

## **Gender equality as a potential for modern and attractive cities in the UBC**

The UBC Working Group on Gender Equality has the pleasure to invite the UBC cities to collaborate in promoting gender equality as a tool for development for modern and attractive cities. Gender equality is important both with regard to justice, and for benefiting in full from the resources in the community. Gender equality is fundamental to the further development of every modern, democratic city.

Some of the challenges that most cities experience are women's lower affiliation (than men's) in working life, their bigger workload at home, lower wage levels of women in comparison to men (maybe "gender pay-gap"?), low number of female leaders, engendering of the educational and working life, under-representation of women in media - as sources and as interviewees. Women are under-represented in elected bodies, and there are few female political and NGO leaders - especially when it comes to «male» spheres of activity such as military, economy, etc. Gender based violence against women is also a serious problem in most of the cities.

These challenges have a considerable impact on the living conditions of both men and women, and also affect the democratic development and the attractiveness of the cities.

The Gender Equality Working Group is, according to its Action Plan, preparing a number of measures to face equality challenges in cooperation with the UBC cities and the Commissions. All interested representatives of the UBC members are welcome to join the Working Group, which now includes members from six countries and eleven cities.

The main topics for the Working Group's efforts in 2017 are: promoting gender mainstreaming in the cities and Commissions, and promoting the adoption of "The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life" by UBC member cities.

The cities will be invited to a seminar aiming to motivate and help to work actively for more gender equality. Information about the most relevant articles of the Charter, and a sharing of experiences by implementing it, will be presented at the seminar, which will take place in Gdańsk on 31 March 2017.

Members of the Working Group will contact each UBC Commission to discuss how the Commissions and their member cities can obtain better results concerning gender equality. Some of the Commissions have already been contacted, and the Smart and Prospering Cities Commission included for example the topic "Gender equality as a potential" in the seminar "Attractive Cities 2016" in Hamburg, September 2016.

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