



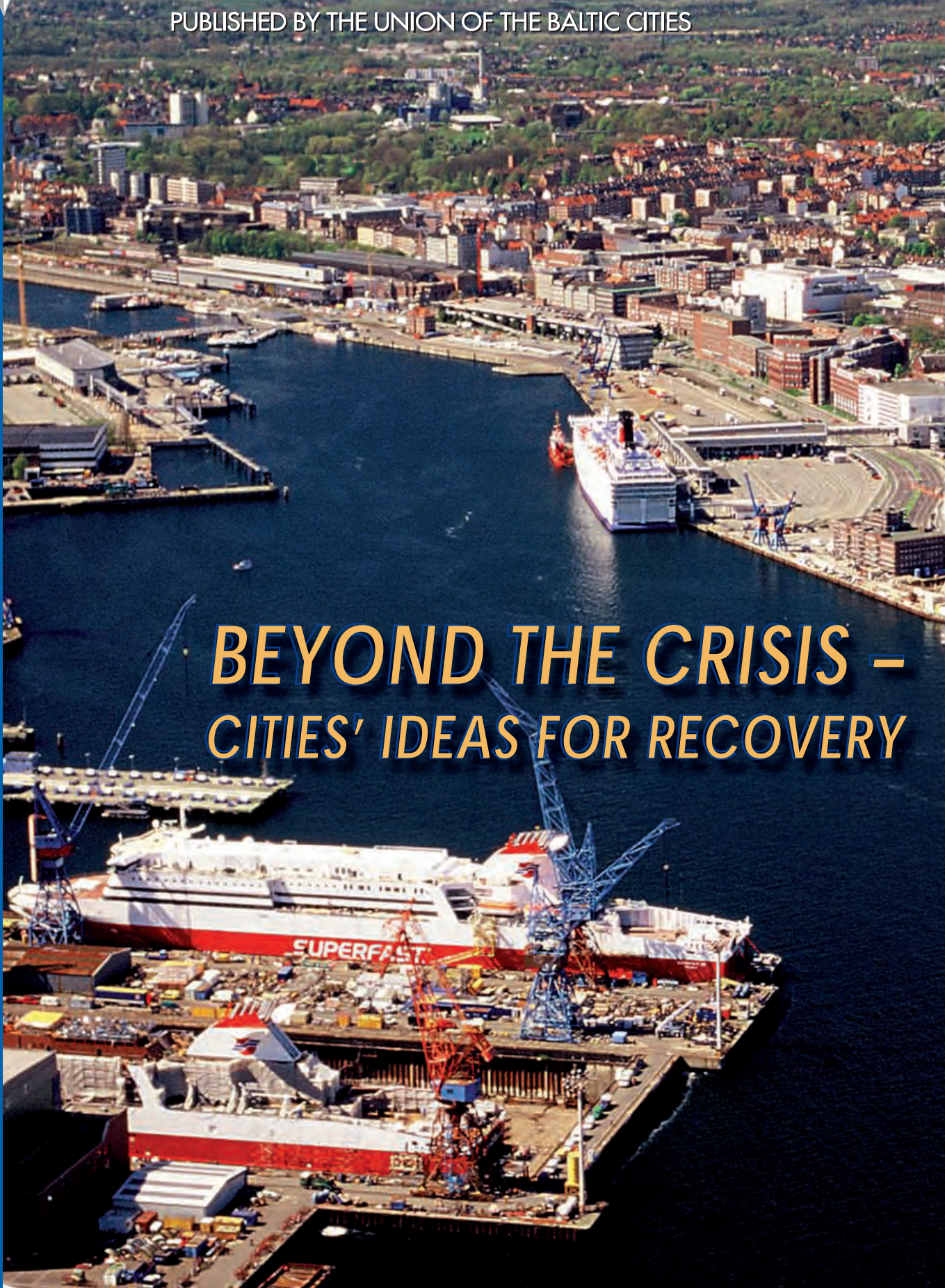
# Baltic Cities Bulletin

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**BEYOND THE CRISIS –  
CITIES' IDEAS FOR RECOVERY**







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# Baltic Cities Bulletin

Dear UBC Friends,

We have just met in Kristiansand at the very successful X UBC General Conference.

Interesting speeches delivered during the first day of the conference made up a picture of challenges in implementing the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. We realize that there is a need for political commitment, active involvement and initiative. The UBC's great experience in working with multiple partners is a solid basis to take part in the realization of the EU Strategy.

I encourage the UBC member cities and commissions to contribute to the EU Strategy implementation through active participation in the flagship projects.

Climate and economic issues as well as the other problems and challenges were in focus during the four thematic workshops. The presentations delivered were a great starting point for further discussions that led to concrete ideas and solutions for the cities. The outstanding involvement of the cities in the workshops' discussions was highly appreciated.

Making use of the potential of the EU Strategy, the cities have to face climate and economic problems at the same time. The Baltic Sea Region has been affected by the economic and financial crisis. However, this situation seems to be an opportunity to rethink the current policies and development strategies. This issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin shows that the crisis may be a kick-off to revise the traditional model of urban economy concentrated rather on short-term profits.

It is impressive how the UBC cities, though not without difficulties, deal with the negative effects of the recession. They try to reforge the problems into the chance and opportunity. As a result the new urban strategies focusing on people's needs and desires, environmental conservation, and finally, long-term investments, are being implemented. Moreover, much more reasonable energy policy of the municipalities is now in focus. Saving energy is saving money.

The strength of the cities is also their ability to cooperate. The 10<sup>th</sup> General Conference adopted a new, revised UBC Strategy for the period of 2010 – 2015 entitled 'Cities for a Sustainable and Prosperous Baltic Sea Region' which sets the ambitious goals. In the new Strategy the UBC and its member cities acknowledge the need for renewing and streamlining of internal structures and working methods.

We have a lot to do in the nearest future. I believe we can work in even more effective way for the whole region and use the full potential which the Baltic Sea Region cities possess.

With Baltic Sea greetings,

Per Bødker Andersen  
President of UBC



Kolding, November 2009



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Vordingborg uses event making to meet the declining private consumption during the financial crises.



222 participants gathered at the 10<sup>th</sup> UBC General Conference in Kristiansand, on 23-26 September 2009.

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# BEYOND THE CRISIS CITIES' IDEAS FOR RECOVERY

Cover story by Wolfgang Schmidt & Bjarke Wolmar



## CITIES' strength beyond the crisis

### *Business conditions in a globalized world*

The day to day business clearly demonstrates the need and feasibility to pursue location development taking account of the conditions presented by a globalised world. Global competition for export markets, capital and commercial developments are leading to ever increasing momentum when it comes to competing for European business locations. Currently, due to globalisation, this competition is no longer solely decided between companies but also increasingly between cities and regions as sponsors of important locational factors.

*In this context it's not just the Baltic Sea Region against Central Europe but Europe against Asia, too.*

In times of the global financial crisis business development policy more than ever faces the challenge to develop and implement effective strategic measures because the cities and regions of the future will look different than today. Internationalization, continuous economic structural change and demographic challenges will give them a new shape. Cities face the challenge of increasing their attractiveness for companies and employees through a high quality of life. Attractive locational conditions play a decisive role in the development of knowledge-intensive sectors of the economy.

The complexity of urban and regional development processes and constrained public budgets force all decision makers to walk new paths of economic development jointly and to create innovative means of facilitating development. Promoting innovation, knowledge and openness will increasingly gain relevance in shaping the future of cities regardless of their size.

In the future the population with its skills and talents will shape the location more strongly than infrastructural preconditions. Creativity is nowadays considered the "resource of the future" and forms the basis for successful development of cities, regions and entire economies. In this respect knowledge and openness are crucial locational conditions. These factors directly influence the business climate and the quality of life.

*Therefore political strategic concepts as well as funding programmes should focus consequently on people, their brains and talents in order to use their potential and their innovative power for developing certain characteristics of a city or a region.*

In the heterogeneous BSR the urban structures are particularly determined by cities of a rather traditional scale. Small and medium sized cities operate as pulse generators for their regions. Although they are often not located in a central geographical position and do not have a metropolitan size, they have to push forward the knowledge-based structural transformation of their entire countries. In order to master this challenge new strategic approaches are to be tested.

### *Challenges for the Baltic Sea Region*

Diverse urban structures, a broad landscape of services, excellent educational institutions and an attractive cultural life especially determine the quality of life in small and medium sized cities. Only locations with such qualities possess good foundations for knowledge-based growth. In the BSR cities with such qualities can be found in many places.

Successful cities, which act as the drivers of growth and, together with their surrounding regions, can prove they are attractive locations, are required for the future dynamic development of the European business area. Regions cannot be developed like a company using a "masterplan" but reveal their potential via a host of partially unrelated initiatives.

Many cities are increasingly showing the major development potential required to establish themselves as knowledge locations in this setting, the hallmark of which is change. These locations provide a good basis for knowledge-based commercial growth, which means they not only provide a diversified service landscape and the infrastructure needed, such as excellent universities and high profile training and research facilities, but also a good quality of life, cultural diversity and the creative force provided by a highly qualified local workforce. This is why there are cities which can drive forward the structural change of the entire state to create a knowledge economy. The soft locational

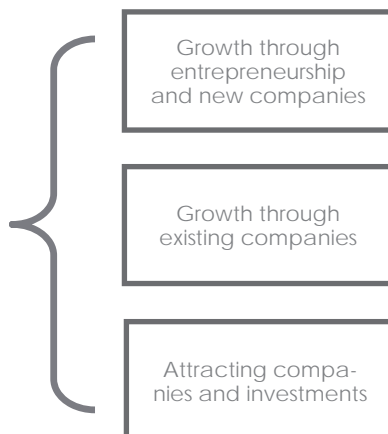


## VISION

We want to see a dynamic, prosperous, democratic and stable European Baltic Sea Region in a successful and sustainable economic, political, social, environmental and cultural development process, moving towards closer cooperation and integration.

The BSR has been able to overcome the adverse effects of the global financial and economic crisis, and is regaining its role as one of the fast growing and prospering regions in Europe.

## STRATEGIC GOALS



## MEASURES

- ➔ Support with know-how from Competence & Knowledge Center
- ➔ Locating relevant production to BSR instead of China / India
- ➔ Locating relevant remote research in BSR
- ➔ Establishing investment agency
- ➔ Attracting investments to BSR
- ➔ Developing science parks and clusters
- ➔ Marketing & sales efforts

### BizCom Action Plan in the UBC Strategy 2010 - 2015

*The new UBC Strategy gives great opportunities for the work of the Commission on Business Cooperation. The time is right to meet the challenges of the financial and economic crisis by joining the forces. In this aspect, BizCom has started to develop strategic goals and clear measures for a prosperous work in the coming years.*

## SUPPORT STRATEGY

International cooperation and partnership

requisites namely innovative skills, knowledge and openness are of key importance when it comes to the dynamic development of cities and the successful positioning of centres as knowledge locations.

