

Baltic Cities

Bulletin

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*The Baltic Sea Region
as a tourist destination area*

• AALBORG • AARHUS • BALTISK • BERGEN • BOTKYRKA • CÉSIS • CHOUNICE • COPENHAGEN • ELBLĄG • ELVA • ESPOO • GARGŽDAI • GÄVLE • GDAŃSK • GDYNIA • GREIFSWALD • GRODNO • GULDBORGUND • HAAPSALU • HALMSTAD • HELSINKI • JĖKABPILS • JĖLGAVA • JĖGEVA • JĖRMALA • JYVASKYLÄ • KALININGRAD • KALMAR • KÄRDLA • KARLSKRONA • KARLSTAD • KAUNAS • KEILA • KEMI • KIEL • KLAIPĖDA • KÖGE • KOLDING • KOSZALIN • KOTKA • KRISTIANSTAD • KRISTIANSTAD • KRONSTADT • KRYNICA M. • KURESSAARE • LAHTI • LIEPĀJA • LINKÖPING • LOMONOSOV • LÜBECK • LULEÄ • ŁĘBA • MAARDU • MALBORK • MALMÖ • MARIEHAMN • MARIJAMPOLÉ • MIEDZYBROJE • NACKA • NARVA • NÆSTVED • NORRÄLJE • ÖREBRO • OSKARSHAMN • ÖSTHAMMAR • PAIDE • PALANGA • PALDISKI • PANEVĖŽYS • PÄRNU • PETERHOF • PORI • PORVOO • PRUSZCZ GD. • RAKVERE • REDA • RÉZEKNE • RIGA • ROBERTSFORS • ROSTOCK • SESTRORETSK • ŠIAULIAI • SILLAMÄE • SLONIM • SŁUPSK • SÖDERHAMN • SOPOT • ST. PETERSBURG • SUNDSVALL • SZCZECIN • TALLINN • TAMPERE • TARTU • TRELLEBORG • TUKUMS • TURKU • UMEÄ • USTKA • VÄSTERVIK • VÄXJÖ • VILJANDI • VILNIUS • VISBY • VORDINGBORG • VÖRU • WISMAR



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Baltic Cities Bulletin

Dear UBC Friends,

When I think about the Baltic Sea Region what immediately crosses my mind are unique sandy beaches, great sailing traditions and cultural heritage, inspiring mixture of cultures and histories. Dynamism and creativity. Experience and innovations. Diversity.

Do we have our common Baltic identity? We still look for a recognizable brand which is undoubtedly a must to make the region more visible and competitive as a tourist destination. However, we cannot create it out of our cultural context. We need to understand and accept the fact that the Baltic Sea Region's diversity, its cultures and heritage are the greatest assets and these should lie at the core of the region's brand. What may distinguish ourselves is the focus on sustainability, also in tourism, respecting the environment and ensuring long-term conservation of natural and cultural resources.

This edition of the Baltic Cities Bulletin presents the UBC cities' tourism policies, projects and initiatives undertaken to attract more visitors. Also, the interesting stories show how to successfully cooperate with other cities or organizations to foster the tourism development. The articles describing sustainable practices and "green destination" policies developed in cities deserve a great attention.

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region seems to be a good instrument to promote our Baltic diversity as an asset. It is intended to increase the region's attractiveness.

Moreover, the EU Strategy may, if fully and properly used, effectively promote the sustainable tourism potential of the region. The projects aiming at the preservation of cultural heritage and promotion of environmentally-friendly initiatives will hopefully help to work out the common tourism strategy.

The awareness of the tourist potential of the Baltic Sea Region is not enough. The EU Strategy is a chance to act, to initiate or join the projects that will improve the region's accessibility, tourism infrastructure and visibility.

Why don't you spend your summer holidays in one of our beautiful Baltic cities?

With Baltic Sea greetings,

Per Bødker Andersen
President of UBC



Kolding, May 2010



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Palanga welcomes to the worldwide famous Amber Museum



Viking town of Trelleborg is to play host of the 58th UBC Board Meeting on 4 June 2010

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THE BALTIC SEA - neither western nor eastern

by Ewa Kurjata, Co-chair, UBC Commission on Tourism &
Dr Tomasz Studzieniecki, AIEST Expert, Gdynia Maritime University

Estonia is the only country in the world that calls the sea the 'Western Sea' (Läänemeri). For the Finns it is the 'Eastern Sea' (Itämeri); for Swedes, Danes and Germans it is Ostsee; for Latvians, Lithuanians and Poles, and for the rest of the world, it is known as the Baltic Sea.

Once Europe's leader, now the laggard – the Baltic Region has gone through extremes during the last three years. The region that has enormously benefited from the EU membership, both in terms of trade as well as investment flow, has been wrong-footed as the global crisis fully struck in the second half of 2008. Already sliding into recession following several years of neck-breaking growth, the global crisis has severely aggravated the landing of the Baltic tigers in 2008 and 2009.

In terms of tourism, Europe in general is a very stable tourist destination compared to other large regions in the world, reveal the Commission's analyses of the European tourism sector. However, 2009 saw the worst economic recession since 1930 and, although in some parts of Europe and the world started to register growth in the second quarter, it remains fragile. So was the year for the travel and tourism industry. According to Tourism Economics forecast for 2010 no strong rebound is expected. Nevertheless, the WTO experts prognosticate a positive outcome for the BSR when it comes to tourism development against other European regions. The 'Baltic Europe' is treading the path to become the most popular transnational destination area in the world.

The economic recession in 2008-2009 has been strongly associated with an overall European fashion to take holidays at home or in neighbouring countries. Surprisingly people have not been travelling less often and less far, but they have been spending less, "taking shorter trips and trading down", we read in the report. They have been searching the Internet for discounts or making last-minute reservations. Even local travel has been curtailed.

It's not just the historical sights...

Here in the Baltic Sea Region, the past intertwines with the present. Fascinating history of cities, teeming with life and offering a whole archipelago of tourist attractions, await for visitors. And more than other economic sectors, tourism has the particular potential to be an integrating factor around the Baltic Sea, practically fostering direct contacts between inhabitants. But what do we associate the BSR with? Is it a popular tourist destination area? Corporate figures show that this is not really satisfactory. So, can we change this? How? We are destined for a seemingly Herculean tasks.

Despite numerous promotional campaign, joint initiatives and policies, it seems the potential of the BSR as a tourist destination area has not been fully and satisfactorily exploited.

For those who live on the Baltic Sea, it is a unique and an attractive place to visit. However, the region seems to lack a visible and recognizable brand. The region drags behind with its often insufficient or obsolete infrastructure, losing the competition battle.

There is a great need for infusion of investment projects and effective marketing highlighting the diversity of cultures and sustainability that would distinguish the Region in Europe. Attempts taken so far have been futile. Not to mention efforts taken by the Baltic Development Forum, which in Helsinki in 2006 set up an international branding team led by Simon Anholt, a prominent expert on place branding. His team so far have not come up with the concept satisfactory for all stakeholders.

Not as long as 20 years ago the entire BSR engaged in discussions on sustainable tourism development, cooperation and coordination of activities. A major role in developing sustainable tourism was played by CBSS on whose initiative governments of the Baltic countries under Baltic 21 programme had approved tourism sector as one of major priorities of sustainable development. The Iron Curtain dividing Europe at that time made common activities almost impossible. Today, the EU Strategy for the BSR and the Action Plan offer new opportunities to the region, especially in the field of tourism. The task tourism, coordinated by Mecklenburg VorPommern, is integrated in item 12 of the Action Plan, with its priority 'to maintain and reinforce attractiveness of the Baltic Sea'. In this context, the BSR Programme 2007-2013 is an excellent instrument to support common projects to implement the objectives for territorial cooperation.

Appraising tourism potential for more visibility

The tourism industry usually stands out among major industries in creating new jobs, resisting economic downturns, and providing a major source of jobs, including women and youth. Of particular importance to communities both large and small, is the fact that small businesses dominate the tourist/travel industry. Tourism as a diversification industry has many advantages over the traditional type. Cities are a normal and natural destination for visitors as are scenic outdoor recreation areas. Tourism is growing and probably continues to do so not only because income and leisure time are more plentiful, but because tourism is largely unexploited in the BSR. Tourism is clean and therefore attrac-



tive to businessmen and residents alike. However, developing a tourist industry has other, less tangible economic benefits for communities. A very important one is visibility. Many communities suffer (unreasonably) from a bad reputation, due to their geographical location, climate, or perceived attributes. One of the most important is community pride. Visitors, when meeting a proud resident, are likely to be shown more hospitality and have a better time. The visitor will stay longer and spend more money, and will 'spread the word' about 'a great place to visit'. It should be remembered that much of what attracts visitors also attracts industry. New businesses, as ones relocating, seek a popular and pleasant place to do their work as well as profit from a growing tourist trade. Tourism industry has a main problem that is seasonality of tourist traffic. Paradoxically, post-season tourist product together with increasing interest and need for services such as spa and wellness are becoming a chance for Baltic cities' business and administrations.

The potential cultural benefits from tourism though less obvious than economic benefits, may be equally significant. A carefully planned, well-organised tourist business can benefit the resident through exposure to a variety of ideas, people, languages, and other cultural traits. It can add to the richness of the resident's experience by stimulating an interest in an area's history through restoration and preservation of historical sights.

Travel distances and time are negative factors in the decisions of potential tourism customers, in both domestic and international markets, for several reasons. Many people consider the psychological and physical effort that is required to make a trip or journey. They consider the economic cost of travelling. Consumers want to reduce travel time, either by using more rapid transportation, or by going to nearby places. While travel time and distance are negative factors for potential visitors, the power of an area's tourist attractions may be a counteracting positive factor. Negative time and positive attraction factors determine what potential customers choose to see and where they choose to go. A place that offers a large variety of interesting attractions has more pull at an equal distance compared to a place that offers only one or a few relatively low interest attractions. Another rule of thumb is that a place offering many attractions pull people from a greater distance than a place offering few attractions. Many factors have to be considered in overcoming barriers.

Finally, product quality and innovation are important factors to avoid the decline of destinations. But since a tourist usually takes a decision in favour of the destination that offers to meet a bundle of wishes (accommodation, events, activities) the competitiveness of destinations can only be maintained or improved when the respective stakeholders are networking and the adequate public infrastructure is provided.

Branding of the Baltic Sea Region

Promoting the region's image should be an integral part of the EU Strategy for the BSR. Efficient cooperation between state and local government administrations, academics and public sector will surely result in producing an effective marketing strategy. The latter could cover such targets as: allocating foreign investments, increase in trade flows, promoting cultural and scientific initiatives, or developing new tourism offers.

As the Strategy is to be implemented on the basis of an Action Plan, its success will depend on the effective implementation of individual actions. Numerous activities aiming at improving the BSR branding have been put forward on the table. Among them are: drawing up an inventory of social and expert research performed in all the BSR states in order to determine a vision of cooperation and communication areas; commissioning a qualitative on-line study among public sector experts

using methods applied e.g. by the European Business Test Panel) to define actions that should be initiated as part of territorial branding; identifying limitations and shortcomings of individual concepts for the region's branding (based on the FGI qualitative studies); identifying potential barriers which might appear at the stage of branding promotion (e.g. SWOT analysis); visualizing the brand – (a common logo, slogan, monitoring of the effects through brand image study); developing the campaign theme; organizing mass cultural, social and sport events or festivals that would serve as a catalyst of region's promotional actions; creating a Baltic Sea portal as an interactive communication instrument (to support the existing European Commission information services) to popularize the existing EU initiatives and actions for the benefit of the region. Additionally, routes with new destinations, attractive offers from ferry lines, and a fascinating varied world of new culinary experiences could be put on table. The region's identity could be promoted through its own media channel or books. N.B. A recently published book entitled "Crossing perspectives – Baltic Sea Region", deserves a mention as it is a good example of idea promoting.

And the answer is: culture and heritage based brand

Region branding is a process of creating and implementing in recipients' awareness of a brand the philosophy representing a specific product, idea and in this case here – the region of Europe through the use of a visual message (logo, flag, symbol), a verbal and semantic one (a catchword, slogan, thought), a sound message (a tune, anthem) or their combination in the context unambiguously associated with marketing. Branding of the Baltic Sea Region seems to be of a very complex nature. The region itself is shaped by a great diversity of cultures, languages, traditions, history and levels of the pace and economic development. Its identity has not been identified as a common platform for region branding and communication. Never before there has been any global or political need to create such a platform. On the contrary, those differences have been the reason and ground for many conflicts and disputes among the states of the region.

The EU strategy for the region has been based on the region branding concept rooted in common identity. Whether the BSR brand should be created in relation to the European system of values and ideas, which are shared by all the states in the region, in relation to areas bringing together states in the region (here in the scope of material culture those include: architecture or design) or on the basis of the planned priorities of the EU Strategy for the BSR still remains unclear. It seems that the emerging brand should be based on common elements, indicating their shared sources, and not merely common interests. It is also worthwhile considering an option of developing the BSR brand as opposed to the Mediterranean region. Another question to verify is whether the feeling of the BSR's identity exists at all. Does Homo Balticus promoted by the UBC really exist? Culture and heritage are the region's greatest assets and these should lie at the core of the region's brand.

It seems the BSR promoting could focus on such positive aspects as: lack of conflicts, competitiveness and attractiveness, positive growth rate and enormous tourism potential.

As the Swedish presidency in the EU has done a lot for tourism, a synergy of actions by governments and local governments seems a must. Poland and Denmark in their upcoming presidencies will have to take the lead in continuing activities promoting the BSR.

MORE

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Sustainable Tourism in Aalborg



by Nikolaj Bichel

In order to attract more environmentally minded visitors to Aalborg in Denmark, the official tourist agency of Aalborg – VisitAalborg – has begun the process of planning and writing a new concept and a new section for the website, labeled Green Aalborg.

The vision is to present in different categories on this site all initiatives in Aalborg that can be considered sustainable or green. Currently, the works on the four categories: Transportation, Shopping and Dining, Staying and General Initiatives are carried out.

Within the Transportation it is emphasized how many venues of importance or interest in Aalborg are within walking distance of each other. The city bike service is promoted with information on how to borrow one of 135 public high quality bikes. It is also explained how the environmental zone covering the entire city center requires all the city busses to have particle filters.

The Shopping and Dining category will be about a Green Shop initiative, and contains a list of shops that have the Green Shop certificate. Any shops or restaurants that are organic or in other ways



seek to benefit the environment will also earn a mention here.

Staying is the category for those of Aalborg's hotels that have earned environmental labels or certifications or have other sustainable initiatives, like one that buys and conserves an area of rainforest for each guest for example.

Lastly, General Initiatives is a more general informative category, describing the city's green initiatives, participation in EU-funded environmental programs, etc. These may not necessarily relate directly to the actions of the visitor but serve more as additional information for the interested reader.

With these four categories, the visitors are acknowledged with ways in which they can make their stay in Aalborg as sustainable as it is possible for us to offer. This is done both to attract visitors who are conscious of their environmental impact and wouldn't otherwise have come, and to encourage other visitors to support the green and sustainable initiatives in the city. By promoting only businesses that act sustainably on this part of the website, also other local businesses may be convinced to do the same; for the sake of tourism as well as for the sake of our environment.

MORE

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Cēsis Holiday Calculator

by Valda Malceniece

Cēsis – medieval town famous for its romantic castle, old town and "Cēsis Art Festival" in summer – is located just one hour drive from the Latvian capital Riga and is also known for its wide range of winter activities. Ski resorts "Žagarkalns" and "Ozolkalns" provide longest ski slopes and excellent snowboarding possibilities at every level – starting from easy kids' slopes to snowboard park for extreme snowboard riders.

After the summer tourism season 2009 when the number of visitors went down by 8% in Cēsis and by 19% in the surroundings tourism entrepreneurs and municipality made common marketing and promotion plans for the winter season. Common product marketing was not an everyday activity during the last years when number of tourists was constantly growing.

New winter slogan "Get the feeling of Alps" was created by entrepreneurs and Tourism Information Centre in the middle of November last year. The main idea of common activities was to prepare easy to find and easy to use booking system of all activities available in Cēsis. Booking system was made as a holiday calculator showing the potential guests final price and discount on the winter products. All together was put in a holiday calculator where one could make a plan for the weekend including not only accommodation and time

at the ski resorts, but also cafes, ice skating, walking trails and visit to the Cēsis Castle.

Despite the fact that the new booking offer was available in Latvian only and not many reservations were made, the results were satisfying. The idea of working together and understanding the expectations of every involved stakeholder and the common vision to promote Cēsis was the most important. Feeling and understanding that tourism entrepreneurs are not competitors but partners will result in better quality and financial results in the future.

An excellent nature, culture and history mix will be provided by the holiday calculator for summer season in the beginning of May.



MORE

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GATE TO CHOJNICE

by Michał Karpiak

The area of Chojnice located within forests and lakes is a good tourist destination for those who prefer to relax close to the nature. The authorities of the town are aware of the fact that the key to further development of tourism in the region lays in cooperation with neighboring communes and districts.

The Municipality of Chojnice is a partner of the Project „Integrated Tourist Information System: Construction of Tourist Information Centers – Gates of Kashubian Ring and promotional campaign”. The task is implemented together with other communes and districts of Kashubian Region. Kartuszy District Council is a leader of the partnership. The project is realized within the confines of Pomorskie Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 and supported by European Regional Development Fund.

The Project consists of two parts: investments and promotional campaign. Through investments 11 Tourist Information Centers will be created. The aim of the so called “gates” is to welcome tourists to Kashubian Region and to provide them with suitable information about the whole area.

The gate situated in Chojnice will be placed in the town walls’ tower. It will be located in a place where such tower existed centuries ago. The staff will provide tourists with information about hiking



Chojnice is a town situated among lakes and woods

trails, monuments of culture and natural heritage located not only in the surroundings of the town, but in the area of all communes and districts of Kashubian Ring. On the front wall of the building information terminal will be installed for those

tourists who arrive after opening hours of the centre. Apart from informational purposes, the gates will be a place for exhibitions and serve as social facility for tourists.

