

UBC Youthful Cities Commission and Youth involvement

First a quick question from me – Would you – the audience – like to have the speech translated into Russian ?

In the YCC we are not very formal, so my name is just Carsten, and for the period of 2018/2019 I'm – or the City of Kolding is, heading the chair of the UBC Youthful Cities Commission. In 2020 the chair will move to Riga.

As I have no fancy video presentation or power point I would like you all just to close your eyes for 2 or 3 seconds and think about happy young people – you all know them and how energizing this image is. Let that be the image in the background during my presentation, and just keep remembering: Current youth will be the future leaders of the world...

When thinking about youth involvement and especially youth involvement in cities i cannot come up with another structure that tries more to improve and develop this work than the UBC Youthful Cities Commission. We all have the same kind of challenges but the different cities are on various levels of combatting the issues so there is always a city who has a solution to almost any issue.

A little about the history of youth involvement in the UBC. It started out a tolerated issue by city politicians back in 2003 the network on youth issues was created and since then we have tried to create a youth conference every time the UBC has its general conference every second year.

The first couple of times we were mostly just tolerated but over time cities started realizing the youth was not just an irritating group of people but somebody having great potential and ideas for solutions and so the landslide of youth involvement started in the UBC and this year I can proudly say that there is only ONE UBC general conference and we hope that about 100 youth from all over the BSR will take part.

The cities who have committed to work with youth issues have agreed that they must bring youth into the work as well, and so during all of our commission meetings i can say that almost half of the participants are youth so here they have a real possibility to contribute to city development

Not to say that it is easy work – because it is not. One issue could for instance be age – how long are you young. Until 16/18/25/30 or when you have settled down with a job and a family

Amongst the cities we might all be able to agree on topics to discuss, e.g. safety in cities, but the differences between the issues can be large. Safety issue in a small town in Finland can be about having lights on pathways in the park at night whereas in a large city in Lithuania it can be about lowering crimes in certain areas of the city.

And by acknowledging these differences we really can develop the cities by learning from the good practices of others.

In the youthful cities commission we would like to welcome representatives from Saint Petersburg in our future work. We do have a saying that the more the better – we can do more when we combine forces and learn from the great approaches to solving different issues.

Bringing youth work to a higher level is also one of YCC priorities and I can say that since 2016 YCC has intensified the cooperation with other transnational organisations – like Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation, Council of Baltic Sea States, Euroregion Baltic and more.

This cooperation work of the UBC started mainly out as a way to try to get youth involved in the EU strategy forum for the BSR and this year we are creating a CAMP for 100 youth in the 3 days leading up to

the strategy forum. The first edition of the Baltic Sea Youth Camp.

We have had almost 180 applications to participate – 12 of them from Saint Petersburg. Unfortunately, we have to turn some youth down as we only have 100 spots – but our vision and hopes are that it will become an annual camp for youth just before the EU strategy forum

So, with these words I will end my presentation and would like to ask if there are any questions.

Carsten Adamsen

Chairman

Youthful Cities Commission