### User Driven Innovation

Innovations are the engine of success in business. They enhance competitiveness and are indispensable for securing and strengthening a market position. But the rate of failure is alarmingly high: 25 to 40 % of industrial goods and even 35 to 60 % of consumer products fail! In addition, R&D budgets are decreasing, innovation cycles are becoming shorter, and the general risk of innovation is high. There is an urgent need for action. One tool to counteract these trends efficiently and effectively is that of user-driven innovation, understood as active participation by the future user in the development of products and services, including the central issues of market-orientated product identification, engineering, and design, both participative and empathic. A systematic integration may be carried out in many ways and may take place at many stages of the innovation process. Expertise in these methods and procedures are still scattered randomly across the region; there is a transparent structure. While big global companies have frequently integrated user-driven innovation successfully into their processes, entrepreneurs and SMEs have a backlog demand. User-driven innovation is a process whose systematic implementation in existing company processes can considerably reduce the general risk of innovation. In particular SMEs, spin-offs and entrepreneurs do not normally have the infrastructure to implement new methods and procedures to increase their competitiveness. Lüthje (2003) reports failure rates of product innovations of 25 to 40 % of industrial goods and even 35 to 60 % of consumer products. Gassmann et al. (2005) consider it therefore to be indispensable to introduce the external knowledge of users in an early stage, in order to increase the power of innovation. Today customers frequently limit their marketing research to surveys on products which have already been developed. If requisite changes are identified in this way, they can only be implemented after the event, if at all, and generally lead to delayed market launch.

### Plan for international business-location marketing

Global competition for export markets, capital and business locations make targeted profiling and national and international positioning of individual business locations in the UBC cities an absolute necessity. This is true particularly given the increasing mobility of workers and businesses, the increasing internationalisation of the economy, and the increasing rapidity of structural change towards knowledge economies. With the involvement of further experts from business and science, recommendations for further action will be prepared and set out in writing, covering the following topics in particular:

- drawing up a profile for a business location and science centre
- the linkage between scientific excellence and economic success
- strategies for presenting a business location and science centre at national and international level
- what business promotion can and needs to do directing enterprise.

### UBC – a strong family with a clear vision

The logic of cooperation corresponds to the logic of European integration, a "Europe of Regions". The guiding principle of the EU policy is ever greater interregional cooperation between regions. That means sweeping away the barriers presented by national borders, and greater Inter-European regional collaboration in the social, economic, ecological, infrastructural, technological and cultural sectors. If we want to succeed in the international competition for investors and sponsorship we need to look for joint venture partners, both regional and international, in good time. We will only be successful if we are able to develop new joint initiatives in a European context and view our commercial location as part of a European centre for commerce and knowledge.

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Växjö  
kommun

## RECOVERY package

by Bo Frank & Charlotta Svanberg

So far, Växjö has coped with the crisis considerably better than many other municipalities, thanks to a positive and stable economy, as well as a consistent growth in population. In the county the downturn continues on the labour market, despite certain brighter areas of economic development. This deterioration can be clearly seen within all sectors. In order to minimise the effects of the financial crisis and the recession, the municipality has established a special "future group", with eight different working groups, who have formulated an offensive package of measures. The aim is to muster the strengths of the county and take advantage of the current recession to increase knowledge and exchange competences, ensure that the region receives a share of the government monies/efforts and EU funds, create a feeling of optimism and belief in the future and at the same time run projects that benefit the growth and attractiveness of the region. Amongst other things the package contains the following:

- Investments in public premises, schools, nursery schools, sporting facilities, etc., shall be speeded up and possibly started earlier.
- The new construction of homes shall be maintained. The goal is to construct 600 new homes per year.
- Petition the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and other state bodies to share part of the package of measures and monies that will be available in the near future, amongst other areas for infrastructure investments within the transport sector.
- To invite all recruitment companies to a discussion about the current situation and the future.

Energy efficient  
8-story wooden  
houses in Växjö



- Mapping of companies' competence/skills and training requirements.
- Extra labour market measures to facilitate young people's and long-term unemployed people's entry onto the labour market.
- Offensive efforts to stimulate the formation of new companies.
- Strengthen efforts to increase the number of female entrepreneurs.
- A special project with a clear, controlled focus on the development of trade and industry and new companies in rural areas.
- An innovation package surrounding R&D. Increased research funds for "wood-design-technology".
- A concentrated effort to promote our province Småland as "The design region of Sweden".
- Create a physical climate centre.
- Lift, market and package all the positive aspects that are happening, develop "The Greenest City in Europe" brand, highlight planned and on-going efforts within the cultural and leisure sections.

MORE

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## JYVÄSKYLÄ PROTOMO: creating new jobs

by Eeva-Liisa Koivumäki

Jyväskylä Protomo is a concrete way of improving business operations and creating new jobs, despite the economic recession. The new operating model has been prepared nationally and, locally in four different towns in Finland. The operations of Jyväskylä Protomo are coordinated by Jyväskylä Innovation Oy, which is a subsidiary of Jykes Oy, a company specialised in developing the Jyväskylä region. Jyväskylä Protomo is an environment based on interaction, where professionals with a university-level degree, graduating or recently-graduated young people, and companies can process ideas into business operations. The aim is to create products and business ideas that

new or existing companies can commercialise, while creating jobs for the developers. "Protomo organises networking events for those considering entrepreneurship. At these events different ideas and networking possibilities compiled together are presented for development, through which those interested can recognise their competence areas and find encouragement for further improvement. People can also present their own ideas at the events, convince others and, in the best possible scenario, identify supplementing ideas, partners, competence areas and networks for reducing the risk of becoming an entrepreneur," says Kari Halttunen, who is responsible for the Jyväskylä Protomo project.

User friendliness and humane attitudes drive the operations forward, reflecting the values prevailing in the region. Central Finland is a competence centre for human-oriented technology. It combines high technology with the human perspective. Human Technology is, for example, about user-friendly IT, technology developed for the needs of the elderly, making communication between school and parents easier or measuring and promoting people's physical well-being. Human Technology is also a larger, more universal concept. It embraces the notion of a safe, human-scale living environment with excellent services in all walks of life.



The Human Technology website is a versatile promotion channel for Central Finland, serving e.g. international companies, investors, students, potential new inhabitants and tourists.

ht Human  
Technology Limited



# GDAŃSK AVOIDS RECESSION

by Małgorzata Zalewska & Mariusz Wiśniewski

Poland will probably be the only one among the central and eastern European economies to avoid a recession this year, Morgan Stanley reported, citing the improvement in the nation's industrial production ([www.bloomberg.com](http://www.bloomberg.com)). Gdańsk, since quite a long time is the most safe place to invest in Poland.

In Gdańsk, the recession is felt mostly in decreased costs of running a business. Additionally, the road infrastructure investments, which

are now developed at 30-50% lower costs, allow for the fast development of logistics and industry in the region. Gdańsk is perceived as a city of good business prognosis with a stable social - economic environment. Gdańsk in 2009 is a developing yet cautious city. With some of the biggest investment planned for EURO 2012 and the ap-

plication for the European Capital of Culture 2016, the city budget is being restructured. Starting in February 2009 the estimated savings were planned to reach PLN 50 mln, yet in August 2009 they already

amounted to PLN 58,6 mln. This came as a balance to the decreased income of PLN 69,1 mln. As a result of the proper financial policies and the general situation in the city in the comparison to the other cities in Poland, the latest ranking of the Polish Cities prepared by Rzeczpospolita (published on July 11, 2009), placed Gdańsk on 3<sup>rd</sup> position, moving up from 8<sup>th</sup> last year.

Investment related to EURO 2012 and European Capital of Culture are in progress and are realized under the first cost estimation. Gdańsk investment – Baltic Arena is one of biggest communal investments in 2009 in Poland. The value of the project is PLN 279,7 mln.

The new modernized road infrastructure helps develop other strategic investment sites like Industry and Technology Park "Maszynowa" and Pomeranian Logistic Center located in the Port of Gdańsk. Many high-advance technology production companies are interested in investing. The possible value of the investments would position them as the biggest direct foreign investment in 2009 in Poland and the biggest in the after Second World War in Gdańsk.

Another one of the most spectacular projects is the Modernization Program 10+, started by the LOTOS Group in 2008. The inner return ratio for the whole projects is 11,5%. The program budget is 5,6 bln PLN (1,4 bln EURO), 30% of the sum are LOTOS own resources and 70% are bank loans. By developing the Modernization Program 10+, the consolidated income for LOTOS can grow up to 20 bln PLN per year.

Gdańsk is also perceived as an attractive location for BPO centers, the only city in Poland mentioned in the KPMG report "Exploring Global Frontiers - The New Emerging Destinations". As a result, their global financial and IT shared service centers have opened Arla Foods, Geoban (Santander Group), Acxiom, Zensar Technologies and First Data.

## MORE

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The biggest Public – Private Partnership Agreement between the city and the BPTO for the development of the New Walowa St. was signed when the biggest American banks went bankrupt.



# An urban development through CULTURAL EVENTS

by Sune Hjorth Bach

Vordingborg uses event making to meet the declining private consumption during the financial crises. Cooperation between the municipality and the urban retail trade has been established to avoid recession amongst the town's trade and industry. It is increasingly harder for the business to attract and maintain customers.

The idea of event making has been developed as an alternative method opposed to the traditional type of marketing through advertisement in newspapers, magazines and TV. The purpose of event making is to create a series of customer experiences towards a products quality and special features. It can be taken a step further by using the "urban branding". The core in urban branding is using the distinctive characteristic of each town. Together with 17 other towns in this region, Vordingborg is developing seasonally prolonged tourist activities. The events are all based on the town's specific historical background and cultural life.

First and foremost, Vordingborg is known for its old royal castle with the goose tower symbolizing its huge importance as Denmark's centre of power during the mediaeval times. The plan it to "rebuild" the

castle using lightning fibre bringing the contour of the old castle alive with its many towers in its natural size located at exactly the same place as the original. Furthermore a maze of Christmas trees will be mounted on a neighbouring square. The event will take place during 11 – 20 December 2009.



Photo: Anders Wiśniewski

The cooperation of 18 towns has been of great advantage as it has lead to intensive marketing. A joint homepage [www.kongeland.dk](http://www.kongeland.dk) has been developed. Furthermore, the profiles have been sharpened strengthening the image of each town.

Stege and Præstø, being the other two towns in the municipality of Vordingborg, are also included. Stege was founded during the Middle Age prospering from herring fishery and the herring trade on the local market. This

event will be brought to life at the harbour front in September. In May, the mediaeval town of Præstø will invite everyone to participate in the francophile spring festival emphasizing quality and notable activities. The francophile atmosphere will leave its mark on the entire town and the charming courtyards will be welcoming numerous cultural and culinary experiences.