Promotional campaign of Kashubian Ring will consist of several actions including: creation of website about the region, insert about Kashubia in a newspaper, preparation of promotional materials (folders, maps, albums), outdoors advertisement and others.

MORE

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NEW RECREATIONAL AREAS IN GARGŽDAI

by Eglė Juozapavičiūtė

Gargždai situated in the heart of the Klaipėda District is one of fast developing cities in the Western Lithuania. Gargždai is also the cultural center of the region. Special attention is paid to the local recreation and tourism development not only in Gargždai, but throughout the Klaipėda District. Water lovers are attracted by the tourism possibilities by the Minijos River, Curonian Lagoon or the coastal zone. Western Lithuanian tourist tract „Curonian way”, designed to develop road cycling, reflects Lithuanian history, customs and nature. A rich network of cultural heritage, unique landscapes and spectacular nature make Gargždai and the district attractive.

Recently, all efforts are targetted at searching the alternative recreational areas and their adaptation to the tourists’ needs.

Complex development of the quarry territory, located in Gargždai suburbs, will solve not only the problem of lacking recreation opportunities, but it will also improve environmental quality. In 2009 the feasibility study „Quarry territory adaptation to recreational devel-

opment” was prepared. In this document the main guidelines of areas development were established. In 2010 a detailed plan of quarries territory will be prepared and it would initiate a more rapid development of the quarry site. The project implementation period is 2010-2020. The total demand for funds is about 72.5 million. Lt.

It is planned that the adaptation of the quarry territory will include water and coastline cleaning in all territory. Also, bicycle and pedestrian trails will be built, beaches and tourist campsites will be put into shape. A beautiful park, a walkway and observation sites will be built. Information center and auto and moto racing tracks will be also equipped in this territory. Private sector will be invited to provide various services for tourists.



Unused quarries are planned to become most popular tourist attraction in Klaipėda District

MORE

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Gdańsk - the city on the route of love

by Agnieszka Cichy & Andrzej Rybicki

On 12 February a new tourist product was launched in Gdańsk: "Cities of Love - Gdańsk, Weimar, Verona". Its essence is to tour the European cities known for their great romances: Copernicus and Anna Schilling, Goethe and Lotta and Romeo and Juliet. This project aims to inspire lovers or those who want to fall in love to explore the route of love. Gdańsk is not only the place where the World War II broke out, where Solidarity was founded and the path towards freedom in Europe began, but also the city of great love of Nicolaus Copernicus and Anna Schilling. This is a completely new look at the history of those cities and an offer to an important group of tourists – couples in love.

The initiative aims to promote Gdańsk. A new tourism offer that will reach global customer, provides the possibility to extend the season. The initiators of the Cities of Love are Andrzej Rybicki of the Gothic House and Dariusz Futoma from Scandic hotel with the support from the city and Gdańsk Tourist Organisation. Promotional activities that were undertaken are already bringing the first results and attracting wide interest. Discovery television broadcasted "Gdańsk – city of love" spot on four channels as part of the Cities of Love ad campaign, Gdańsk Love Trail was created and the Betrayal of Copernicus, a book by Artur Górski, has been published. The Ball of Love, contest to select Anna Schilling among Gdańsk's Annas,



the Carnival of Love, St. Valentine's Fair, contest on the bench of love are planned to be organized. Weimar and Verona have already joined the project, which will ultimately include 27 Cities of Love, creating Europe's route of love.

Partners in this project are: City of Gdańsk, Weimar, Verona, Gdańsk Tourist Or-

ganization, Discovery Channel, Travel Aktiv Tours, Airport Magazine Gdańsk Live & Travel, Hotel Scandic and Gothic House. Commitment

and cooperation of those partners is an excellent example of partnership with local authorities to serve the creation of new attractions which increase tourism in Gdańsk.

Join the project at www.citiesoflove.eu. Let's create a Route of Love around the Baltic Sea Region.

MORE

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WELCOME TO GDYNIA!

by Monika Rode

As one of the youngest Polish cities, Gdynia located at the Gdańsk Bay invites to the most sunny (1.671 hours of sun during a year) Polish beaches.

In Gdynia harbour one can visit museum-ships - ORP Błyskawica and a frigate Dar Pomorza. Gdynia Aquarium presents rich and exotic collections of fauna and flora, and the nearby Planetarium will show you a sky full of stars. In its close neighbourhood you can find the only one in Poland - Cruise Ship Alley with granite plaques commemorating the biggest cruise ship visiting Gdynia, the white fleet harbour and modern yachting marina.

Architecture of Gdynia modernism commenced in 20's and 30's of 20th century attracts visitors. It is distinguished by modern construction and functionalism, uses maritime details and serves also an inspiration for contemporary architects.

Gdynia has been for many years the arena of festivals. The biggest ones are: Heineken Opener Music Festival – the best festival in Europe, international Ladies Jazz Festival, Globalta Ethnic Culture Festival, Polish Film Festival, the National Meeting of Travellers, Sailors and Alpinists and many more.

The summer stage of the Municipal Theatre located in Orłowo Beach offers a wide variety of plays to culture fans.

As a city of active people, Gdynia encourages tourists to challenge

The city centre, surrounded by sunny beaches, the harbour and moraine hills with forests offers many attractions to tourists.



Photo Krzysztof Romaniuk

wind and water. An annual event - Gdynia Sailing Days, one of the largest regattas in the Baltic Sea, attracts the best sailors in the world. One of manifold beach tournaments can be played here (volleyball, football, rugby, arching) as well as golf and tennis. For others there is a rich offer of adventure parks, paragliding and balloon clubs.

To many advantages of Gdynia one may undoubtedly add eminent neighbours: 1000-year-old Gdańsk and Sopot resort and on the other

side of the Baltic Sea – Karlskrona, Helsinki, Travemünde – that can be reached by one of the ferries departing from Gdynia harbour. In the summer season the city's offer is enriched with Water Trams travelling to the Hel Peninsula.

MORE

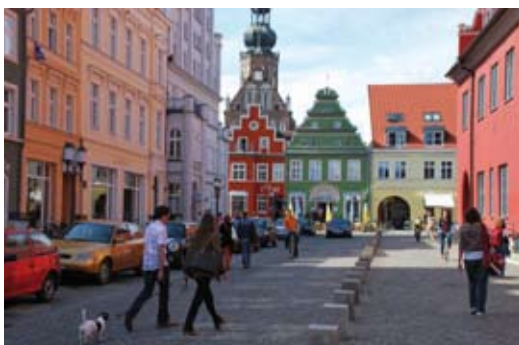
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INTRIGUING GREIFSWALD

by Dr. Arthur König & Jürgen Seemann

Greifswald, a University- and Hanseatic city is located directly at the most popular bathtub' Rügen and Usedom and situated not far from the most beautiful German sailing area. It is a modern city with its ancient flair offering multifarious opportunities to travel, explore, enjoy and to relax within our regional environment. Greifswald's offer to visitors is wide and varied. Either walking through the old town, visiting the Pomeranian state museum or the West Pomeranian theatre, the lido or the zoo, biking or hiking within an appealing landscape, sailing in the shallow coastal waters of the Baltic Sea, or attending the festivals, as well as mari-



time events or enjoying the culinary of Western Pomerania and international viands in full - there's always something for everyone to enjoy. More than 12.000 students create a vibrant city which is colourful and sends out a pulsatile lifestyle directly at the Ryck. By foot or by bike on the Casper-David-Friedrich illustration pathway, visitors can enjoy the monastery remains in Eldena, from one of the most famous painters and sons of the city, who made the town to his central motive during his legislation period. Every year several events like the Bach week, Nordischer Klang (Nordic Sound), Eldenaer Jazz-Evenings, fisher's festival Gaffelrigg and the Christmas market attract people from around the world to the Hanseatic city.

Restaurants and hotels are waiting to indulge tourists in culinary fancy foods.

MORE

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GULDBORGSUND

Marielyst Beach – Making the Best Better

by Frede Danborg

Marielyst Beach - Guldborgsund Municipality's largest tourist destination will become even more attractive. Marielyst Beach is located on the eastern coast of the island of Falster. Marielyst lies in the middle of a 20 km long stretch of white sandy beach facing the Baltic Sea. Every year more than 800.000 guests visit Marielyst of which 300.000 are one-day-visitors and 500.000 tourists are staying for more days giving at total of 1.5 million bed nights. Nearly half of tourists come from the neighbouring countries; Germany, Sweden, Holland and Poland. Tourists enjoy the clean beach, the refreshing salt water and the comfort of the 7.000 summer cottages along Marielyst Beach.



There is a welcoming atmosphere with many opportunities for relaxation and entertainment; golf for the grown-ups, mini-golf for the whole family, great diving opportunities, a go-cart track for those who like speeding excitement, shopping and fine dining. Near Marielyst, tourists can find a number of exciting attractions like the Medieval Center in Nykøbing, The Crocodile Zoo (that has 21 of the world's 23 crocodile species), Knuthenborg Safari Park, four medieval towns with a history that goes 800 - 900 years back and - not least - Gedser Odde which is Denmark's and Scandinavia's southernmost point. A day trip to Moen Cliff, Copenhagen or Rosstock can be easily arranged from Marielyst.

The tourist organisation VisitGuldborgsund and the Municipality have started a process to support and further develop Marielyst as the holiday destination to attract even more tourists, make them stay longer and make better use of numerous tourist offers.

A master plan for Marielyst is under preparation. Using a bottom-up approach involving the tourism service providers and relevant stakeholders in a dialogue where concrete ideas and proposals, it will be developed into an overall and comprehensive plan for the entire area. The Master Plan is to support city's future development into an all-year round destination, develop its identity and image which can focus on specific tourist groups and attract not only more tourists, but also attract new and quality focused investors and tourism service providers.

MORE

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Lifestyle experience in the Baltic Sea Region



by Mika Lappalainen

Helsinki is the Lead Partner in BaltMet Promo project. EU funded BaltMet Promo promotes the Baltic Sea Region on a global scale for tourists, talents and investors. For attracting tourists and travelers especially from Japan, a specific tourism product "Lifestyle experience in the Baltic Sea Region" is created. Lifestyle experience in Baltic Sea Region consists of a differentiated and customized tourism service package for Japanese tourists and travellers to experience the region. During the Lifestyle experience the travellers will familiarize themselves with at least two countries in the region. This gives them a new way of looking at the Baltic Sea Region as a whole, each country complementing the other. Lifestyle experience product will be launched in Japan in 2011. A comprehensive material will be gathered from tourism sector with respect to Japanese tourists' needs and wishes concerning travelling in



the Baltic Sea Region. A guidebook "Guidelines for attracting tourists towards Baltic Sea Region" will be published in English and Japanese providing information on interests of tourists and travellers in the Baltic Sea Region as well as on the different possibilities the region offers for travelers, e.g. lifestyle experiences relating to the nature, trends, food, culture, leisure activities, customs or urban living, etc.

MORE

www.baltmetpromo.net



RE-BORN JĒKABPILS' OLD CITY SQUARE

by Liga Klavina

The summer of 2010 is going to be very special for Jēkabpils because the renovated Old City Square will be reopened in the heart of the city centre. There was a bus station in the past, now it will be the place for resting and walking. Interesting objects will be placed here in order to attract the locals and the city guests.

The city symbol LYNX - a sculpture, made of bronze, pacing across the renovated fountain, symbolizing the river with two banks - exactly like the city's location on the banks of the river Daugava is most interesting.

Close to the fountain, in the quietest corner of the Square, the recreation zone will be organized - with benches and gorgeous plantations. Historically, the Old City Square was created as a market place. In witness of this fact, there will be scales in the centre of the square, made of metal and composite materials. The scales will give an opportunity to weigh oneself either in kilograms or in pounds. Many years ago there was a well at every market place. This fact is registered in Jēkabpils property records in 1930 - called as a water pump. Thus, in the place of ancient well there will be a stylized working pump where the city guests will be able to throw coins in the water basin "to return to Jēkabpils".

There will be a composition called "The story of the city" located



in the southern part of Old City Square at the memorial oak. It will consist of metal plate figures with people's photographs that had lived and created Jēkabpils during the centuries. The Old City Square will be used as a car parking place daily, but on holidays it will serve as a market or place for concerts and special occasions. The project is financed by the European Regional Development Fund and its main target is to create a new tourism product - place where people can meet and enjoy being together. The reconstruction works started in 2009 and will finish in May, 2010. Under the project the Old City Square logo, the advertising film, leaflets for tourists and visitors, and the participation in tourism exhibition are included.

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ALL ROADS LEAD TO JÕHVI

by Maria Laanemäe

The motto "All roads lead to Jõhvi" describes the town and the Jõhvi county, located in the eastern part of Estonia. It is impossible to cross the county by-passing Jõhvi. Located at the intersection of the biggest transport through-passages of the country (the highway St.Petersburg - Tallinn and St.Petersburg - Valga, the railway Tallinn-Narva) and being only 50 km away from the eastern border between Estonia and Russia, Jõhvi harmoniously combines the dynamism of contemporary logistical centre with a charm of a little town.

Jõhvi is the regional center and actively participates in different projects, aiming at the development of the area, infrastructure, entrepreneurship. In 2009 the new Sport Hall was opened in Jõhvi, where local citizens and tourists can play tennis, basketball, volleyball. It also offers fitness. The Sport Hall has the stand seating for 600 viewers which allows to organize the competitions on the national level. Also, in 2009 Jõhvi has started to build the pedestrian's promenade, which will cross the town, and will become its central area.

The cultural life of the town is also actively developing. This year the 3rd International Ballet Festival was held in a modern Concert House. The artists from Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Russia, Czech Re-

The Mihkli church and the beginning of a pedestrian's promenade



photo Erika Prave

public were participating. In April the regular Handicraft Festival „Viru Nikerdaja“ will be held, where the articles made in different techniques will be presented. In July, residents and tourists of Jõhvi can enjoy colorful performances within the festival of cultural societies, which will present the national songs and dances of different cultures.

MORE

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Always ready with the new tourist products

by Ilze Borovska

Jūrmala City Council carries out a lot of activities to attract more tourists to the city and show its beauty. Already during the first two months of the year, representatives of the Department of Tourism and Foreign Affairs of Jūrmala City Council have participated in six tourism fairs in Latvia and abroad (Holland, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania), and will participate in three more tourism exhibitions (Russia, Belarus) during the year.

Every year the main Jūrmala's image brochure in 9 different languages is issued to satisfy the needs of guests, and make them feel more comfortable. Besides, the image brochure that includes the entire information tourist could need, also the thematic brochures about SPA treatments in Jūrmala are offered.



Electric automobile offers excursions through Jūrmala.

Before the most active season – summer, some educational presentations and seminars about the news in the city are held for the representatives of our hotels, restaurants and other tourism attractions.

Every year Jūrmala introduces new tourism products, of which the latest were the river ship "New Way" that offers trips along river Lielupe, as well as in route "Riga-Jūrmala-Riga", and also the electric automobile. Also, this year some new tourism products will be launched in May together with a resort season opening festival. To set and implement long term aims, the tourism strategy, as well as the resort conception have been approved. The main aims are to develop sustainable tourism maintaining the nature unchanged, but at the same time offering the best product for guests – the advantages of local healing natural resources – mineral waters, medical mud and climate that is favorable itself. In winter there are opportunities for distance skiing and ice skating. Jūrmala tries to become more and more attractive also during spring and winter when people are coming to Jūrmala to regain their health in the wide range of SPA hotels and resort rehabilitation centers.

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Kaliningrad – the unique mixture of past and future



by Nina Vyshnyakova

The most western city of Russia is the successor of the diverse and dramatic history which lasted eight centuries. Both the local authorities and the community are making efforts to preserve and reconstruct the existing Kaliningrad monuments of architecture, and history. The cathedral founded in 1333 looks nowadays as centuries ago. Activities aimed at preserving and proper using of the fortification architecture units situated in Kaliningrad are undertaken. The modern vision of Kaliningrad outlook comprises the project of possible reconstructions



of the ancient King's Castle, as well as building up the brand of new modern multifunctional complexes. The project of the large-size music theatre construction is under preparation. Tourism development of the tourism sphere is among the strategic priorities. The municipal and regional authorities contribute greatly to construction of new hotels, foundation of leisure and cultural centers. Developing the transport infrastructure of the city is of great importance. Considerable financial funds are allocated for preservation and renovation of Kaliningrad greenery. The program on revitalization of the city's lakes, rivers and brooks has been re-

cently launched. The project "Marine Gates of Kaliningrad" is being currently elaborated. The project implies more active tourist use of banks of the Pregol River.

The Kaliningrad region is deservedly called "the amber region" not only because of the world's largest amber minefield. Hundreds of Kaliningrad artists offer a diverse assortment of the amber handiwork. One of the largest museums in the region, situated in the ancient fortification, is devoted to the history of the amber craft. Another interesting place is the World Ocean Museum where apart from the artifacts a wide range of ships are exhibited. The municipal Museum "The Fridland gates" offers an interesting insight into the traditions and way of living of the East Prussian population. Kaliningrad is connected with the seashore by means of the thoroughway, which is constantly reconstructed. The Kaliningrad's airport is predicted to become one of the largest international airports in the BSR in the nearest future. The projects of possible triple cooperation between Poland, Russia and Lithuania are being developed, including organization of mini-cruises around the gulfs washed by the Kaliningrad peninsula, excursions around the Warmino – Mazursky system of channels, tourist visits to Gdańsk, Frombork, Kaliningrad and Klaipėda.

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CITY OF KARLSTAD

KARLSTAD – a tourist destination under development

by Nina Höjdefors

Karlstad is situated halfway between Oslo and Stockholm. Karlstad lies on the river delta where two of Sweden's great natural waterways meet; the 500 km long River Klarälven and the mighty Lake Vänern, with its archipelago of 22 000 islands.

