
City of Kärda

COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 – SEPTEMBER 2003

Standpoint

Since the VI UBC General Conference, the UBC has made remarkable progress in sustainable development and environmental co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region and contributed also to European and Global co-operation. Within the UBC Agenda 21 Action Program, 11 projects with a total budget of over two million euros have been implemented up-to-date. Most of the funding has been provided by the European Union. Over 90% of UBC members now have their own local sustainable development plans and/or processes – local Agenda 21s. The European Commission has been repeatedly consulting the UBC on sustainable urban development and our co-operation in the Baltic Sea Regional processes Baltic 21 and HELCOM has been very active too. Lake Victoria Local Authorities have been assisted in their sustainable development work.

The interest of member cities towards the commission, its projects, and the UBC Agenda 21 program has been great. Almost all member cities have contributed in different ways. The meetings of the commission have been regularly attended by 60-70 representatives of member cities and partner organisations.

Many of our activities have had a considerable impact on improving the state of the environment in member cities through building capacities, developing management, and spreading good practices.

Network Services

Three EnvCom and Agenda 21 meetings were organised during the reporting period. The first one in Nacka 31 May – 1 June 2002, the second one (annual meeting) in Kolding 6 November 2002 and the third in Kaunas 22 May 2003. The meetings had thematic approaches. Themes included for example air quality, bio-diversity, energy, sustainable consumption and construction / planning, Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development and exchange of good practices. The meetings gathered up to 70 participants and were also attended by several partner organisations. The Nacka and Kaunas meetings had also visiting experts from the United States, made possible by our co-operation with the U.S. Baltic Sea Regional Environmental Office.

Three editions of **The Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin** were published. Member cities and several co-operation organisations contributed very actively to the contents. In edition 1/2003 also the bulletin started a thematic approach with Environmental Management Systems as the first theme. The approach proved successful and has been further developed in edition 2/2003 (Sustainable Consumption and Production).

The **UBC Agenda 21 Program was made into a publication**, summarising the work carried out in 2000-2002, and disseminated in November 2002.

The **EnvCom web-pages** were totally renewed during Fall 2002. The new pages provide more information and better services. They can be checked at www.ubc.net/commissions/environment.

The UBC Local Agenda 21 Survey was carried out in the autumn of 2001 and published in winter 2002. It provided high quality results with 85% of member cities responding. The survey results, as a follow-up to the 1998 survey, showed that local Agenda 21 has increasingly become mainstream strategy in UBC member cities. According to the survey the UBC is the most important channel of good working models and practices to its members in the field of sustainable development.

The EnvCom has designed **the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2003** based on the themes of Air Quality, Bio-diversity, Energy, Environmental Health and Information and Education. The award ceremony is foreseen to take place on the occasion of the General Conference in October in Klaipėda. With respect to the theme of the conference, emphasis has been put also on the involvement of businesses in the proposed good practices.

Policy Work

Johannesburg Conference

The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in August 2002 was attended by several representatives of the UBC. Honorary President Anders Engström was present on behalf of the Lake Victoria co-operation, Co-chairman of the EnvCom Mikko Jokinen attended the Local Government Session and the Baltic 21 seminar, and Project Coordinator Tea Nõmmann from the EnvCom Secretariat joined the Summit in the role of Special Advisor to the Estonian Head of Delegation.

The Summit produced several important documents. The main outcome from the point of view of UBC's sustainable development work is the shift of focus from local agenda to local action. This meets also the needs of UBC members, and has been taken fully into account in our new proposed Agenda 21 Action Program. Emphasis will be more and more put to concrete sustainable development actions in the cities.

European Working Group on Sustainable Urban Management

The UBC has, on the invitation of the European Commission, attended this working group. Head of EnvCom Secretariat Risto Veivo has contributed in the group by presentations of local Agenda 21 in Baltic Cities and brought up strongly the perspectives of cities in EU Accession Countries. The group

will work until December 2003 and will give input to the Thematic Urban Strategy of the 6th Environmental Action Program of the European Union.

European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign

The UBC has continuously contributed to the Campaign with points of view of the Baltic Cities, as outlined in the UBC Statutes, strategy and the Agenda 21 Action Program. Mr. Veivo has represented the UBC in the Steering Committee. Together with Eurocities, the UBC organised the Campaign seminar on Environment and Governance in Aalborg 17 September, on the occasion of the European Conference on Environment and Governance. The first meeting of the Political Board of the Campaign was organised in Kolding 4 November, on the occasion of the Johannesburg +Europe Conference, and excellently hosted by the Mayor of Kolding and UBC President Mr. Per Bødker Andersen. The Campaign currently comprises over 2000 European local authorities and 10 city networks.

Baltic 21

The UBC, represented by Co-chairman of the Commission on Environment, Mr. Guldbrand Skjönberg from the city of Nacka, has continued its active work in the Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group (SOG). In 24-25 April 2003 the SOG meeting was organised in Turku, co-hosted by the UBC and the City of Turku.

HELCOM

The EnvCom secretariat has followed the discussions on further developing the Program Implementation Task Force (PITF) activities and Project Coordinator Tea Nömmann has represented the UBC in the meetings.

Projects

By the end of 2001, the following projects were finalised: Success Factors for Local Environmental Policy in the Baltic Sea Region (SUFA), Best City Practices (BCP), Municipal Environmental Auditing of Lithuanian cities (MEA), Dissemination of European Common Indicators (ECI), and Baltic 21 Pre-feasibility Study on city indicators. These projects have been introduced in more detail already in the activity report to the VI General Conference. In the following, projects started in the current reporting period will be briefly presented in more detail.

EMAS - Peer Review for Cities (2002-2004)

UBC together with Eurocities, University of West England and 18 European cities are carrying out the EMAS - peer review for cities project. The main focus of this two-year project is on developing and extending the use of EC Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) in local authorities. The EMAS-peer review method as an innovative approach is being developed and applied to encourage cities to work together. Ten UBC member cities are participating in the project. The total budget is € 711.000 and the project is co-funded by the European Commission DG Environment. The project builds on the success of the Municipal Environmental Auditing (MEA) in Baltic Cities as well as on the EMAS experiences of the project partners. The project has proceeded well. More information can be found at the project web-site www.emascities.org

TBestC

The TBestC project (Transferring Best Environmental Practices between Towns and Cities) is giving five city couples a chance to work on transfer of good practices during 2003-2004. The good practices concentrate on five themes: Biodiversity, Energy, Environmental Health, Air, Information and Education. TBestC builds on the success and the experiences resulting from the former good practice project, BCP, and develops the exchange and city coupling methods further. One interesting aspect is co-operation with the United States Regional Environmental Office for the Baltic Sea Region. This has brought into the project also American experts. There have also been preliminary discussions on possible study visits between the Baltic Cities and the United States. More information can be found at UBC web-site <http://www.ubc.net/commissions/environment.html>

Baltic University Urban Forums

The UBC is a partner in this newly launched Interreg III B project, coordinated by the Baltic University Program. The project aims at benchmarking of good environmental and sustainable urban management practice in several city-university groups. Within the project, also a large number of local seminars in the participating cities will be organised.

Integaire

This three-year project, co-ordinated by Eurocities, aims at European-wide networking on Urban Air Quality issues. The UBC contributes mainly to dissemination activities. The work was started during Spring 2002.

New Projects

The new projects, developed during the reporting period and to be started during 2003/2004, include the New Hansa for Sustainable Ports and Cities (Interreg III B), BRIDGE (DG Env), RELATE (DG Env, coordinated by ICLEI), and TISSUE (DG Research, coordinated by VTT). More information on these projects is included in the proposed UBC Agenda 21 Action Program 2004-2009. The program aims at launching altogether projects worth of about 8 M€ during the six-year period. So far 2,3 M€ has been applied for new projects and passed in evaluation by different co-funders.