## MORE

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# HOME AND AWAY



by Rick Butler

Short-term action and long-term vision are enabling the city of Szczecin to overcome the impact of the global financial crisis.

With the global financial crisis undercutting the rate of growth in Poland's economy, elected leaders in Szczecin are combining short-term mediation and long-term planning to ensure future growth. This pro-active approach includes lifting the prospects for local business and fostering the connections necessary to attract funding for regional development that is greater than the sum of its parts. Coupled with the crafting of a development strategy aimed at diversifying the city's industrial base, the municipal administration of Mayor Piotr Krzystek aims to strengthen Szczecin's position at the heart of a greater metropolitan area that spans the



The city of Szczecin: proactive development strategies are in operation

Polish-German border. To meet the short-term needs for helping local business to weather the global economic crisis, the city is working to turn more of its expansive portfolio of commercial property onto the market and in ways that benefit the city treasury. The effort, which has come in response to sliding local property values, is being

made against the backdrop of tax cuts offered to enterprises and developers that will see some 14.000 m.sq. of Class A office space open in the next 18 months. Other local initiatives undertaken during the crunch include infrastructure improvements to both roads and public transport with the aim of lessening congestion on city thoroughfares and improving regional overland links.

More broadly, the municipal government is working with its counterparts in the region to forge a common development strategy and attract funds to shared projects. Along with the German district of Uecker-Randow, Szczecin is applying for EU funds to improve marina facilities. Other partners in the regional development push include Ostvorpommern, Uckermark and Barnim from Germany and the Polish cities of Police, Gryfino, Stargard and Goleniow, representatives from which attended a conference on regional cooperation earlier this year.

Along with tourism, the city is working to leverage the youthful and well-educated workforce and its geographic location to attract high technology and services companies in an effort to diversify the commercial base. These efforts are being articulated in a new long-term development strategy, which is currently being crafted with input both from planning consultants and city residents. A hallmark of the plan is to lessen the reliance on traditional industries, creating a more stable foundation and one that will limit the effects of future crisis-level events on the local economy.

## MORE

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# BEYOND THE CRISIS

by Jukka Vilén

Kemi region is the industrial heart of Lapland. Its production makes almost 8 % of the export value of Finland. The impact of the economic crisis has been strong in the region due to the fact that the value of the trade and export world-wide dramatically dropped. The influence of the financial crisis has been significantly harsher here than in the area less dependent on the foreign trade. During the last 18 months we have lost several hundreds of jobs and 4500 persons have been temporarily forced to have extra leave without salary. The crisis has touched and threatened the well-being of almost 40 percent of the whole working population.

In the middle of crisis one cannot afford to wait and see what is going to happen in the near future or just to close the eyes and hope that the crisis will soon be over. It is clear that new ideas for recovery must be found. It is clear that the current development policies and strategies have to be re-thought. The present strategy and present situation of the city should be re-evaluated. All different kinds of crises can also be seen as a possibility to rethink the traditional model of developing the city and its economy.

Kemi has not been able to do much to minimize the negative effect of the crisis. It is a relatively small city with very limited resources. To keep up the economic activity the city has made a lot of extra investments. The renovation of the biggest primary school has been started

to offer the best possible learning environment for children.

The port of Kemi will have a new northern railway connection to be able to serve better its customers. Altogether more than 15 million

EUR worth investments for 2010 and 2011 have been launched to increase Kemi's competitiveness.

Even though the crisis has strongly shaken the city's economy and well-being, we have also been very lucky. Despite the fact that we have lost hundreds of permanent well paid jobs, so far no factories in the region have been closed down. The city has received some support from the national government. The state has been financing the building of the motorway going through the town that significantly helped the construction sector to cope through these difficult times.

Also, the city has been working hard with several mega size projects.

There are plans to build a bio fuel plant, a nuclear power plant, large-scale extension of the port of Kemi for mining products to triple the export value, state of art facilities for tourism, other investment projects, etc. .

The city market square and walking area are to be rebuilt to be more attractive for new shops and restaurants.



## MORE

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# TALLINN FIGHTS THE RECESSION

by Mart Repnau

In April 2009, Tallinn City Council approved a two-year and 42-point action plan in order to alleviate the effects of the economic crisis for the citizens and entrepreneurs of the capital of Estonia.

The Mayor of Tallinn Edgar Savisaar explained that similar packages of other cities, especially that of London, were reviewed before drafting one for Tallinn.

The 311 million EEK (ca 20 million EUR) economic recession assistance package focuses on relieving unemployment, providing counselling and social assistance, decreasing housing expenses, as well as increasing support to businesses. Additional funding has been al-



Registration of the unemployed to work for the municipal transport company

located to shelters and soup kitchens in order to expand their services, two new social accommodation units and three new employment training centres have been opened in 2009. Family, labour and debt counselling have been made easily available. Compensation of the costs of water and heat have been increased for less privileged. Salary grants for both municipal and private companies hiring unemployed have been introduced by the city government. Almost 500 unemployed have been already hired by municipal transportation companies to clean vehicles and to assist passengers, over 500 have been involved in public work and at least 150 will be hired by private companies by the end of this year. 20% lower rent levels are offered to companies operating in municipal premises against hiring at least 5 unemployed for the period of two years.

Registered unemployment in Tallinn has increased from 7,900 to over 23,000 in just nine months this year. In January 2008 there were only 3,200 registered unemployed in the city of Tallinn. Fast reaction to the changes was inevitable, thus, we are satisfied with the progress of the execution of the action plan concludes Mayor Savisaar.

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# DEVELOPMENT OF THE TIGER

by Bartosz Gondek

Pruszc Gdański with 25 thousand inhabitants has been effectively defending itself from the crisis so far thanks to its favourable location and large economic sector. However, certain indicators prove that also this little economic tiger can feel the effects of worldwide economic slump. But it might happen only next year.

Pruszc Gdański is situated 10 km from the centre of Gdańsk. Despite the direct nearness of the capital of metropolis, Pruszc Gdański has preserved its historical autonomy. The advantage of the town is its location in the fork in the trunk roads (Gdańsk – Warsaw and Gdańsk – Łódź) just next to the bypass of Gdańsk and A-1 freeway. On the area of the town there are over 3000 business entities registered, Baltic Investment Zone is functioning, new housing estates and service premises are coming into being. In the centre modern housing and service development was built, for which the town was granted Honorary Award of Polish Town Planners Society in the nationwide contest for the best developed public space in 2009. An important event for the citizens of Pruszc was the signing of an agreement in October this year ensuring increased frequency of SKM trains rides between Tricity and Pruszc. As statistics show, although population is growing all the time, even if all professionally

active citizens were to work in Pruszc there would still be free working places for visitors. It is the best testimony to economic condition of this youngest, smallest and at the same time the most dynamic town of the Tricity metropolis. Such a strong economic position of Pruszc Gdański makes the crisis in the town much less noticeable than in other similar towns of Pomeranian Voivodeship.

The crisis is not visible in the register of business activity. From May 2008 to October 2009 509 new firms were registered and 336 were crossed out. The crisis is also not visible through the prism of income from property tax. In period from January to September 2008 income to the budget from this tax was 9 384 000. In the same period this year it was 10 581 000. A small shake in the market is visible only because of a small increase of tax arrears.

The only field influenced by the crisis is the sell of properties. Here the slump in the market is very clear. Selling the plots was one of the most important mechanisms driving investments in Pruszc. If next year it is still low we will be forced to look for alternative sources of financing for the investments – says Andrzej Szymański, Deputy Mayor.

Although the interest in the town's plots is lower, Pruszc Gdański has still managed to execute this year's investment budget in the way it was planned last year. The situation will probably be the same next year.

The crisis can also have its good sides. The sell of properties has decreased but also the prices of service and building materials have fallen and many a time in a drastic way – even by half – says Janusz Wróbel, the Mayor of Pruszc Gdański – it is an ideal situation for us. Especially as we are shortly before a historical investment – building the bypass of our town.



Photo: Jacek Świs

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# TIME TO PREPARE FOR A NEW QUALITY



by Vilnis Vitkovskis

Latvia and Liepāja are facing the crisis and the most explicit evidence to it is the unemployment rate which currently exceeds 17% in Liepāja. The unemployment brings about a number of negative aspects and tension in the community. Therefore, the local government has a crucial role in dealing with the situation. Each municipality must have an action plan how to warm up the local economy, create jobs and tackle social issues. Liepāja is working in four main directions.

Firstly, it focuses on the implementation of EU cofinanced urban development and infrastructure projects. These are substantial investments in the amount of ca. 200 million EUR over the next four years which will generate a lasting added value – a better city. And it is of utmost importance that these investments warm up the local economy presently creating jobs in the building industry, as well as indirectly stimulating many other industries – project designing, planning, transport, procurement, catering, finances and insurance.

Secondly - Liepāja's energy efficiency program. The insulation of public buildings (education, culture and sports) is a priority area in order to reduce heating costs. That will result in considerable savings in the city budget which can be diverted to development programs and dealing with social issues. Besides, these activities generate new job places. Liepāja has attracted finances for the modernization of heat supply system and production, allowing reducing of heat tariffs. The city works also on the development of an ambitious co-generation plant project. There is a special program in our city encouraging insulation of the multi-apartment dwelling houses with the support of the municipal and EU funds.



Thirdly - the business support program. The local government gets actively involved to help Liepāja entrepreneurs to find new markets for their products and to attract new foreign companies. Some of the latest projects include a business incubator established for creation and development of new businesses and business ideas and development of new territories suitable for

manufacturing and other businesses. Projects of strategic importance for the development of the port and industries – the port dredging and construction of the port access road are being implemented.

And fourthly - the social area of activities is the support of people who had been hit most hard by the economic crisis, had lost their jobs and incomes. It includes the local policy of social assistance and social benefits, as well as training for the unemployed, teaching new skills and qualifications, temporary jobs for the unemployed, scholarships for job learning, etc. This will allow people to live through the crisis, acquiring new skills and preparing them to be in a better position for job market when the economic situation improves.

The crisis can be viewed as a springboard or a run-up period for a new quality and a new development. It gives experience and wisdom and also teaches how to work more productively and think in a long term perspective.

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# TOURISM IS OUR FUTURE

by Aleksandra Kapejewska

Similarly to other municipalities and communes in the Baltic Sea Region, Malbork is facing today big economic challenges. However, the new situation cannot and does not stop the economic development of the town, possibly due to the consequent realization of planned investments, active promotion and a number of successes in gaining the external funds.



Miniature of famous Malbork Castle and a fountain with water and colours dancing in the rhythm of music – these are just some of the changes introduced in the heart of the town.