In 2004 the City Council decided to invest in tourism. It became one of four important focus areas. In 2005 Karlstad and neighbouring municipalities Hammarö, Forshaga, Grums and Kil joined the Interreg IIIB North Sea Region project Canal Link. The most important outcome of the project is the development of a 10-year long strategy with the goal to double the turnover, number of employees and tax revenue within the tourism industry in the region. The Strategy was approved of by all municipal councils in Karlstad, Hammarö, Forshaga, Kil and Grums. In 2008 Karlstad joined the Interreg IVB North Sea Region project named Waterways for Growth. This project focuses on activities to stimulate business and product development and networking. For example "speed dating" amongst businesses was arranged. The purpose was to provide a "meeting platform" for businesses. The entrepreneurs start to cooperate, share ideas and produce packaged



tours. 41 businesses participated in all together 158 meetings in January.

The new technology solutions are being estimated to see how they can be used to support businesses and link businesses to costumers.

A new website for tourist information was created:

www.destinationkarlstad.se.

The final release will be in

May. Young people, visitors and the local businesses were consulted about the website.

A marketing research was made 2009 to find out who the Swedish and Norwegian visitors were, where they came from and what they were interested in. A summary of the analysis will be translated into English and distributed among the partners.

MORE

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RYANAIR'S NEW BASE IN KAUNAS

by Dainoras Lukas

Ryanair, the low-fare airline company, will open its 40th (and first Central European) base in Kaunas in May with 2 based aircraft and 18 routes (9 of which are new). Ryanair's new base will provide service for more than 1 million passengers per year and sustain 1,000 jobs at Kaunas with over 120 weekly flights as "Ryanair" invests over \$140 million at Kaunas Airport.

Ryanair will pursue over 120 flights weekly. Hopefully, the airport will reach around 1,5 million passengers yearly.

From the spring passengers using this airline will be welcomed to take flights to Barcelona, Berlin, Dusseldorf, Edinburgh, London (Gat), Milan, Oslo, Paris and Tampere.

The airlines will invest over 140 million of dollars into the new base placed at Kaunas Airport, save around 1000 workplaces and engage 150 pilots and stewardesses.

"New routes will be especially important for Kaunas in 2011, when the European Men's Basketball Championship and the International Hanseatic Days 2011 will take place in Kaunas City"; - said Andrius Kupcinskas, Mayor of Kaunas.

Kaunas is Lithuania's second largest city and Kaunas International Airport is the second busiest airport in Lithuania. Kaunas Airport handled over 456,000 passengers in 2009, with 11% increase from 2008.

Ryanair's Kaunas routes

from May 2010
Barcelona (Spain)
Berlin (Germany)
Dusseldorf (Germany)
Edinburgh (UK)
London (Gat) (UK)
Milan (Italy)
Oslo (Norway)
Paris (France)
Tampere (Finland)



MORE

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An icy experience in Kemi

by Kemi Tourism Ltd

The seaport city of Kemi is located in northern Europe, in Finland, near the Arctic Circle. In the winter the field of ice, which forms up in the northern part of the Gulf of Bothnia, is the largest in Europe, offering fascinating possibilities for finding and experiencing the real arctic. The Ajos harbour in Kemi is the only place in the world, from which in just a few hours, one can experience the enchantment of a quiet shoreless field of ice and the breathtaking majesty of an arctic winter. In early November the Gulf gradually begins to freeze and the ice season lasts until May.

Thousands of groups from all over the world have experienced the icy, but heart-warming adventure in safe arctic conditions. Icebreaker Sampo, the only passenger icebreaker in the world, and the exotic experiences have been the subject of dozens inspiring television documentaries and hundreds of interesting newspaper and magazine articles in Europe, America and Asia. A northern winter isn't just plain dark-



Icebreaker Sampo can take 150 passengers on board. There are sixteen people in the crew. The length of the vessel is 75 meters, beam 17,5 meters and draught 7 meters. The 4 main engines can generate 8 800 horse powers.

ness. It also has white snow, soft light blue sky, bright sunshine, the scenery becomes blue as the day darkens slowly in the evening, but it never turns into a dark black night. The northern lights blaze in the sky of Lapland. The stars twinkle brightly and the moon lights the cross country skier's night trail.

Throughout the ages, people have struggled to control their environment in order to stay alive. This is also the case in the arctic world. Without an icebreaker, seafaring at this latitude would be impossible in many months. The help of an icebreaker with its special equipment has been vital to keep routes open. When nature surrenders to technology, a fascinating scene is born. Over a meter thick ice cracks and breaks spattering and crackling as the force and the speed of the icebreaker tackles it. Before Sampo became a passenger vessel, it served nearly thirty years owned by the Finnish government as an icebreaker for the serving, the shipping companies. Approximately sixty percent of the world's icebreakers are built in Finland.

The expertise of the Finnish ship building industry shows how the technical equipment can still be original, yet functional and safe.

MORE

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KLAIPĖDA: AMBITIONS UNVEILED



by Dalia Pleskoviene

Klaipėda is located in an attractive tourism zone. The strategic priority of the municipality to develop tourism products, active recreation, cultural, ecological and conference tourism resulted in launching large infrastructural projects. They improved the infrastructure of the quays for sailing vessels, the maintenance system of beaches, the access to cultural objects. Currently, the city carries out several large infrastructural projects, mostly co-financed by the EU funds.

With the aim to develop the incoming, cognition and conference tourism, a project "The Recreation, Construction and Readjustment of Klaipėda Castle Bastion Complex" is being implemented. It also includes the development of the Lithuania Minor History Museum and public events infrastructure. Klaipėda Castle Place is among the most



historically valuable heritage objects in the Lithuanian coastal area. The Castle was the cradle of the city - for this reason the authorities, architects and archeologists resolved to reconstruct it. The objective of the project is turning the territory of the Old Klaipėda Castle and the Dane river embank-

ments into tourism and entertainment center for the whole Lithuania and the region, attractive with revived true valuables of history, archeology, museums, maritime culture, quays for entertainment vessels, cafés, restaurants, a conference center, small hotels, a fish market and ancient workshops. The feasibility study has already been carried out, and the project currently is in its first stage.

Klaipėda successfully develops the infrastructure of seaside cycling tracks and camping. Irresistible coastal nature invites hundreds of Klaipėdian families and foreigners to enjoy biking along perfect cycling roads that reach further on to Latvian seashores. Last year a four star European standard camping opened its gate as the result of a project "The Development of Accommodation Services in Klaipėda by Establishing a Camping on the Seashore".

Till 2011 a project "The Arrangement of Klaipėda Leisure Park and its Adjustment to Tourism and other needs" will make the existing park shine anew: the greenery, the park lanes, illumination, benches, tennis courts, new sites for family relaxation, playing-fields, cycling tracks and skateboarding grounds – everything will serve for a high quality recreation. The cycling tracks of the park will provide an excellent access to the sea directly from the city center.

Tourism is inseparable from culture, therefore the city expects much from the project "Klaipėda Tobacco Factory Reconstruction and Application to Cultural Industries". The result of the project will be a real Acropolis of our harbour city culture, where under one roof dashing creators of modern arts and small and medium entrepreneurs will work in cultural industries attracting tourists to various outdoor events and workshops.

All those projects alongside with large private ones transforming ship building and cargo handling areas in the city center into the most modern recreation, culture and residential areas will definitely make Klaipėda's most ambitious vision to be among the most attractive tourism destinations in the Baltic Sea Region.

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The City of culture and nature

by Robert Grabowski

Koszalin is located on Lake Jamno just 5 km from the Baltic Sea. Over 40% of city's area is overgrown by trees and other plants and the Pomeranian Dukes Park. The eastern Koszalin is surrounded with a municipal forest with the Chelmska Hill where there is a tourist and pilgrimage complex with a view tower and St. Mary's Sanctuary. Anyone can reach the seaside Mielno from Koszalin both by car or bicycle. Since 2008 a railway bus service bringing tourists to the seaside just in 15 minutes has been operating. Also, a ferry service on board mv „Koszałek” across lake Jamno was initiated; this has won the second place in the Best Tourist Product of the Middle Pomerania competition. The boat takes onboard 67 persons; also spaces for wheelchairs and bicycles are provided. A section of the European bicycle route E9 "Seaside" (red route) runs just in the vicinity of the harbour. Koszalin is a vigorous, diverse and optimistic city. No wonder that city's tourist offer is addressed to people who are interested both in good health as well as perfect relax and good time, all of this available in unique natural environment, between the sea and lakes. It is well worth to see 27 marked Koszalin attractions located at the Old Town Tourist Trail (including, among other things, Neo-Gothic

edifices of the Main Post Office, State Archives, Regency Building, Fire Brigade or brewery buildings). The city belongs to the European Brick Gothic Trail association promoting the most valuable historical monuments of Koszalin such as medieval town wall or Cathedral Church of the 14th century. In the north outskirts of the city there is the Our Lady of the Rosary church dating back to 1278.

Koszalin is also a regional centre for culture. The city has the biggest in Poland roofed amphitheatre accommodating up to 6000 spectators. Numerous events that enjoy the status of permanent culture events such as "Young People and Film" Film Debuts Festival, Summertime Cabaret Festival, Polonian Choirs Festival, International Organ Music Festival, International Accordion Bands Festival or Hansa Jazz Festival are held in the city.



MORE

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by Sanna Nikki

Kotka is situated on the southern coast of Finland and it is served by excellent traffic communications, only one and a half hours' drive from Helsinki. Kotka boasts a fascinating history on the border of Russia, which lies 65 kilometres away from Kotka. The distance to St. Petersburg is less than 280 kilometres.

In Kotka, maritime archipelago idyll, charming nature, verdant parks and unique architecture may be enjoyed. The archipelago is one of the most beautiful parts of the Gulf of Finland.

Maritime Centre Vellamo hosts the Maritime Museum of Finland, Museum of Kymenlaakso, and Information Centre Vellamo. The museums put new perspectives into maritime history and the past of the Kymenlaakso region. Kotka Maretarium is Finland's first aquarium that meets international standards. It pays tribute to the Finnish aquatic life. At Maretarium, one can come eye to eye with over 50 indigenous fish species.

Kotka is famous for its many beautiful parks. The Sapokka Water Garden is the most prize-awarded park in Finland. Sapokka is an old sea bay which has been rebuilt into a charming oasis. The Water Garden begins to blossom in the spring, and the display of colours continues until late autumn.

The unique Imperial Fishing Lodge in the Langinkoski Nature Reserve is the only building outside Russia built for the Imperial family. Tsar Alexander III of Russia visited Langinkoski located at the estuary of the river Kymijoki at the end of the 19th century.

Kotka is a new international cruise destination. From the beginning of 2008 Kotka has taken part in the Cruise Baltic project, which was established in 2004 with the intention of promoting the Baltic Sea



The Maritime Centre Vellamo, built in a genuine harbour environment in 2008, is an abstract interpretation of a wave and is in itself an attraction.

Region as a cruise destination and increasing the number of cruise ship passengers in the region. Today Cruise Baltic includes 27 destinations in the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea offering them better visibility through co-branding and partnership in an outstanding network. The first cruise liner M/V Athena visited Kotka in August 2009. In May 2010 Kotka is waiting for M/S Alexander von Humboldt with 470 guests.

The Central Port of Kotka is right in the heart of the city and there is also plenty to see within walking distance.

MORE

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WELL-LOCATED KRISTIANSAND

by Randi Haukom

Kristiansand is situated on the very south coast of Norway, facing the European continent and surrounded by water on three sides. Although the whole town centre fits within one square kilometer, it is Norway's fifth largest city.

The Kristiansand area is known for busy summer harbours, white wooden houses, a rocky coast with skerries and a lot of festivals. You can see lions and tigers at Kristiansand Zoo and Amusement Park, visit Vest-Agder County Museum – a cultural history museum and open-air museum, Sørlandets Art Museum, Galleri Bi-Z or see one of the world's largest cannons at the Cannon Museum.

Kristiansand is easy to reach no matter whether you travel by car, bicycle, bus, train, ferry or plane.

Kristiansand Airport Kjevik is situated 12 kilometers east from the city centre and has good world-wide connections with daily flights via Oslo, Copenhagen or Amsterdam.

The port of Kristiansand is the second largest in Norway. This is not only due to the long sea-faring traditions in the town, but to the town's strategic hub position to the rest of Europe. Different



shipping lines are responsible for trade, transport and contact with the Norwegian coast and Europe as a whole. We are also visited every year by more than 20 cruise ships.

Kristiansand is well served by the Norwegian State Railways (NSB) and coach companies such as for example Nor-Way Bussekspress, Konkurrenten and Lavprisexpressen.

To the east and west, as well as to the north through the picturesque Setesdal Valley, Kristiansand gives priority to safety for cyclists. Kristiansand is a pioneer town for a network of separate paths for cyclists and walkers.

MORE

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170 years of resort traditions in Kuressaare



by Ingrid Tilts

The history of Kuressaare as a tourist destination goes back to 1832 when a steamer took 20 visitors over from Riga. They took a stroll in town, spent some hours in the surroundings and boarded the vessel again.

In 1840 the first mud treatment establishment was built, followed by next ones in 1876 and 1883. Several thousands of people from a number of countries around the Baltic Sea used to spend their summers here, leading to the improvement of the town environment and development of a rich cultural life.

Today, when Kuressaare is celebrating its 170th anniversary as a resort, seven high standard spa-hotels offer a variety of modern health and wellness services to any taste and demand year-round. Moreover, there are plenty of opportunities for active leisure and things to enjoy in Kuressaare.

Tourism is an important industry for Kuressaare and the island of Saaremaa where it is located. Much has been achieved to make the city looking and feeling lovely. One can enjoy all modern amenities in Kuressaare, still the wildlife and countryside with a number of nature treasures are just a few steps away on the second biggest island in the Baltic Sea.

These days travelling is not such an effort, the world has become smaller and people want to visit possibly many places once they



have left home. During the recent decade, Kuressaare has joined several projects in order to cooperate with our neighbours in Latvia and Finland but also in Estonia to attract visitors and create a win-win situation for every project partner. Currently, we are implementing a project with Ventspils and Talsi district of the Kurzeme region in Latvia. The project, called One Vacation-Two Countries, is supported by Estonia-Latvia programme and aims at developing beach infrastructure and promoting two countries as a joint tourist destination by producing advertising materials complementing each other and jointly disseminating information on our common region at tourist fairs in five countries.

The Swedish island of Gotland has throughout history been a natural place to communicate with. During the period when Europe was strictly separated into East and West, this connection was cut. Kuressaare, Ventspils and Gotland have taken up a joint initiative to restore the connection and submitted a project application to the Central Baltic Interreg IVA programme to

support the need for natural neighbouring to be met. This year we welcome everyone to celebrate the resort anniversary and have your share in Opera Days, Maritime Week, Chamber Music Days, spa-tourism conference, exhibition about history of resorts in Kuressaare, and other events.

MORE

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Towards sustainability with sustainable travel

by Päivi Liikonen

Lahti has a vision to be a leading environmentally focused city by developing sustainable development in all of its activities and functions and it has named sustainable development as one of its values along with desire for development, community and responsibility, in its new strategy 2025. Sustainability is also central in the newly published tourism strategy of Päijät-Häme region, which emphasises the importance of community responsibility of tourism enterprises. ICER (Innovative Concept of Eco-accommodation approach in rural Regions: Public support policies for eco-investors) project is a project that will further promote sustainability especially in the field of tourism and accommodation in Lahti Region. Lahti Region Environmental Service is one of seven European partners in ICER. The project started in January 2010 and will finish in December 2012. The main aims are to promote sustainable travel and environmentally friendly accommodation and to create more effective economic attractiveness policies in rural areas in the tourist sector. The project is financed by the Interreg IVC programme of European Regional Development Fund. To exchange experiences and good practices, which are the base of the project, study visits to each partner region will be organised. As an output of the project a Public policies recommendations book will be published to help public bodies to gain better results from sustainable tourism as a component of regional development.

Ski resort of Mesilä is taking steps towards sustainable tourism and thus contributing to the aims of the tourism strategy of Päijät-Häme



In Lahti the activities will be focused on environmentally friendly accommodation. Workshops with local tourism SME's are planned to be held for example about minimising their carbon footprint and environmentally friendly building and renovation.

ICER project is part of a larger plan since Lahti is involved in the planning of a Päijänne-Vesijärvi biosphere reserve. Biosphere reserves are part of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere programme and they are model regions for sustainable development. ICER project is a step towards more sustainable living and thus brings important concrete action to the process of promoting and becoming a biosphere reserve.

MORE

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TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN LIEPĀJA

by Zane Gaile

Tourism is one of Liepāja's development priorities and over the years various tourism offers have been developed suitable for different tastes and interests.

One of them is the walking route "Follow the notes!" (established in 2007). The concept of the project is rooted in the well-known image of Liepāja as a city of music. It is one of the ways how to discover Liepāja and its most popular sights on your own – just following musical notes set in the pavement at certain intervals and learning about the tourist sights in the city centre. The route is extended each year and made more attractive. "Follow the notes!" is a tourism product not only appreciated in Latvia. It was recognized also as the 3rd place winner of the tourism project competition organized by UBC Commission on Tourism in 2009.

Another important initiative for the development of tourism in the city is improvement of the facilities for bicycle riders. One of the current projects co-financed by the ERDF provides for a construction of a new bicycle path (total length of 7.6 km) leading throughout the city. It will be interconnected with the already built spans of cycling paths.

Also, some of the grimmest pages of our history have been turned into the most demanded tourism products in Liepāja. It is Karosta, the former Soviet military base. Already since 2002 the most popular



tourist attraction in Karosta is Karosta Prison, where each visitor is sure to find something interesting - informative tours, nerves-tickling reality show "Behind the bars", a prison-style meal or extreme overnight stay. To explore the Northern forts visitors can join a torch-light

tour through the underground labyrinths or become players in the spy game "Escape from the USSR". Starting the game you are taken back by several decades to live through the episodes of our country's recent history - the Soviet occupation period. The game provokes active participation of the players making them think, search, run, hide, take decisions, help the others. The task of the game is to overcome various obstacles through cooperation and acting together and to find a friend who is not able to move without assistance and bring him to a safe place - a submarine.