Resources

The Commission on Environment Secretariat has been hosted and co-funded by the City of Turku. The city is also providing very good premises. The secretariat currently has very good human resources. The international team includes Risto Veivo (Head of Secretariat / UBC Environmental Coordinator, FIN), Tea Nõmmann (Project Coordinator, EE), Sari Bowie (Publications Officer, FIN), Anna Granberg (Project Officer, SE), and Sanna Erkkö (Project Officer, FIN).

Due to successful fund-raising (project applications), the budget of the secretariat has increased continuously. However, due to relatively low core funding, the secretariat is still financially rather vulnerable – basically all core funding is being used as own contributions for projects to enable the secretariat to provide maximal service level to the member cities. Project development and fund-raising is a continuous activity.

DRAFT ACTION PLAN SEPTEMBER 2003 – AUTUMN 2005

Starting point

The Baltic Cities are constantly facing big environmental challenges. The mission of the UBC Commission on Environment is to tackle those challenges by all the means provided by an efficient network through sharing of problems, information and knowledge, approaches and solutions. The potential of our network to support the member cities in treating the challenges is good and it needs to be further mobilised.

At the moment, the UBC Commission on Environment is the most active commission of the Union of the Baltic Cities in terms of involvement of member cities, number and budget of projects and other activities organised, and external partners involved. The services and the network provided by the Commission are highly appreciated by the member cities and the UBC is the most important channel for information and good models of local sustainable development work in its member cities (UBC Local Agenda 21 Survey 2001). More information on the activities and the current standpoint can be obtained from the Activity Report.

Challenges

Success, good service and network can only be maintained through continuous development of the activities. There are several challenges that the Commission should be addressing in its work during the coming two-year period. The most important ones include:

1. **Implementation of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme.** This is a joint challenge of the whole UBC and several commissions will be involved. The EnvCom has a good potential to contribute to the program, and the EnvCom Secretariat is also functioning as the programme co-ordination and management agency.

2. **Supporting cities joining the EU.** Poland and the Baltic States are becoming members of the European Union in 2004. This implies many new challenges to member cities in those countries.

3. **Organising activities to strengthen co-operation over the border of the European Union, with member cities in Russia.** Many Russian member cities have both considerable environmental challenges and excellent activities and good practices, and are very active in the UBC. After the enlargement of the European Union special emphasis needs to be put on co-operation with cities which remain outside of the EU.

4. **Keeping up and supporting the current high-level of the “state-of-the-art”** of municipal environmental administration and management in the Baltic Cities. Many of UBC member cities are on the highest level of environmental performance in the World. Such high-quality, state-of-the-art has considerable direct environmental impact and huge demonstration potential for other cities. It needs to be kept up and utilised more for the benefit of other cities in the Baltic Sea Region and among our partner organisations in other parts of Europe and the World.

5. **Improving the information and good practice services** of the commission to better meet the current and future needs of Baltic Cities. The possibilities provided by modern information technology, especially the internet, are not yet being properly utilised by the commission. There is also a large potential of good implemented practices in member cities, which is not yet properly used either. Both of these issues need to be addressed for the benefit of the member cities.

In order to meet these challenges, the Commission will carry out several activities and organise services for the member cities. All the activities and services strongly utilise and mobilise the potential provided by the excellent network of the UBC.

Activities – the network service

The network service of the UBC Commission on Environment is a combination of projects, regular meetings and workshops, information work and policy liaison with other organisations, environmental and sustainable development policy processes and policy-makers. Such policy-makers include Baltic Sea Regional actors like national ministries of the environment, Nordic Council of Ministers, Baltic 21 and HELCOM, as well as the European Union – especially European Commission DG Environment. During the period between the VII and VIII General Conference, the Commission on Environment will put special emphasis on treating the challenges introduced above. In order to do this, the following activities will be carried out:

- **Meetings and workshops of the commission** twice a year – providing opportunity to discuss and plan projects and other activities as well as for direct learning and sharing.
- **Web-portal of the environment and good practices** in Baltic Cities – to provide best possible forum and source of information, lessons learnt and good solutions implemented in the cities.
- **Projects addressing the challenges** in Baltic Cities and implementing the thematic goals of the UBC Agenda 21 Action program – the commission is foreseen to be involved in several large co-operation projects during the period (more information on these can be obtained from the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009).
- **Capacity-building** – organising (mainly through projects) opportunities for the cities joining the EU as well as cities within the EU to up-date their information on environmental policies, practices and legislation.
- **Information services** – publishing Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin, maintaining database on environmental contacts in Baltic Cities and partner organisations.

Resources

The Commission on Environment has an effective secretariat with good resources, located in the City of Turku. The purpose of the secretariat is to serve the commission and to manage and co-ordinate the implementation of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009. However, the most important resource of the commission is the active UBC member cities that contribute with their knowledge, experiences and strong involvement for mutual benefit.

Guldbrand Skjönberg

Commission Co-Chairman
City of Nacka

Mikko Jokinen

Commission Co-Chairman
City of Turku

Risto Veivo

Head of EnvCom Secretariat
City of Turku

COMMISSION ON INFORMATION SOCIETY

ACTIVITY REPORT APRIL 2002 – OCTOBER 2003

Background

The Commission on Information Society was established at the 34th UBC Executive Board meeting in Viljandi on 7-8 June 2002, and the City of St. Petersburg was appointed as the lead City of the Commission. In preparation for the establishment of the Commission, the City of St. Petersburg organized a seminar “*Electronic Union of the Baltic Cities*” on 25-26 April 2002. The seminar included presentations on Information Society programmes from the UBC member cities, discussion on cooperation opportunities and visits to local ICT companies in St. Petersburg.

During last few years Information Society development has emerged as one of the priority sectors for cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, and the Region is developing into a European model region of Information Society and ICT. *eEurope*, *eRussia*, *the Northern eDimension (NeDAP)* and various national e-initiatives offer a financial and policy framework for the cooperation, and accordingly for the UBC Commission on Information Society as well. Baltic cities have been active in Information Society development, and various local e-initiatives and programmes have been launched. Joint projects, networking and exchange of experiences and information between the UBC member cities and their respective e-programmes contribute significantly to the Information Society development in the Baltic Sea Region, and to the objectives of European and national Information Society strategies and programmes.

Based on the above background and framework, there is a strong rationale for the active UBC contribution to the Information Society Development in the Baltic Sea Region through its Commission on Information Society.

Commission meeting in Klaipėda, 18 October 2003

In the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Alexander Spiridonov, Chairman of the Committee for Informatization and Communications of the St. Petersburg Administration, informed that since the establishment of the Commission, there have been unfortunately some problems in the organization of the Commission, and hence the beginning of the Commission work has been delayed. The participants of the meeting discussed the above problem and possible solutions for facilitating the Commission’s organization and for ensuring its fluent and efficient functioning in the future. Furthermore, ongoing Information Society related activities in the Baltic Sea Region in general, and in the UBC member cities in particular, were presented and discussed. Mr. Spiridonov, Mr. Pertti Palttila from the City of Tampere and Mr. Esa Kokkonen from the Baltic Institute of Finland informed the participants of *the St. Petersburg-Tampere Knowledge Society Partnership* that is based on cooperation in the framework of *eTampere* and *e-St. Petersburg* Information Society programmes. The Baltic Institute of Finland also

presented an Interreg III C project proposal *eCities Forum: Promotion of Information Society Development in the Baltic Sea Region*, with the UBC member cities Tampere, St. Petersburg, Kaunas, Tartu and Odense as project partners.

Based on the above presented ongoing cooperation between St. Petersburg and Tampere, Mr. Palttila and Mr. Kokkonen proposed that the City of Tampere together with the Baltic Institute of Finland could contribute to the re-launch of the Commission and to the preparation of a detailed Action Plan for 2004. The participants agreed on the need for the concrete Action Plan, and most potential themes and activities were discussed. Considering the variety of European, national and local e-initiatives and programmes being implemented in the Region, benchmarking, exchange of experience and information, as well as basic inventory of existing local e-programmes and best practices were recognized by the participants as possible activities to be promoted by the Commission. The need to reckon with the fact that there are different models and approaches for local Information Society development in use in the Region was also raised in the meeting.