Years 2007-2010 will be remembered as the period of the most significant changes in Malbork's road and tourist infrastructure ever. Complete reconstruction of the central street of town created an area of new quality tourist services. Malbork became also the place, where tourists and inhabitants may spend their time actively and benefit from a rich recreational offer by visiting one of the biggest rope parks in Poland, playing tennis or climbing a hiking wall.

The town's actions are focused on creating a new public space and attractive cultural offer. Malbork is a splendid venue for concerts, open-air spectacles, theatrical performances and sporting events, famed above all for its flagship open-air cultural events, the Siege of Malbork, and – from this year - Magic Malbork Show.

From 2010 these events will be taking place in specially prepared area, created from the EU Funds. During the last three years Malbork achieved the most significant successes in gaining the external funds ever. The projects already completed, in realization or planned within next 3 years are worth 55 mln PLN (over 13.000.000 EUR), with the external help of 40 mln PLN (9.500.000 EUR).

Malbork should be remembered not only for its castle, but also for extraordinary atmosphere, unique monuments and wonderful attractions. Investments in tourist and recreational infrastructure, attractive cultural events, increasing number of tourists and employees working in the tourist branch – this is our answer for unemployment and other crisis difficulties. Though the budget for 2010 is very challenging, the actions will create solid basis for the future.

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# BUY FISH FROM YOUR NEIGHBOUR

by Gintautas Minelga

The word "crisis" dominates in people's conversations. The crisis was shimmering in newspaper headlines. But what has actually happened? The Atlantic cod is still schooling in the Baltic Sea, and Klaipėda fishermen have not yet lost their ability to catch it, people still do like the fish. Shoemakers continue making shoes and nobody ceases walking; musicians still play their instruments, and citizens still like swinging to the tone of an old good melody. Only building construction has stopped. A hectic city development into agricultural land plots has gone standstill. Many new buildings that currently are empty, sooner or later will be used. Today it is easy to open a small shop of spices or a large dancing hall – premises are more than enough. Young families can find good apartments for comfortable living. Klaipėda community is inter-related with close ties, and for this reason it is strong. With a successful attraction of European funds the city expedited the construction of public purpose infrastructure objects. Roads and viaducts are being constructed far more faster. Klaipėda continues the implementation of all earlier planned projects: the Universal Sports Complex, City Swimming Pool in Lideikio street, Conference Center in Klaipėda Old Castle Place, roads and roundabouts, a new large Cargo and Passenger Terminal, other objects of a well-grounded demand. The majority of those objects will be operated according to PPP model - thus the city will have less expenditure, whereas businessmen will work under smaller risks. In the premises of a former school a Youth Center, based on free access, but not membership, opened the door.



Klaipėda welcomes the 7<sup>th</sup> largest ship in the world

The crisis did not affect grand international events in Klaipėda planned for the summer – the prestigious world regatta The Tall Ships' Races Baltic 2009 and the festival of European cultural heritage EUROPEADE, each bringing in 4000 participants from no less than 30 countries and about a million and a half guests to the city. Klaipėda invests much into tourism infrastructure – it is located on three waters with a unique landscape: the UNESCO heritage pearl the Curonian Spit; an incredibly large, protected from waves and winds lagoon: the river Dane and the Sea. An international standard marina for small entertainment ships and yachts is already operating, cruise liners bring in thousands of tourists from all over the world. Tourism market is to recover the first, and we hope to be among those who add value to travelers.

The city administration structure is being optimized and restructured – irrelevant functions are being refused, they are redistributed. The second level self governance – Regional Governor's Administration will be abolished. Klaipėda has doubled allocations for public work. A freshly launched system of electronic schedule for public transport make the citizens eagerly use it. The port reconstruction goes on, so that the largest in the world container vessels could enter it. The city life is going on in its rapid rhythm.

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# Cultural Harbour and Sustainable Development

by Kari Makkonen

Kotka on the south coast of Finland is fighting the recession and a structural change in economy by putting emphasis on culture and sustainable development. For decades, the economy of Kotka has relied on seafaring, the port and heavy industries, but now Kotka is seeking new driving forces by converting the old City Port situated in the heart of the city into a Cultural Harbour and by contributing to the control of climate change.



Kotka is turning its City Port into a Cultural Harbour, where one of the existing landmarks is Maritime Centre Vellamo shown on the right. The objective is to turn the harbour into a carbon-neutral zone.

## MORE

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"I hope that the United Nations' Climate Change Conference arranged in Copenhagen before Christmas will reach an agreement on global emissions restrictions which will carry significance also here at the local level," says Henry Lindelöf, Mayor of Kotka.

According to Lindelöf, Kotka is seeking a position between the East and West by creating a new attraction for Kotka at the City Port together with its partners Kotka-Hamina Regional Development Company Cursor and two major construction companies, Skanska and SRV Group.

"The City of Kotka recently acquired this land area of some 20 hectares, where our partners and we will construct a centre which uses culture as the impetus for future urban development," Lindelöf says. Henry Lindelöf is particularly happy by the fact that Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund, is also involved in the project.

"We are planning to make this area a similar carbon-neutral zone as Jätkäsaari in Helsinki. Sitra has also been developing that project by acquiring information from international experts in countries such as Germany, USA and Great Britain. Sitra is contributing to the idea crucially, and I believe that Kotka can live up to the challenges brought by sustainable development," says Henry Lindelöf.



## GOOD CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT



by Robert Grabowski

The economic crisis that has swept through the world recently marked its occurrence also in the local governments domain. Revenues from sale of real estates as well as from CIT and PIT contributions have been reduced clearly. Seeing the consequences of such facts and an attempt to overcome the unfavourable phenomena is a responsibility of each commune manager. Koszalin tries to overcome the unfavourable economic prognoses developing the municipal investments that create jobs, assure financial stability of the city as well as exert impact on the general condition. The next priority of Mayor Mirosław Mikietyński, is to create conditions enabling the city infrastructure development, attracting external companies. Those two elements make a foundation on which an axis is built allowing to combat, in micro scale, the global economic crisis.

Every year, the budget of the municipality increases its investment project sums and in 2009 it is PLN 100 million (seven years ago ca. PLN 20 million was used for this purpose). A part of this sum has been earmarked directly for works financed by the commune. However, public funds are not fully used up for financing investment projects as such because Mayor Mikietyński is aware of the fact that he should also care after local entrepreneurs. Therefore, financial concessions asso-



ciated with business activity performed in the city have been implemented; they are supposed to reduce the burden shouldered by those entrepreneurs, who invest in Koszalin. The Special Economic Zone also creates favourable conditions as it effectively attracts companies. A part of the budget is successfully used for planning activities. Koszalin is one of very few cities in Poland having its area almost fully covered by the up to date

physical development plans. This gives, in turn, better opportunities for those investors, who plan to commence or develop their business activity in the city.

Those actions have been reflected in a survey performed recently by newspaper "Dziennik. Gazeta Prawna" in which Koszalin, along with Warsaw, Gdańsk and Wrocław, was put at the top position of cities that have been offering the highest number of jobs, being well ahead off such cities as Poznań and Kraków.

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## SCIENCE as the driver of urban development



by Michael Lüdtkke & Robert Szillat

Rostock is a leading location of new technologies – with a concentration of scientific research centres, throughout Germany and the Baltic. Raising the awareness of this fact is the challenge that [Rostock denkt 365°] has put upon itself. This association has the concept to present the city inwards and outwards as the city of the sciences and a centre of technological innovation.

All scientific institutes have been put together and linked into a network. Altogether 49 stakeholders are identifying where the opportunities are for Rostock and which future obstacles the city will have to steer around. By these means Rostock is, due to the science, sharpening its profile, combining forces and developing its skills.

The aim is to persistently change the city to the tenor that the sci-

ence as impetus is permanently embedded into the awareness of the citizens and to constantly bind the partners together. It is yet to be determined how the latest research results may lead to marketable products and in an economically underdeveloped region preferably also guide to the creation of new jobs. The promise is that Rostock will arise strengthened from the current economic depression. Chairman Prof. Dr. Udo Kragl states that the association's slogan and name are founded on the belief that facilities in this globalized world need to be one ship's length ahead of their contestants. Furthermore: 'Who wants to achieve this, first of all needs to invest in knowledge and smart thoughts'.

Prof. Dr. Kragl, who is also the dean of the Germany-wide unique "Interdisciplinary Faculty" at the University of Rostock, states that the slogan expresses, that Rostock's science: "investigates, orientates, illuminates its environment, analyses and localises the circumstances, reviews its present position and focuses on its problems. The so called "buoys of knowledge" have become its symbol. Those are discharged nautical buoys taken from the harbour, which are now presented as striking "navigation marks". [Rostock denkt 365°] places them in front of the scientific research facilities in the city.

In that way residents and visitors can directly identify where research and teaching is taking place. On top of that they are able to see how numerous colleges and institutes are dispersed in the municipal area.

MORE

Rostock denkt 365°

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With buoys in front of scientific research facilities throughout the whole city sets [Rostock thinks 365°] symbols for the science location Rostock





# NEW LAHTI STRATEGY

by Santtu von Bruun

Lahti, like other municipalities in the Baltic Sea Region, struggles with the economic difficulties brought on by the global recession. Still, in Lahti, it is considered important to plan ahead and to allocate resources to activities that strengthen the city in the long run. Planning the life after the recession, the Lahti City Council agreed on a new city strategy on 1 June 2009. The Lahti Strategy 2025 is an essential leadership instrument for the City Council. It defines the operating principles, the vision to the year 2025 and the strategic objectives and success factors that create a path to the vision. A complementary implementation plan that presents the essential strategic measures, responsibilities, and the long-term target levels for indicators is now being prepared.

The vision, expressed in the strategy, is to be a vital, attractive, and environment-focused city. Six strategic long-term objectives were chosen to guide Lahti into the envisioned direction. These are the objectives to be a vital, growing city, to meet the conditions for residents' well-being through concentration on core tasks, to have an unprejudiced, multicultural urban community, to be a pioneer in sustainable development, to keep the finances of the city balanced in long-term and to attract skilled, professional personnel who have willingness to develop. Lahti will profile itself as a leading 'city of environment.'

The implementation of the strategy has already started in many areas. Lahti and its affiliates will decrease the overall energy consumption and gradually switch to using renewable energy. Also, energy efficiency in housing and public buildings is promoted. New comprehensive urban plan promoting pedestrian traffic, public transport and urban regeneration is underway. New opportunities to sustainable land use planning on regional level are gained through the



The vision for 2025 and the six long-term objectives

municipal merger process that started this autumn. Developing the CleanTech cluster and research is ongoing as a joint effort of public organisations, companies and research institutions. All aforementioned developments will help Lahti to reach its ambitious goal to halve the greenhouse gas emissions from the 1990 level by 2025. The new strategy is compatible with the Aalborg Commitments that the City Council signed in 2007. Lahti committed to a path of sustainable development. Real sustainable development demands integrated management of all areas of development. Thus, a comprehensive strategy, that is applied in all operations and development plans, is a good tool for implementing the Commitments.