MORE

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30 "FABLE-TASTICS" IN LÜBECK

by Doris Annette Schütz

With 30 certificated service partners Lübeck has now achieved a very important aim of becoming Schleswig-Holstein's most service orientated city. In 2007 the Lübeck and Travemünde Marketing GmbH (LTM) - the city's tourist board - started the initiative

called "We are fable-tastic" in the Hanseatic City of Lübeck to improve the quality of service. The aim is to become the most service orientated and most hospitable city in Schleswig-Holstein with 50 partners by the end of 2010.

Service orientation and customer satisfaction are of utmost importance during every single activity - a taxi drive, the hotel accommodation, the check-in procedure at the reception desk, the experiences made in different shops, a guided city

tour during all holiday or short break activities in Lübeck and Travemünde.

This service and quality improvement initiative is based on the activities of "Service Quality Germany" launched by the German Tourism Association (Deutscher Tourismusverband) with 15 quality-conscious Federal Lands guaranteeing a high service standard in the travel destination Germany. The campaign "We are fable-tastics" was awarded with the German tourism prize in the category "Special prize service quality" at the German Tourism Day in 2009.

Currently there are 30 certificated companies and 180 trained quality coaches from 66 partner companies in Lübeck and Travemünde such as hotels, pensions, retail stores, restaurants, museums, taxi companies, dental offices and much more.



ServiceQualität
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www.luebeck-tourism.de



tour, a canal cruise or a visit to a museum. The idea is to make every visitor's experience and impression pleasant and enthusias-



Malbork – one day is not enough

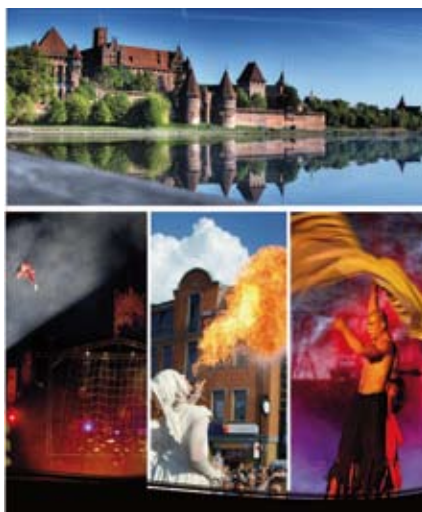


by Magdalena Marszałkowska

Malbork, best known for the largest Gothic castle in the world, now has a new face. In 2009 the heart of the town was renewed. With projects such as the Malbork Welcome Centre, a new public space has come into being on the main Kościuszki Street in the centre of Malbork. The works began on a pedestrian precinct, the "town furniture" project, and the Town Information System.

The pedestrian precinct has become not only a meeting place for the town's residents, but also a venue for exhibitions, parades, a street theatre and fairs. Also, the access routes to Malbork Castle have been rebuilt. The historic rail station will delight residents and tourists with a new, well-kept appearance from the 2010 summer season.

On the precinct in the centre there is a square with water features laid out in the shape of a knight's sword and shield, alluding to the history of Malbork, and also serving as a meeting place for the town's residents. The fountain shows with light and music take place every day during the tourist season, and at weekends visitors can also listen to brief historical presentations accompanied by the fountain shows. Another new product is the modern covered ice-rink close to the centre. Alongside the ice-rink there is a climbing wall and a complex of sports pitches. The town's bathing place now offers a new beach volleyball area. A private investor has built one of the largest ropes courses in Poland. Another project is also under way to develop



the embankments along the Nogat River, including a yacht marina, and to develop the North Park, where a recreation centre and aquapark will be built.

In cooperation with the Castle Museum, a project to develop the von Plauen embankments near the castle has been initiated. A modern open-air show venue has obtained funding from the ERDF. This year the place will become a centre for cultural events, not only those of a historical nature. The creation of suitable technical infrastructure and commercial facilities will make it possible to put on major public events such as the famous Siege of Malbork re-enactment, as well

as the new and equally spectacular event called Magic Malbork. Malbork Welcome Centre announced a competition in 2009 for the promotional melody identified with the town. A melody has been especially composed for the dancing fountain, and also serves as the background music for some new promotional spots for Malbork.

MORE

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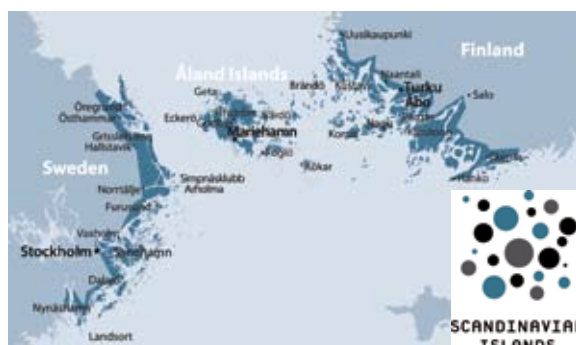
SCANDINAVIAN ISLANDS - pure nature, pure adventure, pure quality

by Tomas Björkroth

Scandinavian Islands is the archipelago area between Stockholm in Sweden across the Åland Islands to Turku in Southwest Finland.

The landscape is a mosaic of 50000 islands with the light and sounds of the North. Scandinavian Islands is the home to 400000 people of which 70000 live on islands. A life close to nature and water has created a special culture in the small but vibrant archipelago communities. Several of the activities that Scandinavian Islands have to offer relate to water, like fishing, sailing, kayaking and diving. Many visitors experience and explore the unique environment by bicycle, car or bus and accommodation and outstanding restaurants to suit all tastes can be found throughout the area.

Scandinavian Islands are easy to access from Stockholm and Turku. Cruise ships and ferries from these ports sail through the area all the way out to the smallest, inhabited islands. Mariehamn, the capital of the autonomous region Åland, has good connections to Stockholm, Turku and Helsinki. In Mariehamn the maritime atmosphere is everywhere to be found. Visit the world-famous Maritime Museum and Pommern, a four-masted, 310-foot clipper ship in original condition. Sights, restaurants, hotels and shopping – everything is located within



convenient walking distance. And don't forget to take home a piece of the Åland Islands with you: genuine, high-quality-design objects, handicrafts and artwork are found in shops and galleries all across the islands. The tourist organisations and municipalities in Scandinavian Islands develop and promote their common destination together. The trademark Scandinavian Islands is a quality guarantee for the visitor, used only by certified enterprises in the area.

The aim of the stakeholders is to increase the number of visitors to Scandinavian Islands coming from abroad by 10% from 2008 to 2013. This is to be achieved

by unified product development, joint marketing and enhancing the competence and quality among the service producers throughout the Scandinavian Islands.

Branding Scandinavian Islands is also a project for developing tourism in the archipelago area. This work is supported by the EU through its Regional Development Fund.

MORE

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En investering för framtiden



Cultural and Historical Tourism in Nacka

by Kamil Zima

The municipality of Nacka, situated close to the Stockholm archipelago, will open two new museums with the support of EU's regional funds. The aim of the project is to create a centre of cultural heritage in Fisksätra through the establishment of two museums: the Heritage and Visitors' Centre for the Battle of Stäket and the Fisksätra Museum.

The museum at Stäket will visualize a part of the long history shared



by Sweden and Russia by bringing to life the dramatic events of 13 August 1719, when Russian and Swedish troops fought a battle at Baggenstäket. Stäket, or Baggenstäket, is a narrow canal in Nacka that connects the archipelago with Stockholm. The battle took place in and around this waterway which was an important route to the Swedish capital.

Connected to the battle scene a research centre, a hostel and a restaurant will be established. This will boost the local economy by creating new business facilities like hotels, restaurants, shops and other services.

The aim of Fisksätra Museum is to collect stories from residents in Fisksätra, real-life stories from people who live here. These two museums will contribute to a cultural focus on Fisksätra. Investments in tourism and attractive cultural events will create new jobs in the region and strengthen the local economy.

This project started in January 2010 and the museums will be opened in 2012.

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EUROPE IS THE ONLY HOPE

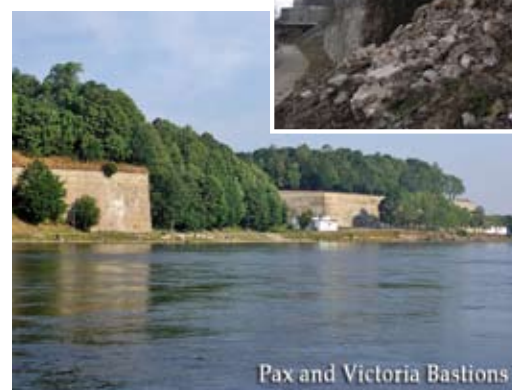
by Olga Tcheryomushkina

Narva is a unique town famous for its fortification system, which started with the wooden stronghold built by the Danes in the XII century. In the XVII century, during the Swedish rule – the “golden age” of Narva in terms of commerce and architecture – the fortification constructions of Narva were greatly improved. Six bastions named Pax, Victoria, Honour, Gloria, Triumph and Fortuna were completed by designs of the Swedish military engineer Erik Dahlbergh. Since the time of their construction, the bastions have been repeatedly attacked, damaged and renovated. At present, the fortification structures of Narva, including Narva Castle and bastions, have no equal either in diversity or in state of preservation.

Since 1991 (Estonia's regained independent) the bastions have been the property of Narva, whereas usually such historic objects are the property of the state, as their maintenance is beyond any city's capability. Narva is doing its best for the renovation of the bastions by applying to various funds for financial support. Since 2001 numerous projects have been developed and implemented. Among the most important ones are such projects as building of drainage system around the bastions; lightening of the main bastions; promotion activities; working out the concept for bastions' development; technical design project of Victoria and Honour bastions; construction project for renovation and conservation of Victoria, Gloria and Honour bastions and casemates; and the development of exposition in Bastion Victoria.

The project proposal to the programme “Development of tourist and cultural object of national importance”, which could fundamentally

The most recent renovations of the bastions date back to the 80s-90s of the XX century. Narva is trying to solve the problem of the unique yet dilapidating fortifications applying for EU funds.



Pax and Victoria Bastions

solve the problem of the unique yet dilapidating fortifications, was placed next to last in the priority list by the Government of Estonia, and therefore it is not financed. Considering the limited support from Structural Fund for such projects, Narva is trying to solve the problem of the collapsing bastions by stages.

Narva is currently developing a project for the reconstruction of inner and outer walls of Bastion Victoria, which is going to be submitted to the Structural Funds Programme for the development of the regions competitiveness, hoping that this time the evaluation committee will consider the project important and worthy of financial support.

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Palanga - sea and sun, summer capital of fun!



by Egidija Smilingienė

Palanga – is a coastal town attracting visitors by the crunch of white sand under their feet, amber washed out by waves, dark green pine trees and unrepeatable sunsets. Wonderful creation of nature have been fascinating people for centuries.

Palanga is the most renowned health resort in Lithuania famous for its traditions. The leisure can be meaningful in Palanga – a stroll along the paths of Botanical Park, a view to the Sea from the top of Birute's Hill, which is full of legends, a visit to the world famous Amber museum and recently opened unique sculpture Museum

of Antanas Moncys. Visitors are welcome to the festival dedicated to the opening of the season taking place annually in the second week of May. Palanga becomes the centre of entertainment and cultural events. Songs, dances, exhibitions of folk masters, entertainment, sport, competitions, and fireworks by the sea declare the beginning of the summer. People flock there to have a rest, bathe in the sun and the sea, and entertain themselves. Holidaymakers can expect from a universal resort, meeting all-type fancies. Music lovers are invited to the concerts in Summer Concert hall, Vandenis Music Club, or on the open terrace of the Amber Museum where Night Serenades are organized. It is also possible



to see the performances of Lithuanian theatres and Folk theatres' shows in Palanga.

J. Basanavicius street is one of the town's famous spot. Holidaymakers promenade along this street willingly, as there are lots of cafes and different attractions. This is the main street, which leads to the pier. The smallest holidaymakers have an abundant range of entertainment, too. They can sail boats on the swimming pools, slide down the water hills, drive small cars, roller-skate or enjoy ride in a horse driven coach. The amusement park, mini zoo are waiting for children.

Following the old tradition of the health resort, holidaymakers hurry to the pier to watch the sunset over the sea. In the evenings families and friends can sit in cosy cafes, bars and restaurants. Palanga is not only a climatic resort but a balneological one as well. Disorders of cardiovascular system, oncological, gynaecological ailments are treated successfully in the sanatoriums of the resort.

In 2010 Great Britain newspaper Sunday Times included Palanga beaches to the TOP of 20 hottest European Beaches in 2010. Palanga is described as follows: *"This is a cracking little resort town with a white, sandy beach, pine forests, sand dunes and fizzing night-life. There are dozens of bars and restaurants along pedestrian Basanavicius Street, everyone speaks English, and it's as cheap as you'll find in Europe. Behind the beach are the dune-side Botanical Gardens and a terrific amber museum."*

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TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN PANEVĖŽYS

by Angelė Steponavičienė

Panevėžys is situated in the North East of Lithuania, on the banks of the River Nevėžis. The city is often called the capital of Aukštaitija Ethnographic Region. Panevėžys boasts a very favourable geographical position. Important national roads cross the city, international VIA BALTICA highway links the city with Scandinavian and Western European countries. The city is in the midway between two Baltic capitals-Vilnius (135 km) and Riga (150 km).

In the run of more than 500 years Panevėžys developed into large regional centre of economy, culture and sport. It is open and attractive to business, investments and innovative ideas. Tourists can visit the monument of Alexander, the Great Duke of Lithuania and King of Poland. On the other side of the River Nevėžis the towers of St. Peter and Paul's Church can be seen. The very heart of the city is a unique singing Laisvės square, especially beautiful in summer time with its flower gardens and fountains. Fairs and various festivals take place here.

Important culture institutions worth while visiting are Art Gal-

lery with its collection of ceramic works created and collected during the Annual Ceramics Symposiums. Gabrielė Petkevičaitė –Bitė Public Library of Panevėžys County is the main modern, largest universal fund in the North East of Lithuania. The Local Lore Museum of Panevėžys preserves the memory of the Baltic tribes. It is also famous for a large collection of exotic butterflies and over 87 thousand exhibits.

The inhabitants of Panevėžys and the guests of the city are fond of the Narrow Gauge Railway- the object of cultural heritage. It is a unique museum in the open air, the longest functioning branch in Europe since 1899. People can take a trip by the Narrow Gauge Railway and enjoy a theatrical performance, the concerts of folk groups or the atmosphere of rural market.

Panevėžys is also famous for its art groups, J. Miltinis Drama Theatre, Galleries, Churches, cosy cafes, shopping centre Babilonas, a newly built universal sports Arena with the only Olympic cycling track in the Baltics. Over 7 thousand spectators can visit the Arena where in 2011 European Men Basketball Championship will take place.



Panevėžys is one of the greenest Lithuanian cities with cosy squares and Skaistakalnis Park. Servagė (the Old River Bed) is a beautiful place for a walk.

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LET'S THINK GREEN

by Anu Juurma-Saks & Viivika Orula

Pärnu, the best known Estonian resort, is more than just a summer capital of Estonia. It is also a place for conferences. It is well known that the best ideas are born when people devoted to finding them are removed from their usual environment. As a conference city, Pärnu has clear advantages over some metropolises. The distances between different locations related to the conference are short. Excellent connections with the rest of the world and moderate relaxation at the end of the symposium or conference make meetings simple and enjoyable. Pärnu is a member of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and wants to be a city promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring good health for its residents and visitors. Last year Pärnu Convention Bureau started a project Green Meetings. Partners in this project are Congress Vaasa and Botnia Tourist from Vaasa, Finland, and NGO Loomeskeskus from Estonia. Pärnu and Vaasa have been twinned for more than 50 years. The common goal of this project is to become greener convention destinations. Green values help to differ in tight competition of meeting industry and support the sustainable development of Vaasa and Pärnu regions. Pärnu and Vaasa regions will be changed into greener and more sustainable destinations for meetings. The first meeting of project partners took place in Helsinki in Sep-



tember 2009. The partners agreed that this project is just the beginning of co-operation. It was the first step towards green meetings topic to enhance environmental awareness among meeting industry entrepreneurs.

Two training courses were planned during the project. One of them was already held in Vaasa dur-

ing the Tourism Parliament in February 2010. The next one will be organised in Pärnu in September 2010. Together with the experts, a background document with principles of green meetings will be worked out.

This project is supported by Nordic Council of Ministers.

The European Ecotourism Conference on "Balancing Sustainability and Profitability" will be held on 26-30 September 2010 in Pärnu.

MORE

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A CHRISTMAS TREE CITY

by Ieva Kalnina

In 2010 Riga celebrates anniversary of the Christmas tree decoration tradition that started 500 years ago. Among the old buildings in lovely streets, there lives a tale about the event. Just in front of the Blackheads House on the Town Hall Square the plaque "The First New Year's Tree in Riga in 1510" is placed. Although the Christmas tree tradition started in Germany, the first

time ever a Christmas tree was decorated, was in Riga in 1510. Archival material describes how a group of revelling young German merchants from Blackhead's House in the centre of Riga, covered a fir tree with coloured paper flowers at Christmas time. Decorating the Christmas tree as an event itself has been bringing a joy to people's hearts all over the world and now 500 years later the Christmas miracle starts again in Riga.

Yet, people still flock to the place where it all started - for it is not only the tree at Christmas that makes the city magnificent. There are splendid buildings, rich history and modern cultural life, cosy hotels, friendly service and delicious cuisine. There is lot to do and see year around. Riga is one of northern Europe's most exciting cities with great possibilities. It is a perfect place for living and working, resting and celebrating. Riga is a city of inspiration to everyone - both for them who are delighted with ancient and who crave for new impressions.

