

MINUTES OF THE 82ND MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Malmö, Sweden, 18 October 2018

1. Opening of the meeting by UBC President and adoption of the agenda. Election of two persons who, together with the President, will check the minutes.

The Executive Board meeting was opened by Per Bødker Andersen, President of the Union of the Baltic Cities. Mr Andersen expressed his gratitude to the hosts for inviting the UBC Executive Board to hold its 82nd meeting in the City of Malmö. The Board held a silent moment in memory of Armas Lahoniitty, a former Mayor of Turku and former Vice-President of the UBC. The Board adopted the agenda, attached to the minutes.

2. Welcome by the Mayor of Malmö, presentation of the city.

Mayor of Malmö, Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, welcomed the participants and presented the city of Malmö.

Malmö is the 3rd largest city in Sweden with around 330,000 inhabitants. It is a city of the young people. Around 50 % of its residents are under 35. It is also a global city, multicultural with over 180 different nationalities.

Malmö is one of Sweden's fastest growing metropolitan centres. From an industrial city (mainly shipyard industry) it has been transformed to the growth centre with a strong focus on sustainability.

The city has been developing dynamically since the Öresund bridge was opened. Connecting Copenhagen and Malmö it ensures that goods, competence and people flow freely between Denmark and Sweden making it possible to work in both countries from one convenient location.

In 2024 the Fehmarn Belt tunnel will be ready connecting continental Europe and Denmark. This will become the new transport backbone between central Europe and the Scandinavian countries and it will all flow up through the Öresund Bridge and Malmö.

Today the city is working towards the Agenda 2030. The presentation is attached.

3. Preparations to XV UBC General Conference in Kaunas, 15-18 October 2019.

The first GC Task Force meeting was held in Kaunas on 12 June 2018.

The Task Force discussed the potential issues to be taken up at the conference, namely:

Integration of migrants and refugees in the BSR cities
Digitalisation of municipal services, best practices
Culture as catalyst for development - European Capital of Culture and other examples
Inclusive cities - all citizens welcome to take part in city life. Baltic Charter The Inclusive City 2040.
Youth participation - nothing about us without us
Talent management/attraction to cities
EUSBSR Horizontal Action Capacity - cooperation of regional and local authorities, business, academia, civil society, etc.
Implementing the SDGs at the local level
Cities promoting renewable energy sources
Energy efficiency in cities eg. communal wooden housing
Circular Economy
Sustainable Tourism in the BSR
BSR Interreg programmes

Mantas Jurgutis, Vice-President of the UBC, chair of the task force, presented shortly the outcomes of the task force meeting that was held in Malmö on 17 October 2018.

The possible topics of the General Conference included:

- Urbanization
- Digitalization (how to use new technologies in a better way to make life easier)
- Inclusive cities (public trust in policy makers, people lost interest in politics)

The questions of the public trust and involvement of the citizens were especially emphasized. Moreover, the youth perspective and participation was found very important and must be integrated in all topics and all levels.

The parallel workshops/seminars could concern:

- Global marco-regions and their strategies
- EU strategy for the BSR – 10th anniversary
- New Urban Charter (Baltic Charter)
- Seminars organized by the UBC commissions

Following the suggestion of the city of Växjö, organizer of the previous General Conference, the programme for the politicians would be concentrated in 24 hours. Also, all agreed the Mayors' lunch tradition should be continued. President Andersen suggested inviting a new EU Commissionaire for regional policy.

Mikko Lohikoski proposed to take into account the EU Presidency of Finland when thinking about the invitations. Also, he suggested inviting Paula Lehtomäki, the next secretary general (from March 2019) of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

President Andersen underlined the necessity of deepening the cooperation with other Baltic Sea organisation. Their representatives could also be invited to the General Conference.

Responding the question of Per Schöldberg, Deputy Mayor of Växjö, Mantas Jurgutis assured the budget for the conference organization has been agreed in the city of Kaunas and the resources have been allocated.