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# IMPROVING THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

by Ingrid Tilts

Sustainable performance of small-size cities depends on their ability to retain their population. The quality of life substantially depends on the quality of the living environment, thus it is important to take every measure to improve the urban environment in order to make it as attractive as possible for both the community and investors. For Kuressaare, a seaside city, the situation of the Baltic Sea plays a highly important role.

This year a large-scale project on water supply and sewage pipeline construction and reconstruction was completed. The work is carried further by reconstructing the existing waste water treatment plant that will be equipped with a new technology enabling the treatment of the increased volume of wastewater, resulting in better seawater as well as air conditions.

Another environment related major infrastructure object, launched in October, is the waste handling station where household, industrial and electronics waste is sorted and prepared to be shipped away from the island of Saaremaa where Kuressaare is located. Timber waste from building industry is produced into wood chips used for heating.

A good living environment also enhances the possibilities for high level public social services like childcare and hobby education. During recent years much attention has been paid on upgrading educational establishments. Currently reconstruction work is going on in one of

the biggest kindergartens that results in better conditions for children and service for parents. Preparations have been made to start reconstruction work in the music school that provides an essential opportunity for the children and young people to get education. Kuressaare is also a popular holiday destination. Therefore it is important to provide opportunities for active leisure. During the past three years 19 km of cycling paths have been built. Beside cycling, the paths provide possibilities for roller-skating, Nordic-walking and jogging. Cycling also makes a contribution to reducing car traffic in the city. In September, Kuressaare was acknowledged as the most cycling-friendly mid-size city in Estonia.

It has been possible for the city to implement all these activities due to the EU financial support. Kuressaare is making every effort to continue developing the city as a pleasant place to live, work, spend one's holiday and, last but not the least, to invest.

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# CREATING THE CITY'S BRAND



by Przemysław Namysłowski

Competition between modern urban centres and their communities is essential. To be competitive, the cities seek for any unique features to distinguish themselves in the global market.

It seems that in the global economic crisis, the brand is the foundation for the idea of competitiveness as a driving force of the free market. Strict defining of the city's Unique Selling Proposition (USP) by using existing or reactivated brands can be a decisive factor that gives the city competitive advantage on the market.

The City Promotion and European Integration Office, as the specialised organisational unit responsible for city marketing, took the initiative of Mayor Maciej Kobyliński, and started to reactivate the Stolper Jungchen brand (The boy of Słupsk), one of the most recognisable pre-war food products.

The reactivation of the 'Stolper Jungchen' brand was one of the directions in the primary strategic objective to build a strong brand – Słupsk. One of the guiding principles is to preserve and adapt all valuable and unique features of the historic Słupsk to the modern conditions of life.

The process of reactivation of the 'Stolper Jungchen' brand is divided into three main stages: stage I – legal protection of the brand, stage II – bringing the brand onto the market, stage III – brand marketing. In the first stage, a key issue was to obtain the rights to the trademark Stolper Jungchen – Camembert in Poland and Germany.



Photo: Michał Słupczewski

Phase II which is establishing cooperation with the manufacturer, started with the municipal applications to the Patent Office to grant protection rights for trademarks. Success at this stage was crucial to the whole process of reactivation. In 2007 the company called 'Cheese-Milk' located in Zielin near Słupsk started the production of Camembert-type cheese under the brand name 'Stolper Jungchen'. Common strategic objectives of the company and the municipality have become a platform for cooperation which was possible due to fulfilling some basic conditions:

- the municipality has brand protection rights in Poland and Germany,
  - there is high brand awareness,
  - it is possible to use modern promotion instruments,
  - there is not a negative perception of the brand.
- In parallel, the Słupsk led actions to promote the 'Stolper Jungchen' brand. The process to reactivate the brand Stolper Jungchen – Camembert launched in 2004 was a success. After five years of intensive work, the brand successfully competes on the Polish cheese market. Being a symbol of multicultural Słupsk it shapes the positive image of the city.

## MORE

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## Projects await the EU support

by Dainoras Lukas

The time of economic difficulties encourages many cities to search for additional finances for the main city development and infrastructure improvement projects. Kaunas is now actively seeking to attract the funds of the European Union for modernizing its urban infrastructure and renovation of buildings in order not to cease the projects that have already been started, as well as to continue them and launch new ones.



Kaunas City Sports and Entertainment Arena is successfully under construction, the value of which is 50 million EUR. EU funds are expected to contribute nearly 15 million EUR.

Beside the Kaunas City Sports and Entertainment Arena – which is the biggest and most challenging project of the city, the reconstruction of the Entertainment and Sports Palace "Girstutis" is going on intensely and will gain about 1.5 million EUR of the EU grants. After the reconstruction Kaunas will have the 50 m swimming pool, as well as the modern track-and-fields athletics equipment that meets the international requirements. There will also be a 25 m swimming pool for swimmers to warm up before the games. Also, there are plans to install a small pool with a set of baths. The value of it will be 5.5 million EUR. Besides, Kaunas citizens and guests will be able to enjoy the only camping place with a beach of Kaunas region near the river Nemunas. The EU funds, as it is expected will contribute about 0.8 million EUR. Now Kaunas pays much attention to renovation of public buildings. This year, it started the project that will save the energy consumption in the high schools. About 1 million EUR will be allotted from the EU funds. Likewise, the project of social services for families and children of social risk has been launched this year. The EU will give 0.6 EUR for the establishment of such an institution. Meanwhile, the most beautiful baroque building of Lithuania – the monastery ensemble of Pažaislis is under consideration. We expect that this unique monastery will attract about 2.5 EUR.

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# RIGA NOWADAYS

by Nils Ušakovs

Riga has always been the city with strong development potential and today it still remains the engine for the national economic growth, as one of the most significant players in the BSR market. Nowadays development of the transport sector and large public infrastructure projects, as well as attraction of investment and strengthening the relationship between the West-East and the North - South have been set forward as the key priorities of the city. Riga is the centre of a well-developed transportation and communications infrastructure that includes railways, roads, pipelines, port facility and the airport, all of them having a great capacity for further growth and development. The city fulfils the function of the transportation hub supporting the link between the Eastern and European markets. The advantages of Riga over the neighbouring ports in terms of distance provide the most favourable conditions for the development of economic relations.

Thanks to the developed motor-road and railway network, the Riga Port is directly linked to the main consumption centres and extraction-processing regions of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Presently up to 80% of the cargoes handled at the Riga Port are transit cargoes to Russia and the CIS states.

In 2008 the cargo turnover at the Riga Port has reached more than 29 thousand tons and the further increase of cargo turnover plays enormous importance for the city economic development. Fulfilment of the Riga Northern Transport Corridor project will additionally provide possibility to connect the Riga Port to the road network of European significance and increase the competitiveness of the East-West transport corridor in Latvia.

Riga has the largest international aviation company in the Baltics and the main air traffic centre in the region - the Riga International Airport that renders both- aviation and non-aviation services, at-

tending national, as well as international airlines. It is one of the few European airports that services full - service and low costs airlines simultaneously. In 2008 RIGA International Airport attended 3.6 million passengers, which is 16.8 percent more than in 2007. In the first six months of 2009 the number of passengers welcomed at Riga International Airport has grown by approximately 10 % year on year. This year the Riga International Airport has been awarded the prestigious RoutesandOAG Airport Marketing Award in Europe as the best airport in Scandinavia. This prestigious award serves as a proof for the successful development of the relationship with airline partners.

Accessibility of the city has enhanced its attractiveness for being a place to meet and share viewpoints, to feel the atmosphere of personal freedom and global thinking. In 2010 it is scheduled to host the Mayors' meeting of the European Union, CIS and other partner cities. Within the framework of this event there will be discussions on the role of municipalities in preventing and combating the consequences of world economic crisis and establishing the new ways of long-term partnership.



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# DYNAMIC KARLSKRONA

by Bengt Lingman

Karlskrona is expanding! The inhabitants have not been this many during the last 50 years, and more are in the progress of moving here due to establishing companies, or due to further education.

Karlskrona is working on the comprehensive plan to transform itself into a sustainable municipality. Among many issues considered, the city focuses on the most suitable areas for wind power development.

Also, the targets for improvement of the inner city environment were developed including the areas of greenery and growth combined with the buildings and residential areas. The work of three architects concerning the central part of the town called Pottholmen have been recently evaluated. The area has a great potential for development. There are plans for constructing a World Trade Centre, travel centre, shops and residential areas. The area is

close to the waterfront. The project shall be launched during 2012. The Blekinge Institute of Technology at Campus Gräsvik is also expanding its establishment by 15 000 m<sup>2</sup>, situated just beside the waterfront. This will become the main campus during 2010. The municipality is investing approximately 32 million Euros on account of the Institute. The aim is to create a good environment for study, research, and also cooperation with commercial actors within trade and industry. The buildings are excellent examples of sustainable building development.

The ferries of Stena Line between Karlskrona and Gdynia have had an intensive summer, and there are advanced plans for new larger ferries to be introduced on the route in 2010. The total amounts of passengers is 400 000 per year. The development of the industrial and port area of Verkö is planned.

As a part of the development towards a sustainable future a combined power and heating plant is to be built in Bubbetorp, situated just outside the town. The plant will mean a considerable development of capacity when delivering heating, which will reduce the city's dependence on oil.

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The new Scandic Hotel Karlskrona is to be open in April 2010. The hotel will have 180 rooms, and is situated on the waterfront, in the centre of Karlskrona.



# THE EU FUNDS FOR DEVELOPMENT



by Irena Šatkauskienė

The crisis can also be defined as a push for some specific actions, positive changes and new possibilities. The crisis forces to reconsider planned works, to direct available funds towards implementation of municipality projects of strategical importance. Local self-government institutions also feel the after-effects of financial shake-ups – budget income is decreasing, institutions lack funds for the implementation of projects. Therefore, the role of the EU structural funds for the project-financing becomes even more important.

At present, the projects in fields of public tourism infrastructure, transport, infrastructure of educational and training institutions, energy saving, improvement of operation management, etc. are being implemented in Palanga. Restoration of the Palanga Botanical Park (manor complex) and development of bicycle tourism will improve the quality of leisure for tourists and local residents. The Palanga Botanical Park, the most fascinating object of interest, is well maintained but its infrastructure is worn out and obsolete, the cultural-historic, sightseeing and natural attractiveness of this cultural heritage object is decreasing. The municipality has started implementation of the 1,045 mln. EUR project financed from the EU funds „Restoration of the historical part of Palanga Botanical Park and its conversion to the public needs” to improve public infrastructure of the historical part of the park and to adapt it for tourism needs, as well as to create a high-quality product.