MORE

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Under the leadership of Rostock the EU project SeaSide provokes to act



by Holger Bellgardt

The rich common maritime cultural heritage of the South Baltic area seems to be forgotten but has a great potential to bind the regions of the Baltic Sea together in order to build up one common identity. The South Baltic cities and regions internationally are highly qualified as cultural first class destinations. Shipping museums in Karlskrona, Gdańsk, Klaipėda and Rostock provide interesting exhibitions by showing unique collections of maritime heritage. The UNESCO world heritage sites of Stralsund in combination with the ocean museum OCEANEUM is something that one has to visit. Maritime festivals in this area like Hanse Sail Rostock, Sea Festival Klaipėda or Sail Gdańsk year by year fulfil visitor's expectations by attracting traditional ships. Those ships, very often owned by private volunteers or non profit associations, get strongly demanded support by making them visible and accessible to the public. SeaSide aims at emphasizing and utilizing this great potential through various activities. The SeaSide team of thirteen partners – Klaipėda, Gdańsk, Karlskrona, Rostock, Stralsund, Greifswald and Rügen is starting to combine all those advantages. This cooperation combines efforts from various fields and know-how on an international basis. The crew enables the professional realization of activities aimed at developing excellent cultural destinations in the South Baltic area. The SeaSide partners initiated special sailing products: "Maritime Heritage Tours", cruises with traditional ships sailing from city to city, port to port, festival to festival, etc. The new brand is "sailBALTIC Tours". The

The 20th Hanse Sail Rostock on 5-8 August 2010 will be a major event. But the first highlight of Rostock's maritime season 2010 will be a sailBALTIC Tour: a Schooner Race from Rostock (D) to Gedser (DK) v.v. on 1-2 May between two traditional ships - GREIF and SANTA BARBARA ANNA (the picture).



ships are accessible for everybody, no sailing experiences required. The passengers will be educated by a professional crew. Such cruises do not only promote traditional ships as a trademark of the Baltic, but also they contribute to the preservation of traditional ships for future generations and train and maintain maritime hand-craft skills. The trainees do not hang around a pool or sit at a deck-bar, there is no ceremonious captain's reception in the evening, a pool or sauna doesn't belong to the standard on a historical vessel. The trainees are involved in the board-routines as deck hand. But this will make the cruise unforgettable. The maritime museums will add ashore the step into our maritime history by fantastic exhibitions and contribute to the festivals with a common travelling exhibition to attract a cross-border interest.

MORE

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Söderhamns archipelago - available to everyone

by Jan Bergenholtz

The strategy for making the unique archipelago available for everyone was founded many years ago and through consistency and hard work the city has built an impressive infrastructure offering transportation, accommodation and activities even for the disabled. Spending the night in a cabin or youth hostel in the Söderhamn archipelago could be an adventure.



All'n'all there are more than 100 beds available but there is no running water and no water closet. Instead, every visitor has to bring own drinking water and use facilities like composting toilets. Every visitor has access to a sauna and a rowing boat, not to mention the beautiful environment full of rare birds and plants. The strategy for making all this available to every-

one concerns also the price. One night in a six bed cabin is about 50 EUR per cabin, a little more than 8 EUR per person. Those who do not own a boat of their own can use the tour boat that passes the islands with the cabins, or book a ride with the taxi boats

operating in the archipelago. Söderhamn is now connecting the city to the archipelago. Where the city meets the water handicap friendly fishing docks with low rails makes fishing even from a wheel chair a fun and safe experience. There is a nation wide well known trailer camping site right by the water sharing the service facilities with the visitors of the guest harbour. The plans for a combined information center with exhibits showing the flora and fauna of the ocean as well as a sea food restaurant has not yet left the drawing table but might be a reality in the near future.

The city has recently acquired a large and unique camping site, Stenö camping, with its own beautiful beach, docking places for boats and much more. Stenö has the potential to offer entrepreneurs a base for their on and off water activities. These future plans will be developed in close cooperation with the local entrepreneurs.

The archipelago of Söderhamn is already today well worth a visit. Rent a canoe, go fishing with professional fishermen, take the tour boat to a distant beach or spend the night in one of the cabins next to the lighthouse on Storjungfrun, the largest island.

MORE

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TALLINN IN THE NEW MEDIA

by Mall Oja

Tallinn as tourism destination, since Spring 2009, has promoted itself actively in social media networks – Facebook, Twitter and Flickr. Tallinn's English Facebook page www.facebook.com/VisitTallinn introduces the activities and city breaks as a social networking group.

In the middle of March 2010, there were more than 3000 fans on VisitTallinn page. Tallinn as a travel destination has gathered a large circle of friends asking questions about culture tourism and city breaks; visiting photo albums and sharing experiences about their visits to the city.

The Marketing team of Tallinn City Tourist Office & Convention Bureau is also using new media actively in marketing campaigns. Tallinn's 2010 spring campaign for the Swedish market invites people to find out about Tallinn's spa possibilities, accommodation offers and cultural events through Swedish Facebook page www.facebook.com/



UnderbaraTallinn. From there interested Swedes, between the 35-50 years of age, are linked to campaign web pages through banner ads and search engine Google.

Tallinn's official tourism web is appreciated and actively used. In 2009 Tallinn's tourism web www.tourism.tallinn.ee was visited around 840 000 times. Based on languages the most visited page in 2009 was English tourism web 41%, followed by Finnish portal 21%, Russian portal 15%, Estonian portal 11%, Swedish portal 7% and German portal 4%. From 2009 in addition the Japanese and Chinese portals made up 0,4% of viewings.

The most read topics were on the city's sightseeing places, planning a trip followed by entertainment, information

about Tallinn Card and events. In 2009 the tourism web's pages were visited in total 4,3 million times. During every visit on average 5 pages were read.

MORE

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Tampere – for people like you

by Kirsti-Liisa Lintula

Based on the 4 Cs of VisitFinland campaign (Finland is Credible, Creative, Contrastive and Cool), Tampere looking in its marketing aims for the inert strengths and superiority factors of the area. These are used to crystallise communication and seek common tools to be used in marketing. The purpose of image advertising is to create a desirable and controlled image of the Tampere Region in the eyes of the target group, attracting more tourists.

The uniform approach aims at better attention value, recognisability and effectiveness. This saves time, effort and money.

Travel marketing is especially aimed at foreign tourists. Finland attracts brave individualists who: are looking for space and tranquillity, value clean nature and originality, and are visionary, modern, thinkers and humane.

Based on the workgroup's brainstorming, one feature was found to best describe the Tampere Region. The work sought a unique feature that distinguishes it from the competitors.

Features that came up in the discussion included easy accessibility, nature and water, leisurely tension-free and relaxed atmosphere, and reliability and safety. But one feature was clearly most prominent... originality.

What does it contain? Honesty, attitude, 'come as you are', genuineness, being yourself and being proud of it. The personality and style of the region will be utilised. It is not necessary to please



everyone but the target group.

A new type of visible marketing is sought – a unique approach which will, in time, become a recognisable trademark of the Tampere Region. What is needed:

- determination to support the approach,
- willingness to follow the new approach in different procedures,
- patience to expect results,
- the vision that something valuable may be achieved,

- the understanding that the desired image may only be created through systematic marketing.

The project Visit Tampere Region is financed by tourism businesses, all the municipalities in Tampere Region and the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. With the budget of 470.500 EUR for three years, the emphasis is put on marketing. The main activities are press trips for foreign journalists, participation in foreign tourism trade fairs in the destinations that we have direct flights from and organizing different marketing and sales events for the entrepreneurs.

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TARTU IS INVITING ITS NEIGHBOURS



by Mihkel Lendok

In recent years, Tartu has been trying to remind its closest neighbours of its existence and introduce itself to them.

So far the tourists who have visited Tartu have been mostly from Finland, less from Germany and Sweden. Recently, Tartu has done a lot of marketing among its closest neighbours, Latvia and Russia. As a result, Latvian and Russian tourists have overtaken Sweden in the top list of the nations that visit Tartu.

According to the statistics, there were twice as many Russian tourists staying in Tartu in the first month of 2010 than there were in January last year. Deputy Mayor Karin Jaanson, who is responsible for the tourism sector, said that tourists from Russia even outnumbered the Finnish tourists. „The figures clearly indicate that our marketing activity in Russia has borne fruit“, said Karin Jaanson happily. Tartu has been carrying out active and purposeful marketing activities aimed at Russia for four years now, by inviting travel agents and journalists to visit Tartu and by promoting the city in the streets of St. Petersburg. Russians have been invited to Tartu within the framework of special programmes in cooperation with private companies, mostly around New Year's Eve and Midsummer night. It is not a coincidence that tourists are encouraged to visit Tartu during the periods outside tourism season.

Promotion activities are also carried out in the direction of the other close neighbour, Latvia. Last summer, Tartu carried out an exten-



sive marketing campaign to encourage Latvians to visit Tartu and stay overnight.

A very important factor in tourism is definitely the convenience of getting to the destination. Tartu has benefited much from the opening of scheduled flights from the Tartu Airport.

Direct connection with Stockholm and Riga has

proven to be necessary as more flights have been added in the schedule. Tartu has also been working on the opening of several bus and train lines that would create a better connection with its closest neighbours.

Despite the economic recession, people still need a change from familiar surroundings and this is why they take shorter trips to their neighbouring countries.

Economic recession gives us the opportunity to discover the places that are closer to home, often cheaper and it takes less time to get there. And the quality of the trip may not be poorer than that of the trips to faraway places.

MORE

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A Viking town Trelleborg

by Ingrid Wall

Do you want to make a journey a thousand years back in time? Meet the Vikings, take part in their everyday life and experience a real Viking fight! Vikings from all of Europe gather in Trelleborg for a week in July to trade, make handicraft and test their strength in the traditional warfare. Situated on the north side of the Baltic coast, Trelleborg is the southernmost city in Sweden. Twenty years ago archeologists made a unique find, the remaining of a Viking fortress dated back to 980 AD. This was the first fortress to be found in Scania, formerly East Denmark. Four similar fortresses have been found in Denmark, and the experts believe there is another one under the Town Hall and Ströget in central Copenhagen.

The Viking chief Harald Bluetooth built these fortresses to unite his kingdom. The first Viking king to confess to Christianity, worked hard to convince his people to abandon the old Asa gods Oden Tor and Freya. The fortresses were used for collecting taxes from the seamen and traders, anchored along the Baltic shoreline trading places like Uppåkra in southern Scania.

Today, a part of the ring shaped castle is rebuilt on its original site in the centre of Trelleborg. Situated in a park, designed in Viking style, with a Viking museum, it is a perfect place to give the authentic Viking life a try – taste the food, prepared over open fire, try to make a typical handicraft and see what a Viking bedroom looked like. The visitors also find several other buildings, constructed in ancient way, where

Some of the highlights during the Viking Battle week:
8 July - historical music festival
9 July - storytelling and live artist performances at the amphitheater
10 July - the Big Viking Battle



they can experience other aspects of the traditional Viking life.

The Trelleborg Fortress is open all year round. In summer, modern Vikings from all over Europe travel around the continent to live the life their ancestors did a thousand years ago. For one week of July, beginning on 5 July, hundreds of them gather in Trelleborg to fight over the command of the fortress, live in tents, make their handicraft, prepare the food and meet in fights. Their dresses and weapons are the result of hundreds of hours of work. Every year the Viking Market and battle attract numerous visitors to Trelleborg and the Trelleborg.

MORE

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Tukums Museum – a Live Museum in Tourism

by Ingrida Smušková

The Tukums Museum was established on 30 December 1935 as Latvia's first art museum situated outside of Riga. Today the Tukums Museum is made up of seven different museums focused on art, history, cultural history, ethnography and folklore.

The Castle Tower is the oldest building in Tukums and now as the Town History Museum it offers exhibitions and participation in programmes such as "Life in a Livonian Order Castle" or "Saturday in a Castle Tower". The last one

is a special programme for Saturdays when every visitor can dress up in medieval dress and feel the medieval life, learn about the medieval rules, the best practice of medicine, make their own amulet, etc.

The Durbe Manor House is a pearl of Classicist architecture in Kurzeme. The museum in the manor offers exhibitions, theatrical excursions and events, concerts of classical music, and special cultural and historical educational programmes called "Time Travel". The participants can learn in detail about the major events in the history of the manor and the region such as December 1905 uprising, which became known as the Tukums War, or the 1st Song Festival of the Tukums District in 1928.

The base of the Art Museum is the art collection of the painter



Leonīds Āriņš (1907-1991) known as the Golden Collection of Latvian painting. For the past 10 years the museum has offered its programme "Let's Copy Some Paintings" for children and adults. The Art Gallery „Durvis” ("Doors") is a space established for the creative expressions of contemporary art-

ists. It is situated in an 18th century building, and the interior has a unique combination of layers of history and works of modern art.

The Weaver's Workshop is a place for creative people. Perhaps some travellers will see for the first time, how a tread turns into a fabric.

The Džūkste Fairy Tale Museum is devoted to the fairy tales of Džūkste vicinity and to Ansis Lerhis-Puškaitis, who collected fairy tales. The Pastariņš Museum is a museum for children, who want to get busy with games, bread baking, butter churning and other countryside activities.

MORE

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ATTRACTING TOURISTS TO COASTAL AREAS

by Päivi Lappalainen

Southwest Finland is responsible for delivering the know-how and the operational best practises to the benefit of operators and tourism enterprises. The target is to build a "Centre of Excellence" co-operation network of operators, universities and polytechnics, and the public and private sectors, in order to join the resources of know-how and development. The flagship project is concentrating especially on development of products, services and accessibility, based on culture and nature in the coastal regions according to the principles of sustainability.

The Baltic Sea Region has good possibilities to become a tourist region similar to the Mediterranean, with its own, special brand. It is

essential to work together to increase the know-how and the means of co-operation between regions, enterprises and operators in order to turn the region into a worldwide area of attraction. Without high quality product development stemming from the needs of the users and the necessary service know-how, there will be neither joint products nor a joint brand of the region.

One product alone does not create an attractive tourism destination. The services must be available to the customers and the service chain must function seamlessly together, to make the travel experience successful and memorable. Ease of purchase, travel comfort, and the networking of destinations will promote the growth and competitiveness of tourism in the Baltic Sea Region.

Coastal Areas Flagship Project concentrates on the sustainable development of travel destinations, products and services, based on culture and nature in the coastal region and ensuring their accessibility. The aim for the future is that operators in the region will develop joint products and services across borders, offering in this way memorable travel experiences to the customers, profitability to the producers and vitality to the regions through new enterprises and new jobs.

The development is based on recognising the strengths of the regions, on thematic profiling, and on partnerships between the operators of various branches.

The key to positive results and successful operational patterns lies in the use of operators of various regions through the network.

MORE

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The project consists of:

- Building of a network of partnerships in the BSR,
- Mapping the network of enterprises,
- Preparing the international mentoring programme,
- Concentrating on, e.g. developing the guest harbours to the regional service centres,
- Defining the development of products and services based on customer information.



USTKA - A TOWN OF VARIETY

by Eliza Mordal

Ustka offers a variety of ways to relax. There are two different beaches, two types of architecture and two seasons - the town is both a spa and holiday resort.

The beach here is very wide, clean and covered with golden sand. It is divided by the 400 meters long pier. The east part is full of attractions during the summer time.



The visitors can rent beach and water equipment, take part in sports activities and fitness. A special playground, springboards and slides are prepared especially for children, who can also stay in the "Beach Kindergarten". Concerts, stand-up shows and exhibitions are organized, too.

The Promenade has its long history. The first ornamental trees were planted here as early as in 1875. Until the end of the World War II, next to a certain restaurant there was a table by which Otto von Bismarck used to eat breakfasts. He also loved walking along the Ustka

promenade. For those who are looking for peace and silence, the west beach, equally wide and clean, is recommended.

There are spa villas in Ustka built in the style of art nouveau. Usteckie Łazienki, leftovers of the sea water intake for cold and hot baths, raised long time before the World War I, are also worth seeing. In 1912 Ustka was turned into the Natural Treatment Resort. Thanks to local specific microclimate, dense forests, abundant resources of peat and brine, the town has been a health resort for more than 150 years.

The tourists may also visit the Old Fishing Village, added to the monuments list. The streets in this part of the town run in the exactly same way as they did hundreds years ago. Currently, the old town in Ustka is being renovated, with the partial participation of the European Union funds. There is a plan to rebuild as many as 28 fishing huts by 2013.

During the summer holiday there are plenty of events. The Fireworks Festive, Bielsko Biala and Beskidy in Ustka or Beach Ball Polish Cup are regularly organized in the summer.

Ustka is alive after the summer season, as well. The patients (there are approximately 800 of them in Ustka everyday) and the visitors know that the largest amount of iodine can be found on the Ustka beach during autumn storms. In autumn the sea is also very spectacular with its dreadful sounds and giant waves.

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Vaasa - the Sunniest City in Finland

by Margit Sellberg

Vaasa was founded in 1606 by Carl IX. Burnt to ground in 1852, ten years later a new city was built 7 kms away from the old site. The population is 58 000, 71% Finnish speaking, 25% Swedish, 4% other languages.

The Kvarken archipelago is on UNESCO's World Heritage List. The land rising is about 8-8.5 mm/year and the land area grows with 1 km²/year. During the summer one can make

lovely cruises in the archipelago. In summertime it is also possible to go in the tracks of the meteorite and visit the Meteorite, the visitor's Centre in Söderfjärden, the clearest and most beautiful crater formation in Northern Europe, now a round large cultivation land of 2300 hectares. Especially during the autumn this field is a halting place of many thousands of cranes.

For tourists travelling either with families, in groups or as individuals Vaasa provides many alternatives from the popular Family Fun holiday packages to spa weekends and theatre packages. There are 2 professional theatres, 22 different museums and galleries, 3 art museums and the city orchestra.