The importance of close collaboration and coordination with other active Information Society related initiatives, programmes and organizations was emphasized by the participants. In this respect, *the NeDAP* and cooperation in its framework with *the CBSS*, Information Society initiatives of *Baltic Development Forum* and established Baltic Sea Information Society forums such as *eBaltics* in Riga and *InfoBalt* in Vilnius can be regarded as especially potential and interesting. A workshop or seminar on local e-programmes in the Baltic Sea Region in connection with *eBaltics* or *InfoBalt* was presented as a possible form of activity for the Commission. Furthermore, the above mentioned initiative of *eCities Forum* could be linked to the Commission, and thus to be developed further.

Finally, it was agreed that St. Petersburg together with Tampere will prepare a draft Action Plan and send it for comments to the UBC member cities. The final Action Plan would be then presented at the UBC Executive Board meeting during the first half of 2004. The first meeting for the Action Plan preparation will be organized in St. Petersburg in December 2003. In the drafting of the Action Plan the cities of Turku and Stockholm will be especially consulted with, considering their active contribution to the establishment of the Commission.

Alexander Spiridonov
Chairman of the Committee for Informatization
and Communications
City of St. Petersburg

Esa Kokkonen
Director
The Baltic Institute of Finland

COMMISSION ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 – SEPTEMBER 2003

1. PROJECTS

UBC Social Charter

The VI UBC General Conference in Rostock unanimously adopted the UBC Social Charter. To reach this aim we prepared a strategy and a network plan were prepared and presented to the 34 Executive Board Meeting 7-8 June 2002 in Viljandi.

As from September 2002 a Translation Team delivered the versions of the Charter in all 10 Baltic languages. They were sent out in March 2002. Shortly after, all versions were integrated into the UBC website. In November 2002 all UBC Commissions and Networks were contacted to contribute their ideas.

Since January 2003 we are encouraging public persons to become Ambassadors of the UBC Social Charter in order to create awareness of this paper on the international stage presenting it in Conferences, seminars, workshops. First Ambassadors were: UBC Vice-President Liisa Pakosta, Prof. Dr. Ingo Richter, promoter and organiser of the Hanse Tour Sunshine 2003, Mr Dejan Panow, member of the founding Committee of the UBC Youth Network. The UBC member cities have been contacted since April 2002, some cities already named a contact person. The financing of the scientific work in the implementation of the UBC Social Charter is pending on appropriate co-funding.

The UBC Social Charter was already presented and discussed at the following events: Conference WoMen and Democracy, 13-14 February in Tallinn; Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Days in Southern Sweden, Malmö 15-19 May 2003; Conference Young Voices of the Baltic Sea Region, 15-18 May 2003 in Kalmar; Baltic Seminar on Creation and Functioning of the Regional Youth Councils within UBC, 29 May – 01 June 2003 in Sopot and during the Hanse Tour Sun-shine, 25 July – 10 August 2003 around the Baltic Sea (see press releases emitted by the Commission's secretariat).

Hanse-Sunshine-Tour 2003

for Children suffering from cancer and other chronic diseases around the Baltic Sea.

The Commission on Health and Social Affairs co-operated in the preparation of the tour itinerary including important contact work and of the previous organisational trips which took place in April and June 2002. The Tour took place from 25 July to 10 August 2003 and led the cyclists through the cities Greifswald, Wismar, Lübeck, Kiel, Kolding, Copenhagen, Malmö, Kristianstad, Karlskrona, Kalmar, Oskarshamn, Västervik, Norrköping, Nyköping, Stockholm, Turku and Helsinki collecting money and goods, taking it all to special organisations, hospitals etc. in the cities Tallinn, Pärnu, Jurmala/Riga, Liepāja, Palanga, Klaipėda, Kaliningrad, Elbląg, Gdańsk/Sopot/Gdynia, Słupsk, Koszalin, Szczecin. The tour became a big success, after having mobilised humanitarian aid of 3 million EUR. The Prime Minister of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, gave his personal congratulations to Prof. Dr. Richter and the whole team and expressed his respects to all who supported this exceptional initiative. A follow-up tour is planned.

International Conference 'Europe of the Future with a Look at Eastern Expansion'

held in Rostock On 6-8 May 2002 during the European Week, the Commission's Secretariat gave a strong assessment in the preparation phase.

VI UBC General Conference in Rostock 2001 – follow-up

The Commission's Secretariat gave strong assistance to the UBC Secretariat in the preparation of the follow-up documents (protocol of speeches), a follow-up exhibition '10 Years UBC' in the City Hall of Rostock was organised and the remaining financial issues were settled thoroughly.

2. PARTNERS

Social Hansa

Social Hansa, a former project within ICSW, was established as an organisation, with an office in Lübeck. Several meetings and discussions took place, analysing the possibilities of co-operation (Social Charter, mutual visit of meetings, correlation of networks, project 'Social Monitor' of the BSR, etc.) and assisting the creation of a constitution.

3. CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER COMMISSIONS

EMAS (Municipal Environmental Management Systems) Workshop

of the UBC Commission on Environment, 15-16 November 2003 in Rostock. The Secretariat strongly co-operated with the organisers during three months preparing the event.

4. MEETINGS

Commission's Meeting

An explicit Commission's meeting could not be organised during this period due to organisational problems. Attempts to place it were made in Tallinn (May 2002), Greifswald, Nyköping, Tartu,

Panevėžys and Vaasa – without success, mostly because of limited financial possibilities of the cities for that period.

5. VISITED / SUPPORTED EVENTS

Conference 'Aspects of Women's Entrepreneurship – Dialogues Open New Horizons'

in Rostock, 18-19 October 2002. At this international Conference (participants from Portugal, Italy, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Sweden etc.), organised by Ressourcencenter, Baltic Fem and Rostock Gender Equality Co-ordinator, the Commission delivered a workshop statement about 'Networking in the Baltic Sea Region'

Third Baltic Sea Women's Conference on 'WoMen and Democracy'

in Tallinn 13-14 February 2003. The Commission's Secretariat was member of the International Planning Committee and introduced the topic 'UBC Social Charter' in the Programme. Leaflets of the Charter in 11 languages were sent to be handed out to all participants. UBC Office Rostock acted as well as National Co-ordinator for Germany.

Social Hansa - International Foundation Meeting

In spring 2002 the Secretariat assisted in the founding meeting representing UBC, showing the Commission's profile and establishing various contacts.

ACTION PLAN 2003–2005

- UBC Social Charter
- Common Project together with the UBC Women's Network
- Combating the Silence and Invisibility of Trafficking Locally -
- Working group on the EU strategy against poverty and social exclusion concerning its implementation on the national and local level
- Hanse Tour Sunshine (preparation, next tour in 2006)
- Co-operation with the UBC Commission on Environment in issues of BLA21
- Strengthening of Co-operation with partners (WHO, Social Hansa, ..)
- More awareness of our activities (Publications, Flyer)
- Strengthening of Networking, more thematic meeting occasions

Karin Wohlgemuth
Coordinator of the Commission
City of Rostock

COMMISSION ON SPORT

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 – SEPTEMBER 2003

I. Annual meetings of UBC Commission on Sport

Between October 2001 – September 2003 Commission on Sport organised 2 annual meetings:

1. Karlskrona (Sweden) 15-16.03.2002

The 2002 Annual Meeting of the Commission was held in Sweden with the participation of representatives of 13 cities from 5 countries: Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. The subject of the meeting was "Integration of the disabled through sport". Apart from the formal issues such as last year's Commission Activity Report discussed in the course of the meeting, the following

presentations were given: (1) “Integration of the disabled through sport on the example of Gdynia, Poland” (Beata Wachowiak-Zwara); (2) “Sports Activities of the Disabled on the example of Karlskrona, Sweden” (Thomas Hall); (3) “The Sport Union of the Disabled in Aalborg” (Jan Sørensen, Arne Odgaard); (4) “Sports for the Disabled in Sweden” (Lars Hjeltman,). In addition, grants for sporting events were allocated (see list below).