In order to improve the infrastructure of bicycle tourism, Palanga, together with partners from Lithuania and Latvia is implementing the project “Improvement of Active Tourism in Border Region” financed



Palanga with 17,7 thousand residents is the biggest resort in Lithuania on the coast of the Baltic Sea, annually attracting about 900 thousand tourists from Lithuania and abroad

under Latvia–Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2007–2013. Total project budget – 1.413.604 EUR. Key element of the project is green tourism measures, which do not have negative impact on sustainable environment. In the course of implementation of this project, the tourism infrastructure is to be renewed by reconstructing a 12 km bicycle route Palanga–Šventoji, Klaipėda region and Nice tourism information centres adapting for needs of bike travellers. Moreover, the project promotes healthy lifestyle among the travellers, strengthens social, economic and cultural links between communities promoting wider familiarisation with Lithuania and Latvia, developing tourism services in adjacent to the bicycle route areas, and promoting informal dialogue between the two countries. The new bicycle route will help Lithuania and Latvia to take their place on the EuroVelo 10 map, to attract new tourist markets via increased accessibility, to organize new tourism events with professional and amateur cyclists, making the region more competitive and attractive both for local inhabitants and tourists.

## MORE

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## URBAN PLANNING for a sustainable society in Umeå

by Frida Olsson Skog

The municipal council of Umeå has committed itself to the integration of a gender perspective in all political fields and activities, with the objective of achieving equal opportunities for both genders. This means that the various living conditions as well as the needs of women and men need to be taken into consideration, also in urban planning and development.

Integrating a gender perspective into the urban planning requires an explicit consideration of gender in both planning and implementation. The idea is that gender planning supports the everyday lives of women and men and contributes to sustainable development on a local level. The integration of gender mainstreaming into urban planning will result in a more sustainable, equal and accessible environment for all members of society. Therefore, integrating gender mainstreaming in urban planning processes means promoting infrastructure which support the equality of women and men.

A gender perspective on urban planning shows, for example, how closely safety is connected to the everyday life of women. The feeling of not being safe affects women's choice when it comes to transport, work and social life. Adapting to the risk of violence restricts women in doing certain activities, like staying out late at night or going for a run when it's dark outside.

Umeå is planning for a new travel centre, in central Umeå. The centre

A walking passage in Umeå. The passage is wide and light to enhance safety and accessibility



Photo: Kristina Larsson

will be built for both high speed trains and buses. Physical improvements of the area, such as lighting, will increase the safety and the accessibility for the pedestrians and aims to make the area safe and lively. A new walking passage will increase the accessibility to the area. The walking passage will be wide with lighting designed to make the environment more pleasant and safe for users. Other aspects can be making sure that there are residents, offices and shops in an area, creating a lively city centre many hours of the day.

The overall aim is to find a solution that makes the area as accessible and attractive as possible for all citizens. This example shows that gender mainstreaming is integrated in the urban planning processes of the city of Umeå by incorporating gender planning principles in the existing planning procedures and practice.

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## SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

by Maria Terebilina

Narva is the largest city in the North-East of Estonia and with its 66,000 inhabitants rates third largest in the country. The city has long-standing industrial traditions. The strongest industrial enterprises of Estonia in the areas of energy production, textile, mechanical engineering, wood and metal-processing are located in the industrial zone of Narva.

For the last few years Narva has been actively involved in the processes of development of its industrial areas. In addition to the industrial park "Intec-Nakro", which has been operating successfully for 10 years already, two more parks have been established in the past 2 years: Narva industrial park and the industrial park "Narova". The main objectives for the creation of the parks were support of the development of the industrial enterprises of the city, attraction of additional investments, organization of new businesses, which in turn, should trigger the increase in workplaces in the industrial sector, and help solve both economic and social problems.

Narva works in close cooperation with the municipalities of Ida-Viru county (Sillamäe, Jõhvi, Kohtla-Järve and Kiviõli). The result of such cooperation has materialized in the establishment of the special-purpose organization "Development of Ida-Viru industrial zones" where the state is one of the stakeholders. The purpose of this "umbrella" organization is to attract investments and create workplaces in the industrial sector of the county and Narva specifically, making use of the industrial land owned by the state.

At the times of economic downturn it becomes crucial to be able



to provide support to the beginner-entrepreneurs, the people who have both wish and desire to start their own business.

The city has been an active supporter, allocating funds for the realization of the entrepreneurs' projects, their participation in the fairs, and organization of seminars in order to increase their competencies in business. In 2009, the city has been nominated in the Estonian contest of the "European Enterprise Award" in the category "Improvement of the Business Environment", where it was granted the title "The best actor in the development of entrepreneurship".

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## ACTIVE AND GROWING JÜRMALA

by Ilze Borovska

Not only during economic growth, but also during the crisis Jūrmala seeks new solutions for the development, and is doing its best to officiate its tasks to make the city a bright and safe place to live in. Working with the decreased financing is harder, but still it is possible. The new solutions have to be found and other methods should be used.

At the moment in Jūrmala a water management project is being implemented. The second round has started, and it will lead to significant improvements of drinking water supply and sewage collection and purification. During the first round a new iron removal station was built, the existing ones were renovated. Now, during the second round it is planned to reduce the proportion of sulphates in water which will also help to prolong the life of household equipment that uses water in its operation. The project will be finished by 2013 and 63% of the total expenses is financed by the EU Cohesion Fund, 12% - by Jūrmala City Council, and 15% by "Jūrmalas Ūdens" Ltd.

Moreover, the implementation of project "Development of velotrack Dubulti-Vaivari" has started - a new, 7.5 km long velotrack in Jūrmala will be constructed, thereby extending the



opportunity for qualitative and safe recreation in Jūrmala. Another project "Reconstruction and renovation of Ķemeri park and its architecture" will reanimate the park of 9.3 ha area, in which the bridges and rotunda will be reconstructed, the water tower will be renovated, a new fountain, a playground for children, as well as a public toilet will be built.

Until 31 October the co-project of waste management company "Piejūra", the Environment Ministry and the EU Cohesion Fund is to be finished. The inhabitants of Jūrmala will be able to live a bit more "greener", because there will be 144 grounds for waste grading. It will reduce charges on this service, and contribute to the recycling.

On 3 October by the Kaņiera Lake a new bird watching tower was opened. It is already the second bird watching tower in the area on Ķemeri National park. The interest about nature tourism in Jūrmala is great. Sloka Secondary school for the sixth time was awarded a Green Flag that confirms that already in the school desk pupils are able to get information about the conservation of nature and its sustainable development.

Jūrmala focuses on improvement of services it provides to the city inhabitants, as well as nature protection and conservation.

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# GDYNIA - A THRIVING CITY



by Katarzyna Gruszka

Despite the global crisis Gdynia has been trying to strengthen its economy, among others, by developing its tourist/cultural offer and thus attracting numerous visitors. They come to Gdynia, especially due to the ongoing Culinary Tour and Modernism Tour as well as Jazz concerts and other events.



*Gdynia Culinary Tour is a great opportunity to taste different cuisine in 39 restaurants in Gdynia*

est boulevard and Kamienna Hill where breathtaking city views and panoramas of the city and sea can be enjoyed. This unusual tour allows everyone not only to experience the atmosphere of Gdynia but also to feel the taste of four different continents of the world.

Culinary Tour is a great opportunity to see Gdynia and at the same time enjoy a very rich culinary offer of 39 restaurants located in the city centre. Apart from extraordinary menus, the restaurants offer original interior design which expresses the owners' passion and care for the place they hold. Culinary Route is a great way of visiting the city streets, modern as well as pre-war houses, the long-

Apart from the well-known beautiful seaside Gdynia boasts of a great number of examples of modernism due to its architecture and buildings. The style of the 20's and 30's occurred in Gdynia in a very characteristic and sophisticated form mainly because of the maritime accents which were introduced in the architecture. Cylindrical or sharp curves of the buildings as well as balconies and terraces resemble the shapes of ships with their masts and bridges. Gdynia's modernism is present not only in houses, villas and buildings but also in industrial constructions and port facilities. Modernism tour in Gdynia allows everyone to experience the amazing journey through its development from a little fishing village to a modern port and international trading city.

After a great meal and a tour around the centre everyone can enjoy excellent music in various pubs and clubs. Jazz Café Scena, Bohema Jazz, Blues Club, Charlie and Sax-Club are just some places where jazz concerts can be heard almost every day. In spring and autumn Gdynia hosts great Jazz Fest and invites international stars from all over the world whereas in summer organizes Ladies Jazz Festival, which is the only European festival promoting women jazz players.

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# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN PANEVĖŽYS

by Dalia Gurskienė

Panevėžys has signed the Agreement with Lithuanian Business Support Agency for the amount of 5, 5 million EUR with the aim to start Industry Park in Panevėžys.

The municipality has been dealing with this idea for several years: purchased the land, prepared general plans and technical projects, signed the agreements for construction works and a loan. The value of preparatory works equals 2.2 million EUR, out of which 1.5 million EUR was financed by the municipality itself, the remaining part was covered by the state and other sources.

According to the Ministry of National Economy of Lithuania the establishment of a proper industry park with a clear vision and specialization will be a positive turn not only in Panevėžys, but also for the industry, business and science on the national level. The city was the first to fulfill the requirements of the Ministry, presenting the vision of the park and its spe-

cialization - high technologies.

After receiving EU support, the infrastructure (building of streets, construction of electricity, water supply, sewage networks) suitable for the development of high technologies will be made in strategically favorable territory of 35 ha by VIA BALTICA highway.

The companies of electronics, mechatronics and electrotechnics creating products and services with high added value are planned

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to be established here. The park will be open for local investors but the most important attention will be given to foreign investments.

As the Director of Administration Stasys Karčinskas says, it is the second (after Sports Arena) important municipal project having in mind financial value. The work and provided financial allocations were not wasted. The most important perspective is that the inhabitants of Panevėžys will find new working places in the established companies.





# ELBLĄG TECHNOLOGICAL PARK



by Piotr Rzepczyński

The main objective of the Elbląg Technological Park (ETP) project is to improve conditions for the development of entrepreneurship and innovative undertakings. The idea is to create a platform of cooperation between authorities of Elbląg, science and business. The Elbląg Technological Park will also foster the cooperation between enterprises working within the framework of the Park, and science labs (applied information technology, wood technology, environmental protection) which will be situated in the Logistics Centre. The Park covers 67 hectares of new investment land in the new district of Elbląg - Modrzewina South. The realization of the project will be beneficial for enterprises due to the access to high quality infrastructure on preferential financial conditions. The scope of services will include i.a. rental of offices, access to the conference room, access to the broadband Internet, car park. Moreover, the potential of the region in terms of innovations will be raised. Close co-operation between the scientific sector and the business will result in the increased number of inventions, useful concepts which can be granted patents. Scientific research carried out in laboratories will cause the improvement of competitiveness of companies working in the area of ETP. Research will not be carried out in isolation from the market, which allows to commercialise the results easily. Scientific institutions will take advantage from the laboratories equipped with research-and-

*The project is co-financed from the resources of the European Union within the framework of the Operational Programme Development of Eastern Poland 2007-2013*



development facilities. Additionally, the cooperation with businessmen will enable the creation of the apprenticeship scheme for students and professional training for the brainpower of colleges and institutes operating in the area of ETP.