The walking centre is a meeting place for people and services. Walking routes, jogging tracks, trails and outstanding long cycle



paths along the seashore are like winning the first prize in the lotto for outdoor and keep-fit enthusiasts.

The educational sector in the city may be characterized by its inter-

est in new ideas and the various trials it undertakes, as well as by an increased internationalization. In place of the Finnish matriculation examination, upper secondary school students in Vaasa may study for the International Baccalaureate examination at the IB-

school, something which is possible in only a few places in Finland. There are three units on higher education level: the Finnish University of Vaasa, two Swedish: the Swedish School of Economics and the Åbo Akademi i Vaasa. There are also two institutes of vocational higher schools: one Bilingual and the other Swedish. The number of students exceeds 10.000.

The most important international enterprises are Wärtsilä, ABB, Vacon, KWH Group and Vaasa Engineering. Vaasa has established many co-operative links with other European cities and regions.

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by the City of Växjö

Växjö is a South-East Sweden's metropolis for glass and furniture design. In Växjö, Småland everyone can find stillness and time for the voyages of discovery or organised trips to an elk park or even a cycle tour. The choices are endless. A visit to the unique glasswork environments in one of the 14 glassworks in the Kingdom of Crystal is a must. The Kingdom of Crystal is a culture-historical emigration district with plenty of shopping, not least of all in Kosta.

For the furniture and design interested visitor, a trip to Lammhult is essential. Just a few kilometres North of Växjö lies the Kingdom of Furniture with the sale and manufacture of design furniture.

Växjö is a modern city with a long tradition as a seat of learning, home of the County Governor and the bishopric. Today, Växjö is also a vibrant centre of commerce with an international university. Successful and innovative environmental activities have made Växjö most attractive city and called the Greenest City in Europe. The eight kilometre long foot and cycle path around Lake Trummen and Växjö Lake passes the lagoons beside Strandbjörket, that filter the city's surface water, and the eight storey apartment building beside Välle Broar, that is a part of Sweden's biggest timber frame building project. These are just two of the many visible results of the municipality's ambitious environmental programme.

One can take a stroll around Lake Trummen and feast the eyes on the Linnaeus garden beside the North-West shore of the lake. The modern Linnaeus garden, created by landscape gardener Ulf Nor-

Take a walk around
Växjö's city lakes
and see why Växjö is
called the Green-
est City in Europe!



dfjell, won gold in London and was greatly admired in Gothenburg before finding its way home to Carl Linnaeus educational starting point, Växjö. Well known species are displayed together with Linnaeus own Linnaea, all in a beautiful framework of traditional Swedish materials such as granite, timber and steel.

Växjö has a rich and varied cultural life, with its own chamber orchestra and regional theatre. Renowned Växjö musicians include Ola Salo, singer of The Ark, Charlotte Perrelli and Per Tengstrand.

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Conference tourism development in Vilnius

by Jolanta Beniulienė

Exceptional location of Vilnius at the crossroads between East and West, North and South has determined not only a variety of architectural styles, but it has also created present spirit of the city and favourable conditions for tourism. The fact that Vilnius has gained an international reputation as a conference venue, conference tourism has been considered one of the priorities in the development strategies for the city.

To encourage and promote conference tourism, the public institutions, Vilnius Tourist Information Centre and its division Conference Bureau, will implement the project 'Marketing and development of opportunities for conference tourism in Vilnius and Vilnius County in 2010-2012'. This will be funded by the European Union and Vilnius Municipality. The project will be implemented together with the public institution Trakai Tourist Information Centre.

During its implementation, an extensive database of resources for conference tourism in the city and Vilnius County, together with meth-

odology for the investigation of statistical data, will be prepared. The results obtained during the investigation will allow for the evaluation of the present situation for conference tourism development and economic benefits for the city. The project foresees preparing the common style concept of marketing schemes for conference tourism, a new website, organising the PR campaign for the promotion of conference tourism and the implementation

of other representative marketing schemes.

Implementation of the project will strengthen the image and popularity of Vilnius, Trakai and all of Vilnius County in the local market. At the international level it will help evaluating the economic benefit and attract greater flows of conference tourism.

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The 57th UBC Board meeting in Næstved

The 57th meeting of the UBC Executive Board was held on 17 February 2010 in Næstved, Denmark, upon the invitation of Mayor of Næstved Henning Jensen.

The main topic of the meeting was the EU Strategy for the BSR adopted by the European Council on 30 October 2009 and its Action Plan with flagship projects. Following the decision made at the last UBC General Conference in Kristiansand, several member cities and commissions sent their proposals to join some of the flagship projects listed in the Action Plan. The Board decided to join four flagship projects: 5.1 "Anticipate regional and local impacts of climate change through research" - Umeå, 8.1 "Promote young entrepreneurs" - Commission on Education and Paide, 8.4 "Make the Baltic Sea an Eco-efficient region" - Commission on Environment, 11.1 "Complete the agreed priority transport infrastructures" - Liepāja.

President Per Bødker Andersen informed that the international organisation Eixo Atlantico - an association of cities from Galicia (Spain) and North Portugal invited UBC to join the new international network Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional Cities Networks. The other partners in this network will be Mission Operationelle Transfrontaliere, Red Iberica de Entidades Transfronterizas, Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Medcities. The aim of the new organisation is to establish a direct line with the EU for negotiations on the future of the regional policy, and cooperation of partners in various fields. The Board decided to join CECICN, but without financial commitments.

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the UBC financial report



for 2009 and the budget for 2010, approved by the Board.

Gdańsk sent a proposal to start cooperation between the cities in the field of public order and local safety. Several member cities expressed willingness to join this action. The first meeting on local safety and public order in the light of national and local regulations was held in Gdańsk on 26 March 2010. The Board decided to give the UBC honorary patronage to the festival the "Sound of the Sea" organised by the city of Słupsk. The Board accepted two new member cities: Östhammar and Söderhamn. The next 58th Board meeting will be held in Trelleborg, Sweden on 4 June 2010.

MORE

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First joint meeting of UBC Commissions on Environment, Energy and Transportation

Sustainable solutions for combating climate change

"The heart of UBC beats in Gdynia today", with these words Mr Marek Stępa, Vice Mayor of Gdynia, welcomed 55 participants to the first joint meeting of the Commissions of Environment, Energy and Transport. The decision of the three Commissions to jointly organise a meeting evoked very positive reactions among the participants. Cooperation is a key to successful work, both between cities and the Commissions in UBC!

The Commission on Environment has had successful cooperation with the Commission on Transport in the BUSTRIP project and the collaboration with Commission on Energy was very close from the beginning. Both commissions have a shared co-chairman since 2009, Mr Thorsten Geißler, Vice Mayor of Lübeck. Having a joint commission meeting was just a step forward to improving UBC activities. The meeting focused on the topic "Sustainable solutions for combating Climate Change in the Bal-

tic Sea Region". Climate change as the topic on every agenda is a cross-cutting issue that cannot be discussed only one-sided, as environment, energy and transport are interlinked in terms of climate change action in the cities.

Storm water poses serious challenges for many coastal cities in the Regions. Gdańsk, Pori and Turku presented current solutions to tackle the effects of heavy rainfalls, strong spring flooding and sea level rise.



From the left: Mr Mikko Jokinen, Mr Thorsten Geißler and Mr Zygmunt Zmuda-Trzebiatowski

As for transportation, Gdynia promoted the initiative of introducing trolleybuses for a more sustainable city transport and Umeå showed impressive actions for sustainable transport in the North. Tim Scheirs presented advanced cycle policy in the city of Ghent, Belgium. Energy is one of the most important issues in the region and one of the core topics when dealing with climate change actions. The Energy Commission presented the concept of the smart grid for a sustainable energy future and introduced a new technology transfer initiative from the Kalmar Science Park. The joint meeting resulted in active discussions and other joint UBC activities within the agenda of the EU strategy for the BSR will follow up.

MORE

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Edges of the City Centre and Re-use of the Traffic Areas

Tampere is the 3rd largest city in Finland with approx. 210 000 inhabitants. It is also a city of industrial history and a centre of industrial innovations. The Commission on Urban Planning had a seminar and meeting in Tampere on 14 - 17 April. The seminar theme "Edges of the City Centre and Reuse of Traffic Areas" concentrated on an acute question in many cities, namely increasing the density of city centres and avoiding urban sprawl. Also climate change and sustainability in urban planning were taken into account in the seminar programme, as Mr Oras Tynkkynen, the Finnish Government Climate Policy Specialist, gave a presentation on urban planning in low-carbon societies. The seminar workshops concentrated on two traffic areas: the first workshop on a lake shore area next to a busy highway that needs to be connected to the urban structure, and



Tampere seminar participants

the another workshop on the reuse of the former railway cargo station area. The City of Tampere is planning big investments in the form of a tunnel and a new sports and concert arena to improve the areas, and the workshops made their own proposals

Tampere is a city of industrial history; a centre of industrial innovations, textile and wood processing companies. Situated between two lakes - the natural rapids between the lakes provided an efficient source of energy for the factories.



photo: Tampere City Centre

for increasing the city density in those areas. The former traffic areas and creating new use to them is a common problem in many Baltic cities. An important part of the seminar has always been the exchange of experiences between professional urban planners. This time there were 40 seminar participants from Russia, Scandinavian countries, Baltic countries, Poland and Germany. The next CUP seminar will be in Šiauliai Lithuania in the autumn 2010.

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A new Task Force is being established within UBC structure

Public Order and Local Safety Working Group meeting

In November 2009 Gdańsk Municipal Guard distributed questionnaires on safety and public order issues amongst UBC members. 34 cities from Baltic Sea Region completed the survey. The research has confirmed that public order and safety were main priorities in the examined cities. Additionally, analysis of findings have showed that safety problems were common and affected all inhabitants of the BSR.

The idea which appeared behind the survey was to work cooperatively, share knowledge in order to deal with the above problems. Municipal Guard of Gdańsk invited all potentially interested BSR cities to start the process of turning the concept into real actions.



The representatives of nine UBC member cities: Botkyrka, Elbląg, Gdańsk, Nacka, Riga, Sopot, Tukums, Tallinn and Vilnius took part in the meeting.

The meeting took place on 25-27 March 2010. The conference was attended by representatives from nine cities: Botkyrka, Elbląg, Gdańsk, Nacka, Riga, Sopot, Tukums, Tallinn and Vilnius.

It was decided that an organizational framework was necessary. All participants agreed that establishing the Task Force within UBC structure must be the first step towards further cooperation. Therefore, the city representatives have signed the Letter of Intent which would be presented during the 58th UBC Executive Board meeting on 4-5 June in Trelleborg.

The Task Force would be cooperating in order to improve security services as well as assure the better safety standards and procedures for all BSR citizens. The problems which seems to be completely solved in some cities still exist in others. Creating the Task Force will allow not only to expand knowledge, but also to gain and share experience. The initiators hope that joint efforts could help to make BSR a safer and tidier place to live.

The first official Task Force Group meeting is planned to be held in October 2010.

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Marketing BSR and Science Parks

The Commission on Business Cooperation met in Kolding on 23 February 2010. An application to the Executive Board was discussed. Commission on Business Cooperation submitted a proposal to establish / strengthen cooperation with: Union pour la Méditerranée, BaltMet, BPO, Medcities, BCCA, Assembly of European Regions (AER), Commission Internationale pour la Protection des Alpes (CIPRA).

On the basis of the UBC Strategy, the Commission has worked out a concept for a strategy to get in systematic contact with organisations within the Baltic Sea Region, Europe and internationally. The concept can be found on the commission's webpage. However, the Board members shared the opinion that the official contacts with the international organisations can be established by the UBC authorities. The commissions are allowed to contact other organisations but may not to make any financial commitments on behalf of UBC without consulting the UBC Board.

The main focus of the Commission's work will be on the Marketing BSR and Science Parks. Therefore, BizCom has become associated partner to the EU Projects BaltMet Promo (www.baltmetpromo.net)

Roundtable „Subsidised jobs in Europe – ideology, legislation and practice“ organized by Tallinn and UBC Commission on Business Cooperation was held on 29 April. The problems of unemployment in the Baltic cities, possible solutions, e.g. subsidised jobs, as well as best practices from other cities and regions were on agenda.

and the planned Project Baltic Sea Identity. A kick-off conference for the partners of the project will be held in Vilnius on 31 May - 2 June 2010. The Chairman of the commission will be participating. In cooperation with the Fondation Sophia Antipolis, the oldest and largest Science Park in Europe and the International As-

sociation of Science Parks (IASP), an international conference is planned in Autumn 2010. This conference will be held in Sophia Antipolis (Antibes) and will go hand in hand with a meeting of the Commission and an informative tour through the park.

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THE UBC CULTURAL PRIZE 2010

The UBC Commission on Culture is asking the member cities to propose a candidate for the cultural prize 2010 "Multicultural Dialog". While distributing the prize the UBC Commission on Culture will appreciate activities which

- have influenced the city's cultural life in a remarkable way
- have influenced the image of the city in a positive way
- have strengthened the identity of the city
- have raised the awareness of cultural values of life.

The cultural prize is addressed to the UBC member cities. Municipalities are the only entities to apply. The organizations willing to apply for the prize are obliged to submit their application forms by the agency of a municipality. Each UBC member city is allowed to submit only one application for the cultural prize. The cities that have a representative in the board of the Commission on Culture may not submit an application.

The candidating activities should have been realized successfully in 2010. The application should contain

- a detailed description of the cultural activity
- a photographic portfolio (preferably digital photos)
- press cuttings (if available)
- the applicants (member cities) evaluation and motivation of the cultural and other values of the activity.

The grant for the cultural activity is 1500 euro and the decision of the UBC Commission on Culture will be announced at the Commission on Culture Annual Working Session in Umeå 22-23 October.

The completed application form should be e-mailed to the UBC Commission on Culture Secretariat: maarit.keto-seppala@turku.fi by **31 August 2010** at the latest.

Sport is cool Annual Meeting in Tallinn

On 22-24 April, in cooperation with the City of Tallinn, UBC Commission on Sport held its Annual Meeting 2010 "Sport is cool!"

The idea of promoting sport activities among children and young people was the main subject of this year's meeting. The Commission members were looking for the measures of encouraging young generation to be physically active and fit as well as of promoting to them sport as an interesting way of passing their free time, and in this way discovering the tourist potential of the Baltic Sea Region.

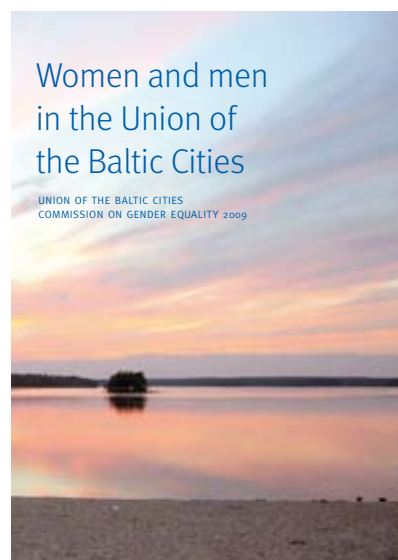
The programme of the Annual Meeting included, among others, presentations of best practices coming from various UBC member cities, such as Turku's Poweraction being after school physical activities for young people, projects from Karlskrona or Tallinn. The Commission did not neglect youngsters from the disadvantaged groups, and thus prepared a presentation showing options to disabled young people, who can try their hand at sailing in order to actively discover the Baltic Sea Region. Additionally, the UBC Commission on Sport Annual Meeting was an occasion to present Commission's Campaign "Sport is cool!" targeted at young people and intended to search/promote effective methods of encouraging them to be physically active.

MORE

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Report on Women and Men in UBC now online



Read about politics and power, economy and working life, planning work, violence against women. The report includes statistics and facts as well as best practice from the Baltic Sea Region on gender equality. Please feel free to download the gender equality report which is now available in Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian or English languages. Download your language version at <http://www.ubc.net/commissions,28.html> It is also possible to request the printed version (English) for your town. As they are free of charge, please send an e-mail with the number of reports you require (E-mail: helene.brewer@umea.se).

Meeting in Panevėžys

The meeting of the UBC Commission on Gender Equality planned for 22 - 23 April was postponed due to the flight paralysis caused by the volcanic ash cloud. The next date, either early June or late August, will be discussed soon. The program of the meeting will consist of some general issues concerning the Commission. Also, exchange with Klaipėda Social and Psychological Services Centre and West Lithuanian Women's organisation will take place. Additionally, the study visit to the Women and Child Centre of Panevėžys and a seminar on gender equality questions are planned.

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AGORA 2.0 approved

The Institute of Geography and Geology of Greifswald University succeeded to raise financial support of 2,3 mill Euro for the tourism project AGORA 2.0 which deals with common identity of the Baltic Sea Region. The Kick-off Meeting took place in Greifswald on 11-13 February 2010. Participants came from 10 countries around the Baltic Sea. UBC Commission on Tourism is an associated partner in this project.

The project was approved in the second call of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007- 2013 (follow-up of the former INTERREG III B Programme). It aims at developing and improving a common identity of the Baltic Sea Region, basing on its rich potentials of natural and cultural heritage. The term "heritage" is here consciously meant in a wider sense, not limited by the extent of UNESCO's world heritage list. One of the work packages addresses the market research to support small and medium-sized tourism enterprises. It is intended to enable free access to market data which are well prepared and presented accordingly. Another work package aims at systematic search, structuring and web-based data gathering of identity forming potentials, as well as a selection of appropriate data for drafting an identity profile. Five pilot project groups plan to develop inno-



Energizing the Commission on Tourism

The Commission on Tourism has recently established good working relationship with two partners. These are: the Swedish Cultural Tourism Institute and AIEST expert. It is hoped that both partners shall provide their best expertise in the issues related to branding the BSR, rooted in the sustainable tourism development rules. The Commission and its new partners are convinced that the Baltic culture and heritage are the region's greatest assets and these should lie at the core of the region's brand. It is intended to develop a working schedule which may result in the joint BSR orientated projects attractive to UBC member cities. Although the CoT meeting in Rakvere was postponed until end of May due to the volcanic ash cloud that stranded European travelers, it will continue its discussions on the ways of making the BSR more attractive as a tourism destination area.