Grants Allocated by UBC Commission on Sport in 2002

In the year 2002 UBC Commission on Sport allocated grants of the total amount of 4 500 EUR. For the first time one of the main criteria in grant allocation was the participation of the disabled sportsmen in competitions.

No.	Name of Sporting Events	Organiser	Date	Granted Amount
1.	16 th International Run for Disabled People “St.Petersburg – Pushkin”	St. Petersburg, Russia	21-24.06.02	1 000 EUR
2.	Cēsis Sport Festival for the Handicapped Persons	Cēsis, Latvia	20-24.07.02	800 EUR
3.	European Road Race	Gdynia, Poland	11.05.02	700 EUR
4.	3 rd City Sport Games “Šiauliai 2002”	Šiauliai, Lithuania	19-22.09.02	500 EUR
5.	International Basketball Tournament for the Deaf People	Panevėžys, Lithuania	11-12.10.02	500 EUR
6.	UBC Tournament of Basketball Players in Wheelchairs	Panevėžys, Lithuania	30.11-01.12.02	500 EUR
7.	26 th International Chess Tournament – Baltic Cup	Koszalin, Poland	17-26.06.02	500 EUR

2. Aalborg (Denmark) 11-13.04. 2003

The 2003 Annual Meeting in Denmark gathered representatives from 6 cities from 4 countries: Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland. Its title was “**Sport as a rehabilitation tool for integration**”. In addition to discussing organisational matters, *UBC Social Campaign “Without Limits”-Agenda 22* was presented together with the other presentations, namely:

(1) “Broadness for the most important life spheres among disabled people” (Jorn Erik Edsbo); (2) “Youth Games in Aalborg with special focus on the sport for disabled persons” (Mette Bertelsen), (3) “Sport as a rehabilitation tool for integration - A life after the working life” (Arne Odgaard), (4) “Senior Sport project” (Kristine Langagergaard), (5) “Sport as an integration tool for refugees/fugitives” (Morten Ubbesen). Additionally, the participants of the meeting could see how it feels to be disabled during a study tour in “The Association for Disabled in Aalborg”. In relation to the announcement of the year 2003- European Year of People with Disabilities, the Commission had decided to initiate Equal Opportunity Prize instead of allocating grants.

Equal Opportunity Prize

The “Equal Opportunities Prize” was founded by the UBC Commission on Sport as a response to the decision of the Council of European Union to announce 2003 the European Year of People with Disabilities. The Prize’s objective was to focus undertaken activities on achieving equal rights for people with disabilities as well as to support their full integration with the society. The Prize was to be awarded to one UBC member city for the best organised (1) sporting event addressed to people with disabilities or (2) sporting event with participation of both the disabled and able-bodied. The “Equal Opportunities Prize” of 3000 EUR was presented to the winning city during the VII UBC conference General in Klaipėda (Lithuania) on the 18th of October 2003.

It was the city of **Tallinn** that became “**Equal Opportunities Prize**“ winner. It was awarded the Prize for organisation of the 6th European Athletics Championship of the Deaf, a sporting event that took place from 13th to 19th of July 2003. 240 sportsmen participated in the championship and among them

there were 169 disabled. The jury took the decision to present Tallinn with “Equal Opportunities Prize” because the event organized by this city really proved that sport is the universal language of communication for disabled people of Europe. The sporting event that took place in Tallinn was the fullest realisation of integration idea. It put emphasis not only on the integration of the disabled sportsmen with other participants but also with the general public. A performance of people with impaired hearing organised for the general public was the best proof of that.

Chairman of UBC Commission on Sport

In autumn 2002, Władysław Kozakiewicz, the chairman of the Commission on Sport since 1999, ended his term of office as a City Councillor of Gdynia. In connection with this fact, Mrs. Beata Łęgowska, City Councillor from Gdynia for 2000-2006 term of office was appointed the representative of Gdynia in the Commission by the City Council and during the Annual Meeting of the Commission on Sport in Aalborg, she was elected the new chairperson.

II. UBC COMMISSION ON SPORT CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS:

Aalborg Senior Sport - promotes senior sport in Denmark through organising activities especially adjusted to elderly people; seniors may not only practice sport but also get together with people of their age

The Association for Disabled in Aalborg - offers various forms of sport activities to people of different disability degrees.

Danish Sport Association from Aalborg - associates 660 members ranging from children to adults with all types of disability, offering over 20 various sport activities.

SISU Idrottsutbildarna - Swedish organisation that offers pedagogic competence and training programmes

Swedish Sports Organisation for the Disabled (SHIF) – promotes sport among the disabled in Sweden

III. INITIATIVES OF UBC COMMISSION ON SPORT

In the year 2002 UBC launched a new social campaign:

UBC Social Campaign “Without Limits”

The campaign was initiated in connection with the adoption of the Social Charter by UBC and the announcement of the year 2003 – European Year of People with Disabilities. The campaign aims at exchange of experience and cooperation among cities located in the Baltic Sea Region in order to effectively solve problems of the disabled as well as to eliminate social and mental barriers.

Within the campaign the following actions were taken:

Questionnaire on situation of People with Disabilities in UBC Member Cities (June –September 2002)

The questionnaire was circulated among the UBC member cities. It aimed at recognising and approaching the situation of the disabled to identify the most urgent problems of people with disabilities and to show which obstacles cities had when solving those problems. The percentage of the disabled in the cities that answered the questionnaire varied from 1 % to 16 % of cities’ inhabitants. The results of the research showed that the most difficult problems for the cities are braking up psychological barriers, lack of social acceptance and the question of professional activating of the disabled to make them live independently. People with disabilities still encounter problems connected with architectural barriers, unequal education opportunities and lack of rehabilitation equipment.

UBC Conference “Without Limits” (September 2002)

This conference which took place in Gdynia between 27th and 28th September 2002 inaugurated The UBC Social Campaign. In the course of the meeting Swedish experience of disability policy planning at local level - *Agenda 22* was presented by its author - Maryanne Rönnersten as well as EU’s official view on the disabled together with specific projects realised by non-governmental sector. Gdynia was

the first Polish municipality, which adopted *Agenda 22 – Disability Policy Planning Instructions for Local Authorities* written on the basis of 22 Standard Rules of UN General Assembly.

Baltic Cities Bulletin “Cities Without Limits”

In co-operation with UBC Secretariat, the whole issue of the first Bulletin in 2003 was dedicated to experiences of the Baltic cities with respect to the disabled policies and the situation of the disabled in these cities. It presents specific projects and solutions implemented in different UBC member cities. 25 cities shared their experiences connected with removing architectural barriers and providing the disabled with assistance in gaining access to education, culture and work.

National Conference “Open Cities”(May 2003)

On the 26th of May 2003, Gdynia City Hall together with the Polish Rehabilitation Fund for the Disabled organised a nation-wide conference entitled “*Open Cities - Local Governments Actions in Relation to the Disabled*”. The Conference in Gdynia gathered 80 participants from many Polish cities representing local authorities and the representatives of NGOs. During the conference the problem of accessibility of the cities as well as the actions of local governments in connection with people with disabilities were discussed together with the possibility of cooperation between local authorities and the Polish Rehabilitation Fund for the Disabled. In the course of the conference the Agenda 22 was also presented to the participants.