Also, the local community will be a beneficiary of the project. ETP will attract new investors which will improve the situation on the local labour market. New investments will bring additional income from taxes into the city's budget.

The project will be realised by the Municipality of Elbląg in 2008-2010. The overall cost is 67.129.331 PLN, the EU support: 55.588.012 PLN.

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CITY OF KARLSTAD

## SAVING ENERGY IS SAVING MONEY

by Petter Falk

The economic crisis also struck Sweden and its heavy industries hard. The labour market has been going through rough times and analysts say that the overall unemployment rate might climb as high as 11% within the next year. But besides the financial crisis there is also the matter of the environmental crisis.

Tackling two major crises at once might seem like a big task. Can environmental work really be prioritized in these harsh financial times? If you ask Karlstad's Environmental Strategist Karolina Pettersson the answer is obvious:

"Yes, of course, there is a place for environmental work in the municipal agenda during the financial crisis! And here in Karlstad environmental work has not been down-prioritized. Saving energy is saving money. Energy saving investment opportunities is a perfect example that sometimes you also need to invest money to be able to save money."

For the past years Karlstad has kept a high focus on environmental issues. Karlstad holds the idiom "The Good Green City" as one of its primary guidelines and the Swedish Soci-

ety for Nature Conservation ranked Karlstads environmental work as the 4<sup>th</sup> best in Sweden. For example the municipality lunched a very successful Echo Action campaign, where 111 local families tried living a more environmental and energy saving everyday life. There have also been big efforts made to reach more environmental waste managing and to increase the recycling possibilities. But can a municipality's environmental effort generate new jobs during the financial crisis? Karolina replies:

"Maybe not directly as an employer, but there is still an expansive market related to environmental work. And as a municipality, we need to hire both consultants and other services to carry out or environmental and energy saving campaigns. We recently closed a huge deal with a major company that will help us save 7 500 MWh, about 14% of our total energy consumption. It did not come cheap, especially in these rough financial times, but in the long run it will be worth it."

Karolina also stresses the importance of being a role model to the public. If the municipality shows its ability to tackle both a financial and environmental crisis at the same time, the public hopefully will follow its footsteps and realize that the modern economy recovers itself and the environment does not.

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Karolina Pettersson  
Environmental Strategist



# ÖREBRO'S INVESTMENT IN BIOGAS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT



by Tomas Bergkvist

On 1 October 2009 Örebro put into action, together with local industry and farmers, several parts of a widespread scheme to increase the production and use of biogas (methane). On the same day, new buses using biogas began to appear on the streets of the town. A new and expanded bus route network will be introduced in April next year. An investment in biogas and improved public transport provides plenty of benefits to the society, both locally and globally. Locally, it means that public transport is both cleaner and more attractive. At the same time new jobs are created as the fuel is produced locally. Among the advantages on a wider scale are lower greenhouse gas emissions. Örebro has been delivering biogas to local companies for many years. This biogas came from the anaerobic digestion of slurry at the sewage treatment plant and from collecting gas that would otherwise have leaked out of waste depots. Since 2007 there has also been a plant that upgrades the biogas to vehicle fuel. As of October 2009, local biogas production was quadrupled. A private company started up a new production plant which is the biggest in Sweden. This plant chiefly uses energy crops from agriculture, but manure, substandard crops, bi-products from the food manufacturing industry and wetland grass are also used. The farming industry has shown great interest in cultivating biogas crops as part of crop rotation planning. The total production capability of vehicle gas is 60 GWh from the new biogas production plant and 20 GWh from the sewage treatment plant when both are operating at full capacity. This is the equivalent of over 8 million cubic metres of vehicle gas, which



replaces roughly the same number of litres of fossil fuel.

Emissions of carbon dioxide are thereby being reduced by 20,000 tons per year. Mere changing from diesel to biogas in the city's bus traffic reduces the emissions by 3,000

tons per year. The residue from the anaerobic digestion process is returned to the farmers to be used as fertiliser.

The diesel-powered city buses in Örebro were replaced with 61 new biogas-driven buses on 1 October. In addition to the overall climate benefits, the air quality in the city has improved since biogas replaced diesel and noise levels have been reduced, too.

In April 2010 a new bus route network will come into force for the city buses, which will improve the level of service and increase the possibility for people to leave the car behind and use public transport instead.

A total of EUR 40 million (SEK 400 million) has been invested in the biogas production plant, the upgrading plant, pipelines, the compression station, a new bus depot and the biogas buses.

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# ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN JĒKABPILS

by Līga Klavina

In the end of 2008 Jēkabpils signed the cooperation agreement with Zemgale region's Jelgava Council on implementing the joint project „Foundation of Zemgale Regional Energy Agency for support of energy management and energy efficiency in the municipalities of Zemgale region”, with the aim to increase the energy efficiency and use RES in the public and private sectors. The project is planned to be run until 31 August 2011. With the City Council's Decision in March 2009, Mayor of Jēkabpils Leonids Salcevičs was authorized to sign the European Covenant of Mayors, which committed the cities to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions implementing Sustainable Energy Action Plan, in that way having accepted responsibility for conservation of environment. The development strategy of Jēkabpils envisages considerate attitude to environment, rational use of natural resources and systematic improvement of city environment. To achieve these aims, one of the priorities is the implementation of energy efficiency measures in municipality starting with municipal buildings.

In 2007 – 2008 Jēkabpils district central hospital with the support of ERAF, state and Jēkabpils District Council realised serious energy efficiency measures: the old windows, doors and covering of the roof were changed. Also, heat insulation of the roof covering, as well as heat insulation of external walls were added. Total cost of project was 1.381.893 EUR. The equipment for reconstruction of boiler house

*Jēkabpils district central hospital before the renovation (up on right hand side) and after - with new windows, the roof and insulation*



(supply of electro station and supply and installation of three boilers with auxiliaries) was installed. The consumption of natural gas in the hospital has decreased from 614,000 nm<sup>3</sup> to 454,405 nm<sup>3</sup>, i.e. 26%.

From mid 2008, the municipal energy efficiency plans and measures are included in the general Municipality Energy Efficiency Programme, which will allow more precisely to coordinate activities and measures in this field. In this way Jēkabpils plans to overcome the obstacles created by economic crisis and prepare itself to be more efficient and nature friendly in the future.

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# ENERGY SAVING MEASURES

by Inta Adamsons

Climate change is one of the greatest environmental, social and economic threats for the planet. Since October 2008 Cēsis has been participating in the project INTENSE (From Estonia till Croatia: Intelligent Energy Saving Measures for Municipal housing in Central and Eastern European Countries), financed by Intelligent Energy. INTENSE has been set up among 28 partners in 12 countries. In total 36 months are scheduled for the implementation of the project.

After the preparatory steps and the first very successful seminar on energy efficient settlement planning, the project entered the most important phase: the partner municipalities will need to be creative and develop their own ideas and mini projects dealing with energy



*The main goal of the improvement of energy efficiency in municipal buildings is to save up the costs for heating and decrease the carbon emission impact.*

efficient settlement planning. To prepare project partners for this task, BEF Germany, in cooperation with Auraplan and REC Croatia and REC Slovakia, organized two study tours in Germany.

Three participants from Cēsis had a chance to get acquainted with good examples in Hannover Region, in Münster, Frankfurt am Main and Freiburg. The study tour was to increase capacity and competence of municipal officers and other stakeholders regarding the information, strategic planning and implementation of energy saving measures in the municipal housing.

As for the energy saving in old municipality buildings, Cēsis has applied in the project competition "Increasing energy efficiency in municipalities' buildings", which will get the financing from transactions in "International emission trading." The city is planning to improve energy efficiency in five buildings. The energy audits, technical drawings have been made for the project implementation. The last condition is defined by the contracts with the Netherlands and Austria according to Kyoto protocol selling prescribed amount units and using the assets for financing the projects according to the climate change financing instrument.

Implementation of the projects in the period of crisis creates economic stimulus programmes promoting local business in the city.

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# NAESTVED GOES GREEN

by Maria Santana & Pia Buch-Madsen

The municipality not only puts a lot of efforts to become more environmentally friendly but the City Council has pushed green issues high on the agenda. In the past two months Næstved has signed two agreements in which the municipality as a business and as a geographic area commits to further reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and to act for a more sustainable future. These pacts are: the Danish Society for Nature Conservation Climate Community Agreement and The Covenant of Mayors of European cities.

In 2008 the City Council adopted a climate strategy and just last month (Sep.09) the municipality launched a Climate Action Plan for 2009-2030 which guides Næstved towards a sustainable energy future reducing dramatically the municipality's overall energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions from current levels, while meeting the needs of present and future generations. Some of the ambitious goals of the Action Plan are to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 30% by the year 2020 and by 50% by 2030.

There is no doubt that Næstved is actively joining the fight against climate change. Here follows some of the many projects which the municipality has made or participates in:

- Mapping and measuring CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Green Building Exhibition
- National energy competition
- Energy efficiency program for municipal buildings
- Energy efficiency program for municipal vehicles
- International Climate Conference
- Waste heat community energy program



*The Næstved Municipality signs The Covenant of Mayors and other agreements to further reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions*

- Wind energy planning
- ...and many more.

Mayor Henning Jensen says: "To act in a climate friendly way should not be a burden but a challenge and an opportunity; an opportunity to develop our local community in a more sustainable way, to attract not only different types of educational institution but also innovative businesses and new citizens. But it is also an opportunity to develop new competence and knowledge. Well, in other words: to think and act in a climate friendly way gives the challenge and the opportunity to make Næstved Municipality a better place to live".

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# UBC today

X UBC General Conference in Kristiansand

## Baltic cities for economic and climate solutions - a developed Baltic Sea Strategy

222 participants, including mayors, city executives, representatives of governments and international organisations, gathered at the 10<sup>th</sup> UBC General Conference in Kristiansand, on 23-26 September 2009.

"Now it is more important than ever to meet and help each other to fight the emerging economic crisis and at the same time to meet the challenge of the climate change", said Mr Per Bødker Andersen, President of UBC opening the conference. He also stressed the need for action when it comes to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Mr Per Sigurd Sørensen, Mayor of Kristiansand welcomed the guests wishing them fruitful networking and discussions.