The report from the TF meeting is attached to the minutes.

Decision:

The Board decided proposed General Conference topics should be sent out to member cities for comments.

4. Information from the Commissions/WG/Network concerning ongoing activities and planned activities for 2019.

Cultural Cities Commission

The report from the Commission's activities was presented by Rūta Stepanovaitė, Chair of the Commission, Kaunas.

In April/May the CCC formed a Steering Committee. Currently the Committee consists of Rūta Stepanovaitė (LT), Külli Hansen (EE), Jaana Simula (FI), Czesław Zdrojewski (PL), Radosław Krajewicz (PL), Iveta Ķelpe (LV). The Committee meeting is planned to be held by the end of 2018. The Commission aims to work strategically and across borders with central national and international bodies dealing with policy making for sustainable and inclusive development within the Baltic Sea strategy and EU 2020 strategy.

In 2019 at least one meeting of the Steering Committee should be held and at least up to 9 online conferences should be organized. Also the annual Commission's meeting is being planned. In order to know the needs of current members of the Commission, a questionnaire has been conducted between May and August 2018. About 20% of the members answered the questions. The same survey should be repeated and accomplished by the end of the year.

The cooperation of the Commission with strategic partner ARS BALTICA has been established through collaborating in the "ARS BALTICA Creative Dialogue (ABCD)" project. This is a two-year (2017-2019) project with actives being set in 10 different cities of the BSR. The closest event will take place on 7 November, 2018 at Kaunas Arts House.

Safe Cities Commission

Kaspars Varpins, Liepāja, Chair of the Commission, presented the report and plans for 2019.

The Commission held one meeting in 2018, in Lahti 12-14 June. The topic discussed: the youth safety issues, organizing of large-scale event, climate change and collaboration between institutions. One of the meeting outcomes was the necessity to collaborate with UBC Youthful Cities Commission in organizing a safety activities for the youth in Baltic Sea Region. The next Commission meeting will be held in December 2018 in Liepāja, Latvia.

The Commission is a partner in the CASCADE project (Community Safety Action for Supporting Climate Adaptation and Development). It will develop an online tool for integrated climate change and disaster risk reduction management in urban contexts in the BSR.

The Commission regularly participates in the CBSS and EUSBSR PA Secure meetings.

Cooperation with other UBC Commissions, especially with the Youthful Cities Commission, two meetings, project CASCADE are among the Commission's main priorities in 2019.

Smart and Prospering Cities Commission

Cathrin Truckenbrodt, city of Kiel, presented the Commission's report and plans for 2019.

The Commission organized two meetings in 2018.

- Fehmarnbelt Days 2018; the seminar on the potentials and challenges of digitalization from an urban perspective organized with the Baltic Development Forum on 28-29 May in Malmö
- "Digital mindset in the BSR" seminar, 13 September, Kiel

The Commission was invited to a panel discussion on the importance of harbour, coastal areas as factor of attractiveness and prospering city during the Innovative City Conference in Nice in June. Also it attended the INTA World Urban Congress in Rostock, 21-22 September.

The Commission has been involved as an associate organization in INTERREG 5B Project „Creative Ports“ that strives to foster growth and employment in the cultural and creative industries of the BSR.

The Commission plans to continue its interest in start-ups, to work on the communication strategy.

Sustainable Cities Commission

Björn Grönholm, Head of the Commission's Secretariat, informed about co-chairs and Commission's Advisory Board in 2018-2019. He reported the ongoing activities and projects, e.g., iWATER, IWAMA, Urban Lab, Climate Adapt, etc.

The Commission held its 2018 meeting in Klaipėda on 13-14 September. Its theme was “Sustainable urban mobility. Trends and Challenges in the BSR”.

The Commission plans to continue its work on the implementation of the UBC Sustainability Action programme 2016–2021.