UBC International Drawing Competition “Dreams Without Limits”

The art competition was addressed to disabled children and youth at the age of 10-16 coming from the 102 UBC member cities. Its objective was to raise people’s consciousness of disabled children’s and young people’s rights to equality in education as well as to promote their development through art. The competition was organised in the local and international stage and was coordinated by the Commission on Sport. Out of the 78 works selected for the competition, the jury chose 7 finalists, one from each country, and among them three winners:

- 1st prize: Agnese Beikule (Cēsis, Latvia)
- 2nd prize: Victoria Chipan (Kronshtadt, Russia)
- 3rd prize: Maria Vassina (Talinn, Estonia)

The works sent for the exhibitions are the material for further projects.

Art Exhibitions

As the result of the art competition there has been created a big collection of children’s works which constitutes the material for the so-called “travelling exhibitions”. The organiser’s aim is to show the works in the UBC member cities. The following schedule for the exhibition was issued:

The title of the exhibition “Dreams without Limits”

City:

- Gdynia (Poland) 15.09-12.10.03, “Ratusz” Gallery
- Klaipėda (Lithuania) 17-19.10.03, Drama Theatre, during the VII UBC General Conference in Klaipėda
- Gdynia (Poland), December 2003, Gallery in the “Nadmorski” Hotel

Starting from January 2003, the exhibition will be available to the other UBC members. The applications from the cities willing to host the exhibition should be sent to the following address:

ubcsport@gdynia.pl.

UBC Calendar

On the basis of the gathered material, the Commission on Sport published a desk calendar with works sent for ““Dreams Without Limits”” competition. The distribution of the calendar among member cities will take place during the VII UBC General Conference in Klaipėda. The calendar will also be sent to the major European institutions UBC cooperates with.

ACTION PLAN 2004-2005

The main goals and planned activities for the Commission on Sport for the next years are as follows:

I. Creating and improving a network for international co-operation in sport:

- Annual Meeting in Narva (Estonia), March 2004
- Annual Meeting, March 2005

II. Promoting and supporting sport events with the special focus on the youth, the disabled, the elderly, gender equality:

- UBC CS Grants 2004
- UBC CS Grants 2005

III. Exchanging of experience and information about sport events in member cities organized by sport clubs and societies:

- creating Annual Calendars of Sport Events in UBC member cities on UBC CS website
- building up a database of youth sports' clubs in UBC member cities on UBC CS website

Beata Łęgowska
Chairman of the Commission
City of Gdynia

Ewa Depka
Coordinator of the Commission
City of Gdynia

COMMISSION ON TOURISM

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 – SEPTEMBER 2003

During the last two year period (Oct 2001 – Sep 2003), the Commission on Tourism has been occupied with project development for the UBC member cities. Once again, during the meeting in Cēsis in August 2003, the Commission stated that education in tourism is of utmost importance to all the member cities of UBC. The Commission has successfully had tourism projects granted by the European Commission and the Interreg IIIB programme.

Commission activities

The Commission's first application; **Baltic Welcome Centre**, was granted in December 2001 and so far consists of the following member cities: Kalmar, Växjö, Sweden; Halden/Østfold, Norway; Turisme Region Syd, Denmark and Schwerin, Germany. The Commission also got further participants from the eastern side through the Phare and TACIS programmes. Approval from EC was given to Kaliningrad and Ivangorod, Russia, Narva, Estonia, and Cēsis, Latvia. The Commission is now awaiting approval of an application to Phare by the City of Palanga, Lithuania by next week and another application is to be submitted in the nearest future by the City of Malbork, Poland.

The project is now half way through and one must say it has been a success for all partners involved. The project, among other things, deals with the development of a Baltic Sea Wide standard for Welcome Centres, as well as spatial planning and investments in buildings and IT. For more information, please contact the Commission and/or visit www.bsrinterreg.net.

The second application of the Commission was granted in December 2002. The project **Ancient Times** started in March 2003 and will last for three years. It deals with development of cultural heritage sites. Edutainment, education through entertainment, meaning interactivity, is one of the most important

conceptions of the Ancient Times project. To create new concepts for exhibitions as well as investments in heritage sites and marketing are also important issues. The partner cities so far are:

Kalmar, Sweden; Lofotr Viking museum, Norway; Medieval Centre, Denmark and Slawendorf Passentin, Germany. From the eastern side (Phare) so far Cēsis, Latvia has been approved and an application by the City of Malbork, Poland is just about to be submitted. To find out more about the project please contact the Commission or visit www.bsrinterreg.net. A project homepage will be launched in November 2003, after the first coordination meeting in Kalmar.

The Commission also participated in the project **High Quality Tourist Zone** Around Malbork Castle, where also the University of Kalmar contributed with knowledge in event marketing and tourism spatial planning. The City of Malbork was the partner in this project. For more information, please contact the Commission.

The Baltic Tourism Academy project was phased out in 2001, with many interesting seminars on different topics. A CD-ROM is available to order from the projects' homepage, disseminating the contents of the seminar series. The CD-ROM contains detailed and valuable information on event management, from planning to follow-up. The information is available on-line, as well. Please visit www.balticevents.com for more information and orders.

The Commission was invited to participate in the "Expert Meeting: Projects on Sustainable Tourism in the Baltic Sea Region and Neighbouring Areas" in Helsinki in October 2002. The secretary of the Commission went to the capital of Finland and presented the activities of the Commission. If you are interested in the report from this meeting, please contact the Commission on Tourism.

Interesting for the UBC to know, could also be that the Commission noticed an **increase of inquiries** to the secretariat. Searches for different tourism related questions often starts with a contact with the Commission on Tourism. The secretariat also often receives questionnaires and surveys or is asked to submit its standpoint in different matters, related to tourism and tourism development.

Some further minor activities were also executed during this period.

Steering committee of the Commission

At the meeting in Cēsis, Latvia in August this year elections for a new steering committee was held. The elected cities/persons for the period October 2003 – September 2005 were:

Kalmar, Mr Kyrre Dahl; Palanga, Mrs Irena Satkauskiene; Kaliningrad, Mr Vladislav Andreev; Jūrmala, Mr Armands Muiznieks. The secretariat function remains in Kalmar.

The first meeting of the new steering committee will take place in Klaipėda, Lithuania in October 2003, during the UBC General Conference.

Commission meetings

The Commission held two official meetings during this period, the first one in **Palanga, Lithuania in August 2002** and the second one in **Cēsis, Latvia in August 2003**. Both meetings focused on education in tourism, featuring educational excursions and lecturing from for instance the Nordic Council of Ministers as well as representatives from the Interreg III ABC Joint Secretariats and disabled organisations etc. The meetings often function as natural partner search forums for cities within the UBC network. To read more about the meetings, please visit www.ubc.net and the Commission on Tourism homepage.

The **next meeting** will take place in Jūrmala, Latvia in August or September 2004.

ACTION PLAN 2003-2005

For the period 2003 to 2005 the Commission on Tourism plans:

1. to keep on arranging at least one meeting per year for the whole Commission on Tourism.
2001 in Vilnius, Lithuania
2002 in Palanga, Lithuania
2003 in Cēsis, Latvia
2004 in Jūrmala, Latvia (September)
2005 in Kalmar?, Sweden?
2. to continue with the UBC Interreg project Baltic Welcome Centre (2001- 2004)
3. to continue with the UBC Interreg project Ancient Times (2003 - 2006)
4. to initiate new projects concerning sustainable development in tourism
5. to help UBC member cities to more actively engage in the work of the Commission
6. to improve its newsletter activity
7. to improve the Commissions' homepage
8. to focus on information to and training of its members' staff
9. to support activities that encourages development and sustainability in tourism
10. to continue its co-operation with the Commission on Culture

Kyrre Dahl
Chairman of the Commission
City of Kalmar

Viktor Rydell
Secretary of the Commission
City of Kalmar

COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 – SEPTEMBER 2003

In 2001 The City of Göteborg took over the chairmanship for the Commission on Transportation and since then the commission has developed strongly. The commission decided after the meeting in Göteborg in June 2001 to focus on three areas in order to encourage sustainable transport solutions:

- public transport - how to develop the management of public transport systems
- cycling - to learn why and how to improve the conditions of cyclists and pedestrians
- mobility management - exchange of information on the potential for mobility management-tools to develop efficient, sustainable transport habits

The following seminars and meetings have been held during the reporting period:

A Public Transport Seminar and an Annual Meeting took place 18th -19th of April 2002 in Riga. The title of the seminar was “Worst practice in managing public transport – mistakes we have made for others to avoid”. More than 40 participants representing 23 UBC member cities from 9 BSR countries came to the Congress Hall in Riga to listen to speakers from Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark. Questions were raised about strategic planning to facilitate efficient public transport, how to organise public transport and ways to finance investments and to operate the public transport systems.