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vative tourism products. The main focus is on concrete cultural and natural treasures of the Baltic Sea Region: castles, red-brick-gothic, forests, shifting sand dunes and stones. In each case partners from 2-4 countries work together, building up on experiences from former projects.

As AGORA 2.0 meets the criteria for a sustainable development - it was approved as a Baltic 21 Lighthouse project. It contributes to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, especially to the Part on Tourism. Again, the Institute of Geography and Geology of Greifswald's University takes over the function as a lead partner for a period of 3 years. Just like its forerunner, the project was initiated and developed by Prof. Wilhelm Steingrube. All in all, there are 24 partners involved in the project.

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NEW BRIDGES project -

Developing Quality of Life and urban rural partnerships

The issue of developing quality of life is becoming an emergent challenge in making the city-regions in the Baltic Sea Region more attractive. This is an urgent quest for city-regions covering urban and rural areas since the interactions of the two types of territorial qualities become more and more complex.

The growing importance of quality of life as an essential element of policy-making has brought forward the requirement of a distinctive and objective comprehension of its influence. Approaches for developing quality of life cannot be based on policies initiated by hierarchical co-ordination of public institutions, but should take into account the individual aspects and preferences. Improvement of quality of life is not only a question of equity, but also a strategic issue in order to attract people and investments.

The UBC EnvCom coordinates NEW BRIDGES project (2009-2011) focusing on urban rural interactions, their management and impacts on quality of life. The project aims to improve the management of urban - rural interactions by developing sound strategies to identify and launch key projects and management tools for strengthening quality of life in seven partner city-regions across the BSR.

Within the project, quality of life is approached through three key elements - residential preferences, mobility & accessibility and provision of services. Particular attention is paid to the individual preferences of people living in the city-regions. Inhabitants and local stakeholders - practitioners, representatives from interest groups and NGOs, scientists, decision-makers, and entrepreneurs & employees - have been involved from the very beginning through surveys,

interviews and Local Stakeholder Meetings.

During the first year of the project the partner city-regions started to create new urban rural partnerships and identified their three most important priority challenges regarding the quality of life. Most challenges were found with-

in mobility & accessibility and provision of services.

Furthermore, the partners analysed the individual preferences and the prevailing local circumstances and policy environment. The analyses show difficulties in addressing the identified challenges in regional planning as cooperation and communication between the relevant stakeholders and an integrated planning approach is insufficient. During the spring 2010 the partners perform a critical reflection by linking the outcomes of their analyses to the priority challenges identified. Based on the reflection each city-region will select Pilot Actions that will be implemented between summer 2010 and spring 2011.



The Peltola allotment garden in Turku

MORE

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European Road Safety Charter

Road safety for vulnerable road users



Increasing road safety is one of key elements for ensuring high quality of life in the city. People spend a lot of time outdoors – and whether they are walking to a shop, driving to work, riding a bike to school or going by bus to meet friends - they are all road users.

In Poland 72% of all road accidents happen in urban areas. 45% of road accident victims are vulnerable road users, that is cyclists (11%) and pedestrians (34% - the highest in EU). In high risk areas road safety measures such as limiting traffic speed, reconstruction of intersections, building traffic lights, pedestrian shelters, guard rails are necessary. But places other than those also need to be recognised as potentially unsafe and have prevention measures introduced.

Building cycling routes makes travel by bicycle safer. Educating cyclists on how to become more visible and safer on roads is also very important. Ensuring road safety for pedestrians must be a priority, i.e. by introducing speed limit zones or increasing safety in the recreational places.

Gdynia is an example of a city working on ensuring safety in areas which still have not been converted into pedestrian zones. One such place is Kościuszki Square - a tourist attraction and the land-



Picture 1



Picture 2

mark of Gdynia. Unfortunately, cars park there along the pavements (it is legal in Poland if 1.5 m of the pavement is left for pedestrians) making the square potentially unsafe (picture 1). People walking from the centre of the square - where there are benches, a fountain and flowers, across the road – to the restaurants, shops, cinema, yacht clubs and museum ships berthed in the harbour, might not be seen by or see an approaching car. Anyone who comes there for a walk, or to relax, including children, might be off guard and walk onto the road. Car drivers looking for a place to park might not concentrate on pedestrians, while others drive through too fast. Both parties can cause an accident.

As a public space the square should be green and beautiful but most of all safe. Pedestrians must be visible and must themselves see potential danger. We will therefore prevent cars

parking along pavements of the square by putting flower pots there (picture 2). Thus, the square will be a safer place to visit and will regain its full attractiveness.

MORE

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NEWS from member cities

Klaipėda - Kuji

The 20th Anniversary of Twin-City Cooperation

Klaipėda is the only Lithuanian city that cooperates with a Japanese town. In 1995 the World Congress of Local Authorities in Hague recognized Klaipėda and Kuji cooperation as the world's most interesting example of twin-city cooperation.

With a strong intermediation of Kuji, in 1994 Klaipėda University established the Center of Oriental Studies. Students had an opportunity to attend lectures in Japanese language and literature. The Center paid great attention to introducing Japanese culture to wider audiences.

In summer 2009, on the occasion of the 20th jubilee of Klaipėda – Kuji cooperation, Klaipėda hosted a large delegation from Kuji, lead by the present day Mayor Mr. Takafumi Yamauchi. Seventeen representatives from this remote twin-city proposed an interesting program of the Japanese Culture Days in Klaipėda which was enthusiastically received by the Klaipedians.

After signing a renewed Twinning Agreement, with a solemn ceremony Japanese Culture Days in Klaipėda Culture Communication Center was opened in front of a huge crowd of the curious public. Among most interesting moments was a traditional Japanese ritual of a celebratory toast given after breaking a barrel of sake with special wooden hammers. It was done in a cheerful mood by the mayors of both cities, chief administration officers and representatives from the Embassy of Japan in Lithuania. Everybody had a chance to



taste a small gulp of sake from special square wooden Japanese cups.

A highly qualified calligraphy master revealed secrets of Japanese script. Two very experienced traditional Japanese dance masters charmed the public with graceful ancient dancing accompanied by an exotic Japanese folk music. Women and men from the audience were welcomed to try on traditional kimonos, and were taught steps of "Sakura" dance on the stage. Beside calligraphy and dance workshops, people could get an insight into the secrets of the famous Japanese tea drinking

ceremony. In another fabulous workshop, Ikebana masters were making flower compositions and explaining their meaning. All Japanese culture admirers, and Klaipėda volunteers assisting the guests, were actively involved during all those concurrent performances which entertained the public over the whole weekend.

The 20th anniversary of twinning with our Japanese partner brought closer the people of the two cities and induced a strong impetus for further cooperation.

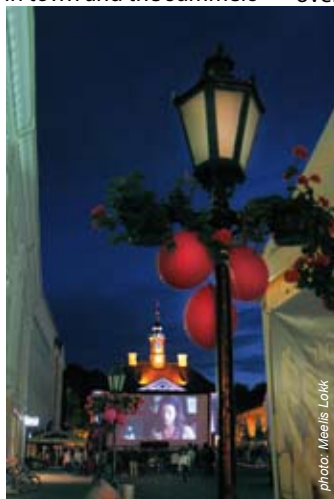
MORE

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From tARTu With Love

Tartu is a vibrant student and university town that blossoms during the academic year but calms down in June when the town is filled with blissful silence, when most of the 12 000 students are gone. Still, there are almost 100 000 people left in town and the summers

in Tartu can be as pleasant as anywhere. To bring Tartu to the centre of attention of the whole country, a special outdoor Love Film Festival tARTuFF was launched. On the one hand, it was to pay a tribute to Tartu, its romantic atmosphere and its inhabitants, and on the other, to welcome large numbers of tourists who could enjoy the town and colourful summer evenings on one of the most beautiful town hall squares in Estonia in the biggest Open Air Cinema ever created in the country. In 2009, tARTuFF welcomed 17 000 visitors. For six days in mid-August, the Tartu Town Hall Square is turned into the cinema with 1000 chairs added to



500 seats available in the summer cafés. The twelve films that are screened during the festival aim to portray different facets of love. During its four year existence, tARTuFF has never been a festival of overly sweet love movies, but rather the one creating the feeling of

spikes and sharp edges.

To further this reputation, a side programme on tolerance has been screened in the Tartu Conference and Cultural Centre Athena. The programme usually covers various topics such as race, cultural diversity, religion and environment. It takes a look at the current topics of the present-day world mainly through documentaries, but also by presenting a parallel selection of feature films – altogether 12 of them. All the pieces are introduced by the film makers and experts who also deliver open lectures and participate in different discussions prior to the screenings.

5th Tartu Love Film Festival tARTuFF is held on 9 – 14 August 2010.

MORE

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The best way to explore the Tri-City and the region

"Gdańsk-Sopot-Gdynia-Plus" Tourist Card is the ultimate sightseeing package tailored for every visitor to the region. It provides the value and convenience to visitors sightseeing all the attractions the region has to offer. The Tourist Card project was launched and implemented by Gdańsk Tourist Organization in 2009 and has proven itself to be an effective solution in tourist service as it answers the demand of the market.

The Tourist Card is the effect of signing the agreement between the Pomeranian Region Authorities, Pomeranian Regional Tourist Organization, Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia Municipalities and the Metropolitan Transportation Association in 2008.

The Tourist Card is a comprehensive offer for an individual tourist as well as families and groups. Two versions of the card will be available in season 2010/2011: the Mini option which includes free admission to museums and a wide variety of attractions and the Max option including a ticket for public transportation valid for 24 or 72 hours



ensuring tourists make the most efficient use of their time, free entry to museums and art galleries and discounts on various attractions. Due to high interest, project has evaluated this year. It now cooperates with 150 partners providing a rich selection of offers and discounts in: accommodation facilities, restaurants, pubs and clubs, cultural institutions, shopping centres, amber galleries, car rentals and water equipment hires, paintball, Aqua Park, and many more.

The Tourist Card can be purchased at Tourist Information offices around the Tri-City. The pass comes complete with a comprehensive guidebook available in 3 different languages containing a wealth of detailed offers, maps and directions. It is a remarkably helpful tool to arrange a few days of exiting stay to fully enjoy the heritage, culture and attractiveness of the Tri-City and the region.

MORE

www.gdansk4u.pl

Vilnius - Culture Comes Alive

2009 was a special year for Vilnius, the European Capital of Culture and a gateway to the country celebrating the millennium of the first mention of its name. The slogan of the programme "Vilnius - the European Capital of Culture 2009" was "Culture live" indicating that art and culture are a continuous change, a flow, a process of reformation and renovation involving everyone in action, where culture becomes an indispensable part of modern life.

The cultural life of Vilnius did not begin and end with the year of the Capital of Culture. Cultural tourism is one of the priorities of tourism development in Vilnius. The city has a great cultural potential consisting of a multi-faceted musical scene, dance, theatre, folk art, museums and art galleries. Opera and ballet performances have already gained international recognition and traditional festivals attract more and more fans every year. There are festivals for jazz lovers with "Vilnius Jazz" and "Vilnius Mama Jazz", classical music festivals such as "Vilnius Festival" and "Christopher Summer Festival", the international theatre festival "Sirens" for theatre lovers, the festival "New Baltic Dance" for admirers of contemporary dance, and an unforgettable folklore festival "Skamba Skamba Kankliai". City festivals are not forgotten either. "Kaziukas Fair" is a tradition that has been running for more than 400 years which takes place in the streets of the city in the first weekend in spring every year. The fair is expanding and every year it attracts more attention and more visitors. Another important festival of the city is the "Capital Days", an event for Vilnius, its residents and guests.

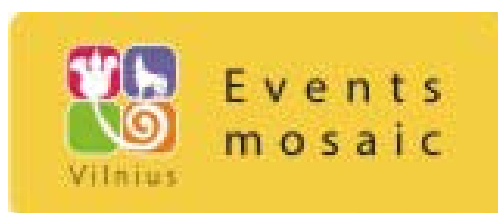
The new events performed under the programme "Vilnius - the European Capital of Culture" which attracted great interest have now become traditional events in the city. This year the first Saturday in May will be devoted to the "Street Musician Day" inviting all those

who are not indifferent to music: on that day the city is drowned in music. The "Culture Night: Let There Be Night" event, when the city is awake all night and people are strolling around and enjoying culture, will also be organized. People will have an opportunity to enjoy "Art in Unusual Places" again, when one can see unusual, strange

and interesting works of art in the most unexpected places.

Vilnius is not lacking in either an abundance of events or their variety. Everybody can find something to capture their interest. To disseminate information about events in Vilnius more widely and

to encourage not only the residents of Vilnius but also the guests of the city to participate in the events, a new internet website www.vilnius-events.lt, where information about cultural events is presented in a visually attractive way, has been created. Special attention is devoted to traditional city events, festivals and non-commercial events. The focus of the website is not only on the local residents but, most importantly, on the guests and tourists. The website encourages visitors to share the useful information found there with their friends via social networks, and recommend and share impressions about the events. The events website contributes to the more effective dissemination of information about events and promotes interest in the cultural life of the capital.



MORE

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Sail Szczecin and many more

2010 will see the city's consequent execution of its Sailing and Maritime Education Strategy. For the second time, Szczecin Municipality will be organizing a cycle of maritime events which are scheduled to take place on the second weekends in June, July, August and September.

The city's oldest event celebrating its ties with the sea – Sail Szczecin is taking place on 11-13 June. It will be preceded by the international conference on "Freedom and security". The city will host ca. 40 sailing ships, oldtimers, and 3 vessels of the Polish navy.

For Poles and szczecinians, 2010 is a special year because of several reasons. It's the 200 anniversary of F. Chopin's birthday, whose music shall be presented during the evening concert on Saturday, 12 June). Classical performance and jazzy arrangements of Chopin's music will surely attract the music lovers, especially as the piano concert is to be played on board S/Y Fryderyk Chopin.

Zygmunt Choroń, a constructor of numerous modern sailing ships, is to be the guest of honour. Three sailing yachts Fryderyk Chopin, Pogoria and ORP Iskra will berth in Szczecin. 2010 will also witness the 65th anniversary of sailing in West Pomeranian Region and in Szczecin. The event will attract many sailors of Polish origin who will come from all over the world. The agenda includes the concerts by Irish and Polish music and dance bands, a concert of shanties „Sail Szczecin”, ecology and wind energy workshops, and diving



photos: Tomasz Seidler, Szczecin Sailing Events Office



courses. Guests will be invited to go sailing on board the yacht.

The Odra Rafting, culminating in Szczecin during the Odra River Days on 10-11 July, makes the river in its southern section teeming with life and Polish and German boats and yachts. Numerous workshops for children and youth, a music concert on the concrete boat, concerts at waterfront attracts everybody to Wały Chrobrego Waterfront.

On 6-8 August the city's skyline will live up with fireworks and electronic music during the III International Firework

Festival PYROMAGIC 2010 and Szczecin Wave. Companies from Korea, China, France and Poland will present their shows with the accompaniment of F. Chopin's music (the first three minutes) and the musical stage will be located on water.

On 11-12 September, the city invites to join the discussion on the sources of culture of the Baltic nations during the Baltic Folk & Roots event. This year's leitmotif is "Kalevala". Folk music performed by the Baltic bands will make the day.

MORE

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Kristiansand is hosting the 2010 Tall Ships' Races

This national celebration with non-stop entertainment and the maritime festivities in the harbour area will ensure that Kristiansand becomes the hub of Norway during these days (29 July to 1 August 2010). 300 000 visitors are expected.

The Tall Ships' Races is an international event with young people, and for young people under the direction of Sail Training International. It is the annual regatta for small and large sailing ships, which is organized in different European cities. The regatta's aim is to promote good relationships between young people through



"Fullriggeren Sørlandet"

different activities whilst the ships are alongside.

The host cities also organise events for hundreds of thousands of people who join in this festive extravaganza. In 2010, all of Sørlandet (Southern Norway) will be invited to create the largest event ever to be held in our region. Kristiansand is the homeport for Sørlandet, a favourite icon sailing ship and a symbol.

The vessel will, serve as the city's ambassador in the Tall Ships' Races 2010 and will be

at the centre of the event. The event is to last over four days and offers an extensive cultural programme for all. Local and regional businesses are given the possibility of profiling themselves to a large section of the public.

The event demands very high standards for the environment programme from the host cities. Kristiansand will strive to show as the environmentally friendly city with future-oriented solutions in transport, waste disposal, energy and in recruitment. Sponsors and partners will have the possibility of marketing themselves locally and regionally, as well as internationally. The environmentally friendly profile will help to promote Kristiansand as a very attractive arena for marketing products and services.

Great benefits from the international interest in the opportunities offered by our region are expected. It will be a chance to show the enormous growth in business and commercial life and highlight the need for more workers. The whole maritime environment, schools sector, institutions, associations and individuals will have the possibility of using the Tall Ships' Races as an inspiration for their work.

MORE

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Music and theatre in a former monastery

What makes the Rostock University of Music and Theatre so fascinating is not only the closeness to the Baltic Sea but also its residence itself. Here, studying takes place behind walls of a former monastery. It was in April 2001 when the University of Music and Theatre moved to the elaborately restored and highly equipped Katharinenstift, an old monastery of the Franciscan Order founded in the mid 13th century. For the purpose of the University of Art the historic parts were combined with new sections. Today, the interplay of gothic and modern architecture is exemplary for the building. Thanks to all this the former monastery offers a unique working atmosphere among Germany's university buildings with the extensive cloisters, the chapter hall, and the refectory.