Björn Grönholm presented also the research based web application Ducky. It is a digital tool designed to quantify, visualise and communicate everyday climate activities in order to spread knowledge and motivate people towards climate-friendly habits and sustainable lifestyles. It helps users to achieve their personal targets, and facilitates progress towards business, local, regional, national and global climate goals. Grönholm encouraged to use this app to get more aware of climate-oriented activities.

Youthful Cities Commission

Carsten Adamsen, city of Kolding, Chair of the Commission, highlighted its activities and plans for the next year.

The Commission held two meetings in 2018:

- “Digital tools to improve youth involvement and participation”, 20-22 March, Narva, Estonia
- “European charter on local youth work” and the “European competence model for international youth work”, 8-11 October, Rostock, Germany

Following up on the Commission’s engagement in the two previous EUSBSR annual fora, this year together with BSSSC, ERB and LSU (Swedish national organisation of youth councils) it arranged the 3rd edition of the seminar “Nothing about us without us!”, Tallinn, 4 June. The focus was on which digital tools cities could use to improve local participation and involvement. The seminar hosted 80 participants.

Working Group on Gender Equality

Ann-Sofie Lagercrantz, city of Kalmar, co-ordinator of the Working Group, informed that it is now trying to reformulate the group’s priorities and scope of activities. The main challenge is to find more people involved. The Group plans to develop the cooperation with the UBC Commissions, especially with the Planning Cities and Inclusive and Healthy Cities Commissions.

Communications Network

Irene Pendolin, Communications Manager, announced the planned events, e.g. UBC Seminar on International City and Business Marketing in Rostock on 28–29 November 2018, and webinar on EU funding possibilities to be organised 4 December 2018 by the UBC Secretariat.

Ms Pendolin also informed that the UBC website has been improved.

Irene Pendoline referred to the Per Schöldberg's question about more frequent online meetings saying they are the added value, but still in-person meetings are very important.

Mikko Lohikoski stressed the importance of internal communication in order to improve the UBC visibility in the UBC member cities. Ms Pendolin agreed with that.

The reports are attached to the minutes.

Decision:

The Board took note of the reports and decided to assign 10.000 EUR as start-up money for the commissions for activities in 2019.

5. Supporting Youth Employment and Well-Being - progress report.
Presentation about the new project STEAM.

During the last two years UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being has strengthened a cooperation with the EUBSR (European Union Baltic Sea Region) Flagship School to Work (S2W). The Flagship aims to strengthen transnational cooperation between stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region in the field of education and works in order to prevent early school leaving and develop new support methods for vulnerable groups of students/youth, which means that their goals are parallel to the ones of the Task Force.

Matti Mäkela, city of Turku, chair of the UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being presented the report from activities in 2018.

Study visits, workshops, conferences and other activities were organized, as follows:

- March 2018: Integration of Newly Arrived Migrants and Refugees Conference "Sharing the European Dream" in Rostock, Germany (two workshops: Education and Labour Market Integration)
- Study Visits: Turku (February), Gävle (March), Stockholm (June), Kristiansand (September)
- Dissemination and cooperation workshops in Riga (themes: youth guarantee, attractiveness of VET) and in Vilnius (theme: migration).
- Trainings: Entrepreneurship (Turku), Appreciative inquiry (Malmö and Turku)
- Compilation and dissemination of good practices
- Widening the national and BSR networks
- Flagship Conference in June (Stockholm)

In the autumn the following activities have been planned:

- Study visits (including creation and dissemination of the model Study visit 2.0); starting in Gdańsk (November)

- National and transnational Migrants, Employment and Vocational Education Conference in Turku 31.10.-1.11. (including study visit 2.11.)
- Youth Guarantee Seminar in Brussels (preliminary meeting in November)

Mr Mäkela applied for a possible co-financing of the seminar in Brussels with 5000 EUR.

The Board took note of the Task Force report. Presentation is attached.

Decision:

The Board authorized the Task Force to continue the work plan and agreed to allocate 5000 EUR for the seminar in Brussels.