The Commission on Transportation also had their Annual Meeting in Riga. The participants discussed how the commission will work and how to use the network as efficient as possible. The meeting also included a planning session.

To the Bicycle seminar in Cēsis 13–14 September 2002 more than 40 participants from 20 different cities in the Baltic Sea Region came to take part. There were speakers from national, regional and local level in Latvia presenting the Latvian Cycling Development Programme, The Cycle Route Network Development in the Riga Region and The Bicycle Transport Development Plan of Riga. There were also Scandinavian speakers from Copenhagen in Denmark and Örebro and Malmö in Sweden talking about the cycling policy and route planning in those cities. After the presentations there was a discussion about how to plan for cycling, what the benefits are and how it is possible to change attitudes.

A Mobility Management Seminar and Annual Meeting was held in Tallinn and Paldiski 24th – 26th of April 2003. 35 participants from 15 different cities in the Baltic Sea Region came to the National Library in Tallinn to participate in the conference. Mobility management was presented as a complement to an already existing infrastructure. Questions concerning increased efficiency in transport systems through new technique, attractive transport solutions, attitudes and new forms of collaboration were discussed.

At the Annual Meeting in Paldiski the participants discussed, among other things, how the commission could work and how to use the network as efficient as possible.

Other activities for the commission have been the following:

The first Baltic Cities Bulletin 2002 was focusing on “Transportation in Baltic Cities”. This was at the same time as the Commission on Transportation had its re-start and several TransCom members took their chance to show good transport examples from their cities. The publication also resulted in a growing network of interested member cities.

A questionnaire has been sent out to the UBC contact persons and to the commission’s network in August 2003. Individuals representing the member cities were asked to indicate what subjects they are interested in and what could be topics for the commission to work with. They should also indicate if they would like to be involved in a working group supporting the Commission on Transportation.

ACTION PLAN 2004-2005

- Annual Meeting during spring 2004. Location is not yet decided, but hopefully Lithuania.
- Seminar in connection with the Annual Meeting (spring 2004). The topic of the meeting is not yet decided.
- Evaluation of the questionnaire sent out during early autumn 2003.
- Development of the future working group for the leadership of the commission.
- Continue to develop the network in different ways

Lisa Sundell
Chairman of the Commission
City of Göteborg

Sofie Vennersten
Commission co-ordinator
City of Göteborg

COMMISSION ON URBAN PLANNING

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 – SEPTEMBER 2003 GUIDELINES OF THE ACTION PLAN IN 2004–2005

In general

The UBC Commission on Urban Planning has been a stack network of some 120 professional planners from about 50 cities and towns. They are from 10 countries. The active core of our Commission consists of some 35 planners. They know each other well and are aware of, what is happening in the field of physical planning and public design in Cities around the Baltic Sea.

The Commission with its partners has organised seminars in Malmö (1999), Umeå (2000), Helsinki (2000), Gdańsk (2001), Riga (2002), St Petersburg (2002) and Kolding (2003). We have produced seminar re-ports from the four first seminars. They are a unique collection of description of actual projects in some 35 cities and towns.

The Gdańsk Seminar booklet

The title of the booklet of the Gdańsk seminar is: “Waterfronts, Development Opportunities in Cities”. It was published in April 2002. There are 32 full coloured pages. The main editor was Mr Ryszard Biały from Gdańsk.

Riga Seminar

The City of Riga and the Commission on Urban Planning organised a seminar in Riga 18.4. – 20.4.2002. The theme of this seminar was: “Public Space – Problems and Possibilities”.

In the seminar we had 78 participants and 34 of those were Latvians. The participants came from 31 cities and towns and from 10 countries. The main organisers were Ms Inara Marana and Mr Vilnis Strams from the Riga City Development Department.

In the seminar the participants worked also as consultants for the City of Riga. They studied as planners four different districts in the UNESCO world heritage area in the old City. The participants handled: Inner court yards, the main pedestrian alley in the old City, the green belt around the old City and how to enlarge the commercial centre of the City.

The Riga seminar report is completed and it will be published in October 2003.

In the annual meeting of the Commission in Riga the participants decided that the existing Steering Committee of the Commission will continue in the office for the time being.

St Petersburg Seminar

The UBC Commission on Urban Planning and the St. Petersburg City Administration Committee for City Planning and Architecture with the help of District Administrations of Admiralty, Vyborgsky and Petrodvoretz and the Real Estate Company BECAR arranged a seminar in St. Petersburg 19.9. – 21.9.2002. The theme was: “Developing the Historical Industrial Belt of St.Petersburg and the New Masterplan”. We had 35 participants from 15 UBC Cities and the 8 countries. The main organisers were Ms Anna Katkhanova and Mr Victor Polichouk from the Chief Architect Mr Oleg A Khartsenko’s Department.

In the seminar we handled the historical industrial belt, which is situated around the magnificent city centre. We had lectures of its history, conservation and revitalisation. We had also lectures about the actual real estate development projects in this area and about the legal framework of land ownership situation and in what terms the City leases areas to a developer.

As short term consultants the participants handled the former Warsaw railway station area and the Vyboerskaya Embankment by the river Neva. The St. Petersburg seminar report is under preparation.

ABC II – ALLIANCE OF THE BALTIC CITIES

The ABC – project is a new start in the field of Urban Physical Planning and Public Design in the UBC Cities. It is a new step towards deepening the co-operation and a fine possibility to learn more from each other about possibilities, challenges and problems - and to see results as a built city environment.

The UBC Commission on Urban Planning prepared under the leadership of the City of Malmö an INTERREG III B application: ABC – ALLIANCE OF THE BALTIC CITIES II, A City Network Cooperation for Local Approaches to Regional Strategies.

The BSR Interreg III B Committee accepted on the project 17.12.2002. EU will co-finance the project with max 255.957 EUR in the years 2003 – 2005. This money is the financial support to the participants from EU cities. The Estonian, Latvian and Polish cities and towns made their applications in 2003 to get financial support from EU Phare Fund, but they did not succeed.

The partners of the ABC – project are:

Sweden:	Malmö, Umeå, Kalmar, Sundsvall
Denmark:	Aarhus, Kolding, Nyköping F
Estonia:	Kärdla, Narva, Pärnu, Tartu, Viljandi
Finland:	Helsinki, Espoo, Kotka, Lahti, Tampere, Turku, Vaasa
Germany:	Rostock
Latvia:	Jēkabpils, Jūrmala, Liepāja, Riga
Poland:	Gdańsk, Gdynia, Szczecin

Malmö City Planning Department is the Lead Partner and the Project Chief is Architect Mr Lars Brattberg. The project period is 2003 – 2005.

The common ABC seminars

According to the ABC – project there will be six common seminars or project meetings. According the project programme they will be arranged in:

- Kolding, Denmark April 2003
- Vaasa, Finland October 2003
- Liepāja, Latvia April 2004
- Viljandi, Estonia October 2004
- Gdynia, Poland April 2005
- Malmö, Sweden October 2005

The common seminars will be prepared in the Work Packages 1,2 and 3, led by the cities of Helsinki, Umeå and Malmö. The Work Packages are responsible to prepare the common seminars in their joint meetings.