The courses of studies at the Rostock University of Music and Theatre prepare to an artistic career of a musician, a singer or a composer, and to the teaching profession. In addition, the University educates actresses and actors with great success. The healthy air of the sea invites to a study of special brilliance. Many graduates gained already from the advantages the institution has to offer. One example is the Latvian violinist Baiba Skride who won the 1st prize at the Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition of Belgium and started her international career already during her period of training in Rostock. Today she is still connected with the institution where she was educated in the class of professor Petru Munteanu. Therefore, during the last years she has returned not only for concerts but also as a teacher for a master class in the course of the Summer Campus. Another excellent graduate is Alben Danailowa

An extensive number of concerts and drama performances entertain throughout the year.



photo: Thomas Henrichs/nordlicht

who is at present the concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Graduates of the Drama department are just as successful. They have become ensemble members of for example the Vienna "Burgtheater" or the "Thalia Theater" in Hamburg. Students from all over the world are invited to master classes during the annual Summer Campus in August. That makes the University even more a centre of international flair. During this happening many concerts are offered which allure people from the region and visitors from far away to experience the magic of the place and the music.

MORE

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Kemi SnowCastle

The SnowCastle of Kemi is built every winter. The first SnowCastle, built in 1996, was a gift from the UNICEF and the City of Kemi to all children in the world. The idea for building the SnowCastle in Kemi arose from the fact that even though snow is a very common aspect for the Finns, for the majority of children in the world it is still quite a strange or even an unknown element, and yet, utterly interesting: what snow looks like, how it feels and how it tastes, are factors to fascinate the young and old alike. The first SnowCastle of 1996 with its 1100 metre long walls made the Guinness Record Book as the world's first SnowCastle with long walls.

Every January, from these historic years onwards, a SnowHotel, a SnowRestaurant, a SnowChapel and the Children's World within white snowy walls are constructed. The SnowCastle is open every year from the end of January to the beginning of April. At the Inner Port, the part of Kemi where the SnowCastle is located during the winter, there are cafes, bars and cosy restaurants as well as the lushly green Meripuisto-park right by the lightly salted waters of the Gulf of Bothnia for visitors to enjoy in the summertime. For the SnowCastle 2010 21 000 m³ of snow was needed, which corresponds to the amount of 2 100 lorry-truck-loads. The SnowCastle area is 4 900 m², which is the area of about one and a half football-fields.

MORE

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The Province of Pomerania as a leader of FP2 - PROMOTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND UNIQUE LANDSCAPES

Thanks to its activity in the Baltic Sea area and experience in the international and cross-regional cooperation, the Province of Pomerania has been invited as a leader of one of the flagships, as defined in the action plan of the tourist pillar of the Strategy for the BSR, related to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and unique landscapes.

In the framework of assigned tasks project initiatives will be identified, focusing on sustainable utilization of unique natural resources, the elements of cultural heritage to create an attractive tourist product that would characterize the region and refer to the regional identity as well as constitute a competitive advantage on the market of tourist services.

Detailed, multi-level analysis will let identify directions of the development of the tourist offer as well as the integration of local initiatives. It will also enable the exchange of experience and will contribute to tightening the inter-institutional foreign cooperation. Thematic interrelation of different ideas will help to define recommendations for creating comprehensive offers for potential visitors, as well as to segmentate groups of purchasers and to point out the end markets, on which promotional actions should be focused. Effective marketing and a powerful, attractive tourist offer focused on their preferences will allow for creating tourist image and brand of this Pomerania Region will use experiences resulting from leading international projects financed from European resources and contacts established with those representing tourist and cultural spheres. All tasks aim at sustainable development of the BSR, its even penetration by tourists from different parts of the world, and residents, too. Due to the geographical range of area and its diversity and specific character, it is necessary to initiate close cooperation and involvement of all interested parties. Pomerania Region will endeavour to accumulate



Hel Peninsula

all projects and information about them, but most of all, it will attempt to initiate ideas, inspire the cooperation between tourist and cultural environments and between regions of the Baltic Sea basin.

First meeting is to take place in June 2010 in Gdańsk where the originators of the project who accomplish the priorities of the Baltic Sea Strategy, as well as consultants and interested beneficiaries of projects will be invited. The 2nd Baltic Tourist Forum organised in the autumn in Kaliningrad will be an occasion to summarize and select leading project activities which define the character of the development of tourism in the Baltic Sea basin and development of recommendations for further cooperation. The accomplishment of objectives of the FP2 leader will be

carried on in coordination of the remaining flagships related to the development of tourism in rural areas or the development of a strategy for sustainable tourism. This will contribute to the achievement of synergy, development of model solutions and collection of proposals and recommendations for the next programming period of 2014-2020.

MORE

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Sound of the Sea

The International Festival 'The Sound of the Sea' is quite a new initiative of the city of Słupsk. It is dedicated to the maritime cities from all over the world, especially for those where beach and sea are an important element of economic activity, a part of well-being of its residents that attracts tourists from distant parts of the globe.

The idea of 'The Sound of the Sea' Festival is that one can listen to the sounds of the seas and oceans, at one place and time, then compare and evaluate them. The Festival is for maritime cities from all over the world, especially for those where beach and sea are an important element of economic activity, a part of well-being of its residents that attracts tourists from distant parts of the globe. The Festival will promote the most attractive maritime tourist places. The awarded cities may use the awards in their promoting campaigns. The Festival 'The Sound of the Sea' is the only of this kind in the world.

In 2009 the first edition of the Festival was held. The Jury awarded A Coruña (Spain) first place. Kołobrzeg (Poland) won second place and Jarosławiec (Poland) won third place.

Each city may submit only one application including sea sound recording. The Jury (musicians, sailors, travellers, travel agents) will choose the best ones. The application should be submitted by **15 September 2010**.

The UBC gave the honorary patronage to the festival.

MORE

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The National Meeting of Travellers, Sailors and Alpinists – GDYNIA 2010

Gdynia hosts the annual meetings of globetrotters from entire Poland. The National Meeting of Travellers, Sailors and Alpinists in Gdynia has been organized by the City of Gdynia and MART agency from Cracow since 1999, the final of the 'Kolosa' competition accompanies it, forming the most prestigious travel event in Poland.

During the meeting that this year took place on 12-14 March, thousands of visitors have an opportunity to meet the most famous travellers of our times, such as Krystyna Chojnowska-Listkiewicz, Marek Kamiński or Krzysztof Baranowski. The meetings are divided into three categories - Water, Travel and Achievement & Mountains, which guarantees finding interesting issues for everyone. This event promotes virtues of distant African and Asian countries as well as areas of the Baltic Sea. The meeting as well as the 'Kolosa' competition promotes an active lifestyle, teaches tolerance and care for preserving world cultural and natural heritage. It encourages young people to fulfil their own dreams. In order to assist them with that, since 2002 the Mayor of Gdynia has been presenting the award of Andrzej Zawada which constitutes of 10000 PLN grant that helps travellers to accomplish ambitious plans. The winners are chosen basing on their current achievements, originality and quality of the project that is to be realized. This initiative influences promotion of the region, often abroad. Essential elements of the Meeting are also: integration of the travellers' community, skill-sharing, training by colleagues. Thanks to such event Gdynia becomes the capital of travel world for a few days in a year.

This year's edition with its rich programme attracted record crowds. Visitors enjoyed meetings with experienced travellers - Elżbieta Dzikowska and Wojciech Cejrowski as well as presentations of young globetrotters putting first but brave steps in the world of explorations and achievements. The wide audience enjoyed additional attractions like seminars, climbing walls and getting acquainted with offers at a book fair organised this year for the first time presenting travel press as well as stands offering tourist equipment and clothes. At a few separate exhibitions we could see many colourful pictures taken during exotic journeys.

MORE

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Mariehamn PAF OPEN



Åland will host the world's coolest professional sports tournament - SWATCH FIVB World Tour on 18 - 22 August 2010.

"This is a milestone for beach volley on Åland", says Simon Dahl, the Paf Open Tournament Director. Dahl has participated twice in the Olympic Games with his beach volleyball partner Björn Berg.

The beach volleyball week in Mariehamn offers not only the games but lots of fun and entertainment. In the festival area there are courts and loads of exciting activities to discover.

The investment in beach volleyball in Finland and Sweden is long term and will guarantee that Finnish-Swedish beach volleyball has a place on the world tour for many years to come. Mariehamn will host the tournament again in 2011. SWATCH FIVB World Tour Paf Open is part of the development of beach volleyball and volleyball in Finland and Sweden. It is a unique Finnish-Swedish World Tour event and it is the third time that the Tour is arranged in Mariehamn. Paf Open hopes to become one of the major annual Nordic sport events.

MORE

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Kotka beats to your rhythm



Music Festival Kymijoen Lohisoitto, 2-6 June 2010

Finnish music festival Kymijoen Lohisoitto is known as a multifaceted annual event full of colourful musical experiences. The festival opens the summer season of the Kotka Region in the beginning of June. As in the previous years, the festival concerts will be arranged in various breath-taking locations such as the Kotka Concert Hall, Restaurant Kairo, the Langinkoski Imperial Fishing Lodge, the churches of Haapasaari and Pyhtää, and Kuutsalo Island. Kymijoen Lohisoitto festival pays also attention to friends of popular music. The festival programme contains concerts that are free of charge, too. These concerts are held at places that are normally full in the summertime, such as market squares. www.lohisoitto.fi

Kotka Maritime Festival 29 July-1 August 2010

This spectacular annual event is Finland's largest maritime carnival organised around the architectural splendour of the Vellamo Maritime Centre in Kotka. The festival also provides a superb setting for maritime culture, with a concert programme ranging from rock to classical music, the Sea Shanty Festival, Maritime Jazz, exhibitions, international street theatre performances and the Children's Maritime Festival. In the evenings there will be mega concerts in the port. www.meripaivat.com

Hamina Tattoo - the International Military Music Event 1-8 August 2010

Hamina Tattoo - the International Military Music Event - was arranged for the first time in 1990. Since then, it has established its position as a major review of military music, extending over one week every second year. The Tattoo bands in 2010 are coming from Estonia, Germany, Russia, USA and two bands are Finnish. The main shows take place right in the heart of Hamina, in the renovated Hamina Bastion. The Tattoo week provides memorable musical experiences in the streets, parks and market places of this old fortress town. www.haminatattoo.fi

A course to Kiel

Start of the cruise line season

On 20 April the new cruise line season begins. From that day on around 140 cruise ships will arrive in Kiel and assure an incredible view on the harbour panorama. Sometimes up to six ships will berth in the port of Kiel next to the two ferries of the Stena Line and Color Line.

Spring-events in Kiel

Spring is coming and with it various events. Mild temperatures, the fresh sea air and warm sunbeams entice us outside. Therefore, it is worth to come to Kiel and enjoy events such as the Festival of beers (13.05.) or the start of the sailing camp Camp24lsieben (06.05.) where kids, teens and visitors can test their sailing skills. Besides, the Open-air museum Molfsee opens its doors and invites everyone to the gardener's market (25.-26.04.)

www.kurskiel.de

Kiel Week: 19-27 June

The Kiel Week is the world's largest competitive sailing event and the largest summer festival in the north of Europe with its over 1000 events. Up to 70 hot-air ballooning teams will be attending the fourth international Balloon Sail. All good reasons to be part of this amazing summer spectacle. Sailing boats can be chartered in order to go on a trip in the Kiel fjord or to accompany the sailing regatta. www.kurskiel.de

Sailing regatta on traditional sailing ships

Back to the roots! For the first time, the Kiel fjord is the venue of this sailing event. On 24-26 September 2010 around 30 traditional sailing ships are expected to take part. An exciting supporting entertainment programme with children animation as well as a music and show-act stage will accompany this event.





Welcome to Tukums

Tukums is a small town on the border of two regions of Latvia – Kurzeme and Zemgale. 100 years ago it was known to all travellers as the town of gardens and craftsmen, famous for its ceramists and honey-golden pottery. As you approached the town, it looked like a huge cherry-tree garden, sinking in mountains of blossom in the spring time and in red and sweet cherries in the summer.

During the second half of the 20th century, the town was famous for its artists and roses. Here, during the summers, students wandered along the narrow, crooked streets of the old town, painting for their summer practice, but the breathtaking roses were blooming in the streets and squares. The horticultural farms of Tukums were known for their flowers not only in Latvia and the Soviet Union, but also in Europe and Asia. For more than 100 years now all travellers upon hearing the name of Tukums know the rhyme – Leave your heart down in Tukums town! Also this year Tukums is ready to show off with its goodies. Already at the beginning of May, to rejuvenate the image of Tukums as the city of gardens, the grandest of Latvian poets Imants Ziedonis, who is originally from the region of Tukums, and the popular Latvian rock band “Brainstorm” are planning to plant cherry-trees in Tukums together with the local residents.

From 18-20 June, the annual town festival will take place, during which activities of expecting the Summer Solstice celebration will be held; the ancient crafts will be brought to daylight and refreshed also in the image of the 21st century. But from 1-4 July the only Rose Festival in Latvia will take place here. The slogan of the festival is “Roses only!”. A competition for florists “A dream about a rose” will be held during the festival, along with making large-sized rose paintings with the aim to get the Guinness world record.



MORE

Ms Ingrida Smuškova, Head of Tukums TIC
www.visittukums.lv



Vaasa welcomes for numerous events 2010

12 - 16 May **Vaasa XVIII Choir Festival** **Vaasa Choir Festival** www.vaasa.fi/choirfestival

An international event of choir music. The festival is organized annually on the weekend of Ascension Day. Nearly one hundred concerts take place during the five days of the Festival.

22 - 23 May **Spring Market on the Market Place**

5 June **Fish Market in Inner Harbour**

16 - 23 June **Korsholm Music Festival** www.korsholmmusicfestival.fi

One of the most acknowledged chamber music festivals in Finland, brings its own mood to this coastal region as music resounds in concert halls, restaurants, museums and idyllic church buildings.

1 - 4 July **Wasa Youth Football Cup** www.wasafootballcup.com

Some 250 teams representing countries in Scandinavia and Europe, participate in this tournament.

17 - 18 July **Rockperry Festival in Vaskiluoto** www.rockperry.fi

6 - 8 August **Vaasan Marssi** www.vaasanmarssi.fi

A walking event.

12 August **Night of Arts** www.vaasa.fi/taiteidenyo

12 - 15 August **Days of World Heritage**

In cooperation with the municipalities of World Heritage region and organizations, hiking tours, World Heritage Cruises. World Heritage Conference, workshops for children.

4 September **Vaasa Marathon**

MORE

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3rd World Gdańsk Reunion

21-23 May 2010

www.gdansk.pl


Gdańsk is a multicultural melting pot, a world-famous city, with its heritage developed over the centuries by representatives of many ethnic groups who settled in this hospitable and tolerant town. Some of them came to stay here, some would only stay for a while to return to their mother countries in later generations. Those, however, who left Gdańsk kept its memory in their hearts and handed it down from generation to generation. The World Gdańsk Reunion is dedicated to those, who may be scattered round the world, but their hearts are still tied to Gdańsk. They will meet in the streets of Gdańsk for the third time from 21 to 23 May 2010.

The World Gdańsk Reunion serves to maintain our traditions as an open city renowned for its hospitality. Just as in the olden days, Gdańsk will open its gates to all those who want to identify with this place either through their descent or simply just because they love the town. It is our intention for the meeting of the large, though scattered, Gdańsk family to strengthen our ties and our Gdańsk identity.

The programme of the Gdańsk Reunion includes many cultural events, usually open to the public, which will take place both in the city streets and in the interiors of its historical buildings. We will hold: exhibitions, previews, theatre and multimedia spectacles, conferences, competitions dedicated to Gdańsk, concerts, theatre productions and literary meetings. Come and see the many faces of Gdańsk!


MORE

www.gdansk.pl





GDANSK
www.gdansk.pl




LE HAVRE



ZMiGM

Transfer wiedzy i najlepszych praktyk w zakresie zarządzania portami morskimi w celu wypracowania optymalnego modelu dla Trójmiasta

Transfer of knowledge and best practices in the scope of the seaports governance in order to elaborate an optimal model for the Tricity



eea grants

Projekt jest dofinansowany ze środków Mechanizmu Finansowego EOG oraz Norweskiego Mechanizmu Finansowego



norway grants

"Transfer of knowledge and best practices in the scope of the seaports governance in order to elaborate an optimal model for the Tricity"

The purpose of the project is to develop a joint concept on decentralized management of sea ports of major importance to the national economies. The project target group consists of the representatives of ZMiGM, city of Gdańsk and other interested stakeholders involved in the process. In the outcome, the project will produce the economic-financial analysis for the decentralized sea port management model. The project will have two locations: Le Havre and the city of Gdańsk. It will last 8 months (commencing from 2 February – 30 September 2010). With the total co-financing of 25 257 EUR, ZMiGM contributes with 4 457 EUR.

On 13 September 2010 the city of Gdańsk will host the seminar to promote the activities aiming at optimizing the Tri-city port management.

More information about the project:
www.zmigm.org.pl; www.gdansk.pl.

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57th UBC Board Meeting in Næstved, Denmark, 17 February 2010

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Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is a network of over 100 cities from all ten Baltic Sea countries, with an overriding goal of contributing to the democratic, economic, social, cultural and environmentally sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.

The Union has based its operational activities on thirteen working Commissions on: Business Cooperation, Culture, Education, Energy, Environment, Gender Equality, Health and Social Affairs, Information Society, Sport, Tourism, Transportation, Urban Planning, Youth Issues. The Commissions coordinate and execute specific projects, activities and special events. Each city is capable to have its own creative and fully independent input to the Commissions' work.

The Union has an observer status with the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), the Committee of the Regions, the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM). The Union is also a Special Participant in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). The UBC cooperates with numerous Baltic and European organisations.

The Union is open for new members. Any coastal city of the Baltic Sea or any other city interested in the development of the Baltic Sea Region may become a member of the Union by making a written declaration of its will to enter UBC.

Please contact the UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk for more information
about the UBC work and the rules of entering the Union.