Matti Mäkela also presented the STEAM Turku project. It is a new initiative started by the City of Turku in cooperation with the local universities and universities of applied sciences. Its goal is to create Science and technology path in preschool, basic and secondary level education in Turku and Southwest Finland. STEAM also offers youngsters direct routes to further studies and the Turku technology campus. Presentation is attached.

6. EUSBSR Horizontal Action 'Capacity', information on latest activities.

The Horizontal Action Capacity and Involvement (HA Capacity) was established in 2015 as part of the second revision of the Action Plan accompanying the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). UBC together with the Swedish Institute and Baltic Sea NGO Network are assigned to coordinate the HAC.

Horizontal Action 'Capacity' supports capacity building and involvement of the EUSBSR key stakeholders.

The Core Group prepared work programme for the period 1 June 2018–30 August 2020. The programme is divided into three areas of activities, each of them include specific actions:

- capacity building:

Organising and funding of development processes (flagships)

Alignment of policymaking on national level with EUSBSR

Annual spring meetings with NC's, PAC's and HAC's

- promotion of involvement and participation:

Co-organize Strategy Forums (Network Village + Speaker's Corner)

Participation Day (prior to the Strategy Forums)

Promotion of involvement and participation

- coordination and communication :

Internal and external coordination

Implementation of the communication plan

The Core Group were called upon to present the work programme for the Interreg Baltic Sea Programme Secretariat in February 2018.

At the meeting in Rostock, 13 March 2018, the Board decided to allocate 6540 EUR divided in three parts for 2018, 2019 and 2020 as UBC co-financing in Interreg project.

The Swedish Institute decided to abstain from the Interreg project but not the other partners. The actual total partner budget for the project is 72 240 EUR of which the 15% own contribution is 10 836 EUR instead of 6 540 EUR.

Mikko Lohikoski, UBC Coordinator of HA Capacity, emphasized the crucial role the cities play in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the BSR. He informed that the HA Capacity coordinators were invited to participate in the preparatory process to the 10th EUSBSR Annual Forum to be held in June 2019 in Gdańsk. The Participation Day will be organized on 11 June 2019.

HA Capacity has been also asked to coordinate the cooperation with other macroregional strategies, covering the Danube, Adriatic-Ionian and Alpine regions. While the Baltic Sea Region and the EUSBSR were the first to start with their macro-regional strategy in 2009, the other regions are also developing well. Each of them can learn something useful from the others.

Mr Lohikoski suggested incorporating the HA Capacity work into the UBC and its Commissions' activities. He encouraged the UBC member cities to actively participate in various processes. It is important that the voice and views of the local and regional authorities are listened to when the European Union and the Member States start to revise the EUSBSR Action Plan later this autumn.

The President proposed that from 1.8.2018 onwards UBC will be in direct charge of the technical administration of HA Capacity, a task which earlier had been assigned to an outside organization.

Decision:

The Board took note of the report and agreed for the President's proposal. It agreed to raise the UBC financing share to required 15% level of 10 836 EUR.

7. Cooperation with CDP, status report and plans for 2019-2020. (SCC)

Björn Grönholm, Head of the SSC Secretariat in Turku, presented the report from the cooperation and plans for the next two years.

CDP and UBC co-campaigned in spring 2017 to get more cities in the Baltic Sea Region to join the reporting. The number of BSR cities that disclosed is 57 of which 20 are UBC member cities. The number of UBC cities doubled after the campaign.

The report “Climate Leadership from Baltic Sea Region Cities 2017” (<https://www.ubc-sustainable.net/library/publication/climate-leadership-baltic-sea-region-cities>) was presented at the XIV UBC General Conference in Växjö last year.

In 2018, cooperation continued (newsletter campaigns, direct calling, CDP participation in UBC Urban Planning Webinar etc.). 28 UBC cities disclosed to CDP during the summer holiday period 2018. He concluded the UBC member cities had an increasing interest to be involved and the received a global recognition and visibility. CDP has continuously indicated a strong interest to continue the cooperation with UBC.