The common seminars are also open with certain terms to the participants from UBC member Cities, especially from the cities which belong to the network on the Commission on Urban Planning.

For this activity the ABC partner cities and towns will prepare applications to EU funds to receive financial help for their activities.

The Kolding seminar

The first ABC – project seminar was in Kolding, Denmark. 23.4. – 27.4.2003. The theme of it was: “Developed Urban Management, City Renewal and Development Towards Sustainability”.

In the seminar we had 39 participants from 26 cities and towns and from the 8 countries. The Seminar was prepared by the Work Package no 1: Helsinki (lead), Kolding, Viljandi, Riga. The main organisers were Mr Peter Hee and Mr Georg Unna, Kolding Planning Department.

We had lectures about the Danish Planning System above all and about the Regional Planning in Jylland especially in the Triangle Region. It means co-operation between cities Kolding, Fredericia and Vejle. We got very informative presentation about the history of Kolding and the town planning principles. And when walking in the city centre it was easy to notice the results of sustainable urban renewal. The townscape is harmonious and the scale is human.

The participants worked in three work groups:

1. Sustainability in Urban Renewal, New use of old building structures and restore housing schemes
2. Commerce and Infrastructure, Competition between central and external commercial centres
3. Sustainability in new housing schemes

Each work group made also suggestions of their own to the small scale investments in Kolding. Most of them handled how to open the centre of the city and the Lake of Kolding to the sea.

On Saturday we had an excursion To Aarhus guided by city architect Ole Ostergard. We studied the re-opened river, a new canal and pedestrian alleys in the city centre with high quality public design. We also studied the rearrangement of the harbour and how to open the city centre to the sea.

The Kolding seminar report is under preparation and will be delivered in Vaasa seminar in October.

The Vaasa Seminar

The next ABC – project common seminar will be in Vaasa, Finland 16.10 – 19.10.2003. Its theme is: CITIES AS REGIONAL ENGINES URBAN DESIGN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

This seminar is prepared by the Work Package no 2: Umeå (lead), Vaasa, Gdynia, Tartu, and Jūrmala.

The Steering Committee of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning:

Jussi Kautto, Chairman Project Manager, Architect Helsinki City Office	Lars Brattberg Chief of the ABC project, Architect Malmö City Planning Department	Inara Marana Project Manager Riga City Development Dept
Tomas Sikström Head of the Planning Dept City of Umeå	Lars-Göran Boström (substitute to Tomas Sikström in 2003) Head of the Town Planning Office City of Umeå	

WOMEN'S NETWORK

ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2001 - SEPTEMBER 2003

Introduction

UBC Women's Network strives to promote women's participation at all levels of co-operation within the Baltic Sea area building networks not only between the women's organisations and the authorities in the Cities of UBC but also in order to create a "women's lobby" towards the European Union.

In line with international developments the strategy encompasses the promotion of gender mainstreaming adopted by United Nations as well as EU and UBC.

Networking

The network is open to women politicians as well as women working in the administration in the member cities. The contact is developed during UBC meetings, network-meetings, seminars and conferences and continuously with e-mail.

The network is used to inform about issues, events and projects with the aim to keep the interest alive for gender equal societies and to enlarge women's possibilities to participate in the social dialogue and politics.

Women's Network has organised and participated in the following events during the period

Oct.2001	Seminar in Narva, Estonia, disseminating the results of the 3 R-project co-ordinated by Hjördis Höglund. Participating UBC Network women and NGO's from Lithuania, Estonia and Finland.
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- Dec.2001 The Women's Network of Estonian Cities invited the co-ordinator to their meeting to inform about UBC, UBC Women's Network and the 3 R-project.
- April 2002 Round-Table in St.Petersburg, Theme "Women Networking in the Municipalities in the Baltic Sea Region". 21 participants representing NGO's and cities from the Baltic Countries, Finland and St.Petersburg. The meeting was organised in connection to the 2nd Annual Baltic CBSS NGO-Forum.
- Nov.2002 Network Meeting and a two-day Seminar "How to raise money for social activities" with the assistance of Šiauliai City, Šiauliai City Women's NGO Association and Šiauliai University. 60 participants representing NGO's and UBC cities in Baltic countries, Poland, Russia and Finland.
- Febr.2003 Network Meeting in connection to Third Baltic See Women's Conference Women and Democracy in Tallinn.
- Sept.2003 Regina Rass, Paldiski, represented UBC Women's Network in a seminar about the 3R-method arranged by the Women's Network of Estonian Cities in Toila, disseminating information about UBC and UBC Women's Network.

Project activities

Women's Network strives to be helpful in projects dealing with gender issues. We are participating as collaborating partners (no funds) in European projects.

The Network is able to be helpful disseminating the results of following European Projects:

- 1) LIBRA-03/European Programme the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality 2001-05
- 2) Transnational Networks/NET 31 REM/European Program Leonardo Da Vinci

Women's Network answered a call for proposal VP/2003/025/19.9.2003 titled Initiatives against trafficking. The project proposal **Combating the silence and invisibility of trafficking locally** was made with assistance of two Finnish Women's Centres in Turku.

Transnational co-operation

The co-ordinator has on invitation participated in the Planning Committee for the Third Baltic See Women's Conference Women and Democracy, that took place in Tallinn 13-14.2.2003. (600 participants from 12 countries).

The co-ordinator participated in the group formed by four Finnish NGO that took the responsibility of the program of the Human Rights workshops at the Third Annual Baltic CBSS NGO-Forum, Turku, Finland 8-11.5. The theme was Gender Equality and Human Rights in Changing Societies. The workshops gathered c. 100 participants.

Global Partnership with Africa, Lake Victoria Cities, Women's Network represented by Hjördis Höglund. The former co-ordinator of UBC Women's Network, Hjördis Höglund, is involved in the co-operation between UBC and Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Co-operation, LVRLAC. She is supporting the women in this project to create a LVRLAC Women's Network in co-operation with UBC Women's Network.

Co-operation with other partners

NGO's are important partners for the UBC Women's Network. In order to develop contacts and to forward gender-related information to them the Network has invited local women to its seminars.

Resources

UBC has provided the Network with funding, Šiauliai City has helped with the arrangements in Šiauliai and Femina Aboensis with funds and free work.

Conclusions

When EU is enlarging, the interest and understanding of the importance of networks in getting partners for projects has grown. Women in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have engaged themselves in forming networks in such a degree that it brings forth the possibility for negotiations with the UBC cities in

these countries to make an offer to take over the responsibility of the co-ordination of the UBC Women's Network - with a rotation principle - providing the network with facilities and basic funding.

It is important that UBC provides the network's office in the willing city with annual funding for the activities, too.

Many problems need to be dealt with actively when Europe grows. Providing the Network assistance would enable it to actively answer project calls relating to these and other gender issues.

ACTION PLAN 2004 - 2005

Introduction

UBC Women's Network continues to promote women's participation at all levels of co-operation within the Baltic Sea area building networks not only between the women's organisations and the authorities in the Cities of UBC but also in order to create a "women's lobby" towards the European Union. In its work it is using a twin-track strategy focusing both on gender mainstreaming and traditional channels. In line with international developments the strategy encompasses the promotion of gender mainstreaming adopted by United Nations as well as EU and UBC.

Focus areas

Trafficking and violence against women, building a women's lobby within UBC.

Networking, meetings, seminars and projects

The network is open to women politicians as well as women working in the administration in the member cities. The contact is developed during UBC meetings, network-meetings, seminars and conferences and continuously with e-mail.

The network is used to inform about issues, events and projects with the aim to keep the interest alive for gender equal societies and to enlarge women's possibilities to participate in the social dialogue and politics.

During 2004 Women's Network aims to

- encourage national and regional meetings of women involved in the UBC Network and UBC Women's Network
- have two meetings in connection to UBC meetings
- to develop, work and participate in joint projects.
- to arrange one seminar (possibly in May in connection to Women's Forum in Turku)

During 2005

- following the same lines

Global Partnership

Lake Victoria Cities, Women's Network represented by Hjördis Höglund.