The Commission proposed to sign a new Memorandum of Understanding for the next three years. The proposal for Memorandum of Understanding is attached. It also applied for financial support for the cooperation between UBC and CDP. The application for funding is attached.

Decision

The Board decided the President to sign the new MoU and to assign 9000 EUR for cooperation with CDP.

8. Proposal of the new UBC Social Charter. (Rostock)

At the VI UBC General Conference in Rostock in 2001, the UBC adopted the UBC Social Charter addressing the most important issues that time.

As the circumstances have changed, a new paper could be elaborated on the basis of the experiences the cities gained during the recent migration wave.

Karin Wohlgemuth, city of Rostock, briefly introduced the idea. She reminded about the conference on integration of migrants that was held in March 2018 in Rostock. At the workshops the city delegates analyzed the issue under different aspects:

- Sharing Online and Offline Communication - a Multicultural Package
- Gender and Minorities' Equality and Linking Cultures
- Equal Access to Education
- Creating a Stronger and More Inclusive Economy and Job Market
- Using, Developing, Creating and Designing the City Together
- Safe and Healthy Life for All

- Cohabitation of Religions and Traditions
- Sharing Culture

The method of appreciative enquiry was used. At the end it became clear that the conditions for a well-working urban society do not primarily depend on balancing discrepancies between long-established and newcomers. Above all, it is about equal chances for everybody, about the willingness to equally contribute to the society and to respect each other. It's the human being as such which has to be in the focus. So after two days of vivid discussions the participants noticed that what they were discussing was how they wish the concept of the Inclusive City put into practice.

The essence of these visions could be highlighted in a Baltic Urban Charter 2040. The draft of the Charter could be presented at the next Board meeting for comments.

Mikko Lohikoski pointed out there were two aspects of creating any document: if there was enough time to involve all stakeholders in the process of creating a meaningful paper and if the cities could really adopt it. This kind of document makes sense only if it can be implemented and if it can make some concrete actions.

Ms Wohlgemuth said that it was worth taking a chance to prepare it. The Board decision would be a green light to start the work on the Charter and the time will show if it is ready to be presented to the General Conference.

Decision:

The Board agreed that Karin Wohlgemuth, Rostock, in cooperation with the UBC Task Force on Migration Issues, will proceed with the document elaboration.

9. Concept of UBC National Coordinators. (Växjö)

The Executive Board at the meeting in Rostock 13 March 2018 agreed to launch an initiative to strengthen the capacity and proactivity of the UBC cooperation, by assigning UBC national coordinators in each of the UBC member countries.

Per Schöldberg, City of Växjö, described this idea in Malmö which aim is to improve the information flow between the UBC Secretariat and the cities.

A national coordinator would be appointed in each city which holds the seat in the UBC Executive Board in each UBC member country. It is hoped to strengthen the commitment of the member cities to remain active in and contributing to the UBC network.

National coordinators are expected to act as extended arms of the UBC secretariat and make the dialogue within the UBC more effective.

More information is attached to the minutes.

Decision:

Each Board member city is to propose a national coordinator by 20 November 2018.

10. 'Sport for Values' project. (Kaunas)

Mantas Jurgutis, city of Kaunas, made a presentation about the 'Sport for Values' project developed upon the initiative of the city of Kaunas.

'Sport for Values' project aims at identifying good practice, developing practical tools and disseminating them through a series of workshops, training and conferences for urban sports development. The project was submitted under the European Commission Call for Proposals EAC/S14/2018 "Promotion of European values through sport initiatives at the municipal level" in July 2018.

The partners are: Kaunas, Lithuania (Applicant), La Rissa, Greece, Portimao, Portugal, Umeå, Sweden, Campobasso, Italy, Fazana, Croatia, Sandanski, Bulgaria, Thermi, Greece, Liepaja, Latvia and Union of the Baltic Cities.

Total eligible costs – 227 813,70 EUR. The Grant requested from the Commission – 182 250,96 EUR.

Decision:

The Board confirmed the UBC participation in the project and encouraged the UBC member cities to take part in project activities.

11. Invitation to the International Youth Forum of the Baltic Sea States, St.Petersburg, 28.11-2.12.2018.

Valeria Kodolova presented RUSPROMO organization and invited to the International Youth Forum of the Baltic Sea States in St. Petersburg.

RUSPROMO, Russian Centre for Promotion of International Initiatives, is a non-governmental organization aimed at promotion of international initiatives in Russia and abroad. The Center implements various programmes and projects oriented to boosting multilateral international cooperation and development of Russia's relations with other countries.

The Forum is aimed at finding new ways of developing cooperation with the countries of the Baltic Sea Region, proposing a division into thematic areas in the spheres of energy and transport, economy and business communications, youth policy and civil law. One of its main goals is to ensure communication between public organizations, representatives of the youth and state authorities of the countries of the Baltic region and St. Petersburg.

The Forum is held by the St. Petersburg University of Management Technologies on 28 November – 2 December.

12. Agreement between the UBC and the City of Gdańsk on the UBC Secretariat.

In the letter of 30 June 2015, Paweł Adamowicz, Mayor of Gdańsk, proposed to host the Secretariat of the Union of the Baltic Cities in Gdańsk in 2016-2019. The XIII UBC General Conference in Gdynia, held on 27–30 October 2015, accepted this proposal.

President Andersen informed that the aim of the agreement is to have the arrangements concerning the maintenance of the Secretariat in Gdańsk in written.

Decision:

The Board authorized the President to sign the agreement.

13. Any other business.

a. Credit cards for the commissions.

Planning Cities Commission chair, the city of Gdynia, asked if they could get a credit / payment card in order to make bookings and payments. Until now the secretariat made bookings and payments for the Commissions. The Board of Audit suggested the Board should discuss whether the Commissions can get credit card or payments and bookings should be made from the secretariat as it has been done so far.

Decision:

The Board discussed the question and did not agree for the credit cards for commissions due to safety reasons.

b. Proposal concerning the twin cities.

Karin Wohlgemuth, Rostock, suggested extending the list of the twin cities of the UBC members, that is available on the UBC website, with the cities beyond the BSR. Some cities have already provided such extended lists, some still not.

This cooperation could also be a theme of the future edition of the Baltic Cities Bulletin.

According to the President, it was a question to the cities on how they would like to be presented on the UBC homepage.

Per Schöldberg added it would be interesting to see the map of the UBC members international connections.

The Board encouraged member cities to publish their twin cities beyond the BSR on the UBC website.

c. Cities' experiences on integration of refugees and migrants since 2015

Karin Wohlgemuth stated that UBC cities have been very active in sharing experiences in integration of refugees since 2015. She suggested that UBC should make these actions including results visible on its website in order to make the information accessible for a wider circle of cities. That means UBC should display a record of measures, like meetings/ workshops/ conferences/ symposia, carried out since 2015 and, if possible, provide the link to the events reports/websites. Björn Grönholm suggested creating the database with best practices.

The President said it could be an offer to the cities if they want to share their experiences on this matter. He asked if this could be a part of the General Conference in Kaunas, e.g. a wall could be provided where all interested cities could present their achievements.

14. Next Executive Board meeting.

The Board authorised the Presidium to discuss and decide on the venue of the next Board meeting in February/March 2019.

Per Bødker Andersen
Chairperson

Paweł Żaboklicki
Secretary

Marie-Louise Rönmark
Adjuster

Heiki Hansen
Adjuster

The documents are available at:

<http://ubc.net/document-categories/executive-board-meeting-documents/82nd-executive-board-meeting-malmo-18-october>