Co-operation with other partners

NGO's are important partners for the UBC Women's Network. In order to develop contacts and to forward gender related information to them the Network invites local women to its seminars and keeps on building connections between women in decision-making and women's organisations locally and within the Baltic Sea Area.

Resources

It is of utmost importance that the Network gets support both from the city where the co-ordinator works and from UBC in accordance with the practice for the Commissions, that is: As well UBC as the city involved should offer basic annual funding. The City could also provide facilities and provide facilities.

Conclusions

Many problems need to be dealt with actively when Europe grows and internally becomes free and moves towards a common currency. Providing the Network assistance would enable it to actively answer project calls relating to these and other gender issues.

Ulla Lundqvist
Coordinator of the UBC Women's Network
City of Turku

REPORT OF THE UBC EU-COORDINATORS NETWORK

The EU Co-ordinators network has been inactive for quite some time now. The future of the network was therefore the focus at the EU Co-ordinators meeting.

The meeting showed that there is a need for this kind of network, and a revitalisation should be done. The focus of the network should also be shifted a little.

There is a great difference on how municipalities handle EU issues. The aim should be mainstreaming of EU within municipalities, which means that each sector department in the municipal organisation deals directly with EU projects and has the necessary network and know-how how to do that.

However, only few municipalities have reached this far. Instead most have one person or a small department in the central municipal administration that supports EU initiatives in all or near all municipal departments, collects and informs about EU matters and is active in forming the EU policies of the municipalities. This person is the EU Co-ordinator. He/she has perhaps some other title and often does other things as well, perhaps associated with the international affairs of the municipality.

Sweden and Finland has national networks of EU Co-ordinators, Denmark has "regional" networks associated to one of the regional EU offices. The UBC EU-co-ordinators network should work as a complement to these networks, and perhaps support build-up of national networks in those countries that do not have them yet.

The main tasks of the EU Co-ordinators network shall be

- To be a contact network between professionals in UBC member cities working with EU issues and EU policies
- To be a channel for exchange of information on EU from municipal perspective
- To be a resource for UBC in its role as policy organisation regarding EU policies in the Baltic Sea Region

The meeting formed a temporary steering group consisting of:

Jan Martinsson, Kalmar jan.martinsson@kalmar.se

Sirkka Kotola, Kotka sirkka.kotola@kotka.fi

Mika Akkanen, Turku mika.akkanen@turku.fi

Tove Holmström, Linköping tove.holmstrom@klk.linkoping.se

Juhan Janusson, UBC, will function as a secretary to the group.

"The group shall discuss a strategy and policy of the EU Co-ordinators Network, and arrange a meeting in connection with the next open UBC Board Meeting, which probably will take place in the beginning of the autumn in 2004.

The group will utilise the EU-coordinators network own mailing list in its work to initiate discussions and exchange information. However, the mailing list contains many persons who of different reasons would like to be withdrawn from the list. So the first step would be to revitalise the mailing list.

Juhan Janusson
Political Adviser

TASK FORCE ON YOUTH / NETWORK ON YOUTH ISSUES

ACTIVITY REPORT 2001-2003

Background of Task force for youth participation

1997-2001

Between the years 1997 and 2001 there where a youth exchange going on between several Baltic cities namely Gdansk/Sopot, Kaliningrad, Panevezys, Rostock and Kalmar. Its origin was an initiative taken by the municipality of Kalmar, Kalmar Youth Council and the Regional council for Kalmar county. The exchange was named “YCSF – Youths Concerning a Sustainable Future”, and its focus was on youth and sustainability. As the exchange went on, the young people that participated, started to focus more and more on their real possibility to influence today society and the sustainability of the future.

The conclusion was that young people’s possibility to take active part in society must start on a very local level, and that there are processes needed to support and initiate youth participation in society. The new question that was raised was, is there any organisation in the Baltic Sea Region that is interested in hearing what youth around the Baltic has to say?

The former president of the Union of the Baltic Cities, Mr Anders Engström, expressed a wish to hear young people and to put a youth perspective on the work being done within the network of UBC.

2002

- Short information on a possible way to work towards more evident youth participation within the work of UBC, was held on a UBC Board meeting in Viljandi in June 2002.
- A Task force for youth participation was put together with representatives from different cities: Charlotte Gustafsson, Kalmar, Stefan Birkebjerg-Andersen, Kolding, and Magdalena Marchlewicz, Sopot. The Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth affairs in Kiel was represented by Sandra Weidemann and Kieler Jugendring. Kalmar youth council was represented by Carl Bengtsson.
- The decision was made to arrange a Youth Conference, with young people and civil servants from all UBC member cities invited. Kalmar was to co-ordinate the conference.
- The conference was supported financial by the National Youth Board of Sweden, Nordiska ungdomskommittén, Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs, Municipality of Kalmar, Regional council of Kalmar county and UBC.
- A project secretary, Magdalena Marchlewicz was employed in Kalmar. Magdalena comes from the city of Gdansk and was active as a youth in the first project YCSF.

2003

- **Young Voices of the Baltic Sea Region** conference held in Kalmar, Sweden on 15th- 18th of May 2003, hosted around 100 youngsters and civil servants dealing with youth issues from 8 countries and 34 cities in the countries around the Baltic Sea. The young participants were young people active at a local level: at schools, in youth councils, or in local NGO’s. In the framework of the UBC’s co-operation project with the Lake Victoria Regional Local Authority Cooperation (LVRLAC) in Africa, a further 7 young people from the countries bordering Lake Victoria also participated.

- **The result of the conference and the conference proposal** are presented as the activity plan for the year 2003-2005, to be further discussed and put into a time plan at the Youth Task force seminar at the UBC General Conference in Klaipeda, October 2003.

ACTION PLAN 2004-2005

A Network on Youth issues

The tasks of the network are to promote youth co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region and to work towards youth involvement, youth exchange and youth participation in the UBC member cities.

It should serve as a basis for UBC contact persons on youth issues. The network builds upon existing youth networks of local youth structures as well as upon one youth organisation as a contact point in each member city. The network co-operates closely together with the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs, which is to become a consultative body for the network, as well as with the UBC Secretariat.

The Network will consist of young people as well as civil servants and politicians dealing with youth issues on the local level. Existing youth networks of the Baltic Sea Region will be taken into account. The Network will monitor the agenda of UBC from a youth perspective.

Objectives

- Create a working group and a youth contact net within the Network on youth issues
- Lobby towards nomination of a youth contact officer in every UBC member city.
- Co-operate with the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth affairs in getting an overview of the activities of the local organisations in UBC member cities.
- Monitor the agenda and documents of the UBC from a Youth point of view

A UBC Youth Conference

The focus of the annual conferences is on questions important for young people of the Baltic Sea Region. It represents a forum for young people of the UBC member cities as well as other cities willing to join in, to exchange experiences, finding partners and discuss common issues such as youth participation, EU and Baltic Sea- cooperation and youth influence on local levels. The conference is organised with regard to the UBC General Conference as well as to other for addressing youth issues in the Baltic Sea Region. In the framework of the conference youth representatives will be elected for the "Network on Youth issues".

Objectives

- Work towards a conference on local youth actions within UBC member cities in 2005.

UBC Executive Board

The young people of the Baltic Sea Region consider it of great importance that the UBC Executive Board gets in contact with young people of every city they meet in, with the aim to learn about the views and ideas of the young generation concerning the life in and the future of that very city. We call upon the UBC Executive Board and the UBC Secretariat to work towards the Network on Youth issues".

Objectives

- The Network on youth issues should be active in finding ways and follow-ups for dialogue between the UBC Executive Board and young people in the region during the UBC meetings.

Charlotte Gustafsson
Network on Youth Issues Coordinator
City of Kalmar