"We will never speak the same language and our cultural differences will remain", he stated. "But we have lots of joint challenges, or maybe more important - the same possibilities and opportunities". The speeches delivered during the first day of the conference, by Hallgeir Aalbu, Director General, Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Norway, Ambassador Kornelija Jurgaitiene, member of the Council of the Baltic Sea States Committee of Senior Officials, Maria Åsenius, State Secretary to Minister for EU Affairs, Kingdom of Sweden, Councillor Kay Twitchen, Rapporteur on Climate Change, member of the Committee of the Regions, David Sweet, European Commission, made up a picture of challenges of the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The necessity of political commitment, active involvement and initiative were strongly emphasized. As Mr David Sweet pointed out, "It is not about the documents. The documents are the starting point. We need to move from words to action". "We believe the Strategy can be a way of doing two things that need to be done: integrating policies across the wide range of fields and delivering the cross-border cooperation policies that are so hard to set up in many cases. We think we can work on these lines but we need your help" – concluded Mr Sweet.

Making use of the potential of the EU Strategy, the cities have to face climate and economic problems at the same time.

Presentations of Miquel Rosselló, member of the Executive Committee of the Consell Insular of Mallorca, Arco Latino and of Mayor George Heartwell of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Chairman of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative pointed the strong need and will to cooperate with other organizations having similar problems and priorities.

"The future is in our hands. We cannot wait for national government to



solve the problems we face. We must seize this moment. We must act on behalf of these magnificent bodies of water: the Baltic Sea and the Great Lakes", appealed Mayor George Heartwell.

The economic and business aspect was introduced by Svein Grandum, R&D Manager, Product Development of Elkem Solar contributing to

low-cost production of solar cells. The youth voice was represented by Jannike Arnesen, Kristiansand.

The current problems were in focus during the four thematic workshops: to improve the environmental state of the Baltic Sea Region, to make the Baltic Sea Region a more prosperous place by supporting balanced economic development across the Region; to make the Baltic Sea Region a more accessible and attractive place and to make the Baltic Sea Region a safer and more secure place. The presentations delivered were a great basis for further discussions that led to concrete ideas and solutions for the cities.

The second day of the Conference was devoted to the UBC internal matters, such as reports, elections, finances and meetings of the UBC Commissions.

The Conference adopted the new UBC Strategy, new Sustainable Development Action Plan as well as the up-dated Social Charter. Additionally, the UBC Best Environmental Practice Award was handed to the city of Umeå for the practice "No idling taxicabs in Umeå". The city of Gdańsk was a winner of the UBC Cultural Award 2009 for the project "The City Signs of Culture". The 10<sup>th</sup> UBC General Conference resulted in the resolution adopted unanimously on 25 September 2009. The resolution calls the UBC member cities to be active in the EU Strategy for BSR implementation process and to work in an even more effective way for the whole region.

### The new Presidium:

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, Mayor of Kolding - as President,  
Ms Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor of Umeå - as 1st Vice-President,  
Ms Urve Tiidus, Mayor of Kuressaare and Mr Jarkko Virtanen, Deputy Mayor of Turku – as Vice-Presidents.

### The new UBC Executive Board:

Næstved (Denmark), Kärdla (Estonia),  
Jyväskylä (Finland), Rostock (Germany),  
Liepāja (Latvia), Panevėžys (Lithuania),  
Kristiansand (Norway), Gdańsk (Poland),  
St Petersburg (Russia), Växjö (Sweden)





X UBC General Conference adopted a new UBC Strategy 2010 – 2015

# NEW UBC STRATEGY SHARPENS FOCUS AND TRIMS ORGANISATION

by Mikko Lohikoski

The UBC Strategy is entitled “Cities for a Sustainable and Prosperous Baltic Sea Region”. The region has greatly changed since the adoption of the previous strategy in Klaipėda 2003. While much has been done to clean the Baltic Sea, it still is one of the most polluted bodies of brackish water in the world. Increasing sea traffic, especially oil tankers, is increasing the danger of serious environmental catastrophes.

Integration in the BSR has deepened as a result of the EU membership of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Creating conditions for economic growth and social development. North-Western territories of Russia, especially Sankt Petersburg and its environment, have taken great steps in their development. However, the world wide economic crisis has hit disproportionately hard the BSR, widening regional cleavages and causing severe problems. This situation calls for even closer collaboration. The UBC itself has also travelled a long way since its foundation in 1991. It is now a representative regional organisation with over 100 member cities, working effectively in a wide range of issues. By all definitions, it has been a successful organisation with a long, practical track record of achievements.

## Vision – The Baltic Sea Region by 2015

The clear overall goals for the development of the BSR:

- to overcome the adverse effects of the global financial and economic crisis and to regain its role as one of the fast-growing and prospering regions in Europe;
- to stop the deterioration of the state of the Baltic Sea and start a gradual recovery process through joint action;
- to take concrete measures to halt the climate change and promote sustainable development as envisaged in the new UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010-2015.
- to deepen democratic processes and promote active citizenship, as well as tolerance and equal opportunities in member cities
- to promote deeper cooperation and integration in the BSR, including the adjacent areas of Russian Federation.

## UBC mission to serve member cities, promote region's interests

The UBC sees its role as the representative and recognised regional organisation of cities in the BSR. Its aim is to provide an open and goal-oriented platform for mutual cooperation and exchange.

UBC is working, through active networking to:

- support its member cities in their development to achieve a high quality of life for their inhabitants
- promote the BSR as a dynamic, competitive and prosperous region
- further the interest of the BSR and its cities in

national and European decision-making.

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and related Action Programme, which are the first such comprehensive programmes for any European macro-region, create a natural framework for the attainment of these UBC goals.

## “Ten commands” for UBC development 2010 - 2015

In its new Strategy, the UBC and its members acknowledge the need for renewing and streamlining of internal structures and working methods. The Strategy includes concrete goals and – for the first time – also includes clear methods about how to measure how we achieve these goals.

## THE KEY TASKS OF UBC IN THE PERIOD 2010 – 2015 AND MEASURES TO EVALUATE IT ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- **UBC shall be a key partner in promoting the EU Strategy for BSR**

The Executive Board is requested to define the priority areas and actions in its first meeting after a consultation with member cities and commissions.

- **Strengthening member city participation in UBC activities**

Goals include enhancing best practice experiences between cities, conducting surveys among member cities (2010 and 2014), and mobilising more political decision makers by organising a biennial Baltic Sea Urban Forum starting in 2010.

- **Increasing UBC membership and partnerships**

A systematic drive to gain new members shall be prepared. Likewise, guidelines for partnerships with other actors like companies are to be updated. Success is measured by a number of new members, partners and sponsorship funding.

- **Energizing and streamlining UBC Commission work, optimising use of resources**

Executive Board to formulate common criteria for evaluation of UBC Commission's work; financial support to be based on achievements. Commissions are encouraged to seek closer cooperation with each others, among others through establishing of joint Commission Secretariats to serve them effectively.

- **Promoting expert exchanges between member cities**

Executive Board, together with Commissions, to work out a plan for expert exchange programme between cities and for its practical implementation.

- **Enhancing UBC policy formulation and lobbying capacity**

UBC must be prepared to use all resources, including those of its member cities, to formulate policy papers, lobby at national and European levels and make its voice heard in national capitals and Brussels.

- **Systematic cooperation with partners in BSR, European level and internationally**

UBC shall define key areas of action and main partner organisations, and negotiate concrete plans of cooperation with them for the implementation of common goals.

- **Raising public profile and visibility of UBC**

UBC's work is not yet known sufficiently. It needs a clearer and stronger brand. UBC shall work out a new Communication and Marketing Strategy to address this issue. In this, use of member cities' media channels will also be included.

- **Monitoring on Strategy Implementation**

Executive Board will create methods for systematic Strategy implementation and allocate responsibilities concerning it.

- **Invitation to joint action!**

UBC expresses its active readiness to cooperate with all partners working for our common future. Our common goal is a sustainable and prosperous Baltic Sea Region. Let us all make it a reality – by joint action!



## New Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015

The UBC approved a new Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 at the X UBC General Conference in Kristiansand, on 23 – 25 September 2009. This is the third Action Programme focusing on sustainable development.

Nearly a two decade experience of the UBC confirms that a bottom-up approach is relevant to building regional cooperation. During this period environmental and sustainability issues have been the main topics in the development of the Baltic Sea Region, as well as for the development of the UBC.

During the second UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004 – 2009 more than 25 projects with more than 40 UBC cities and several UBC Commissions were involved in different types of projects focusing on sustainability issues. UBC has also actively been involved in a great number of European and regional conferences, carried out three large scale sustainability surveys, participated in different policy related processes, as well as launched a new UBC Good Practice database [www.ubcwheel.eu](http://www.ubcwheel.eu). Many of UBC member cities have also been noted as forerunner cities in Europe and several ones have won recognition for their good practices in different fields. The Sustainability Action Programme can therefore be considered as a very successful programme.

There are great expectations towards the new EU Strategy for

the BSR. The Strategy is an important step forward in a challenging time, where concrete actions and new development steps are needed. It creates a joint framework and defines several areas of priority action. Sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region is a key issue in the document and for our cities it is a crucial element for the well-being of the Baltic Sea Region and the cities. The third UBC Sustainability Action Programme has been build up to enable this.

The process of creating the UBC Sustainability Action Programme started in 2008 and has engaged more than 200 persons from more than 50 UBC cities. It focuses on further strengthening the organisation, the activities and actively building even more sustainable cities in the whole Baltic Sea Region. The Programme consists of 36 goals that should be met during the programme period. The main goal of the Programme is to give an ambitious, but clear picture on how the Baltic Sea Region cities should act to become more sustainable and attractive!

### MORE

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### UBC Environmental Award

## Umeå wins the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2009

Umeå, Sweden, is the winner of the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2009. The winner was announced at the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) tenth General Conference in Kristiansand, Norway, on 25th September. The value of the award is 5000 EUR.



"The competition between the candidates was hard, as there was only one point of difference between the candidates. The Umeå nomination fulfils the award criteria – innovativeness, relevancy and quality – with high scores", says co-chairman of the Commission on Environment Mikko Jokinen.

As many other cities in Europe, Umeå has problems with air pollution. In fact, Umeå exceeds the limits, and that makes it one of the biggest challenges for the town. The winning practice, "No idling

taxicabs in Umeå", has contributed a lot to the environmental goal for improving the air in Umeå. In Umeå, there are 200 taxicabs that run an average of 300 days/year. The goal was to make visible that idling taxicabs was a problem, to stop unnecessary idling, and to reduce the discharge of carbon dioxide. This was done through education of all taxi drivers. The drivers were also challenged to a competition. The driver that could reduce their fuel consumption of their car the most in relation to the quantity of kilometres driven would win a very special price! Also the media was made aware of the project so that passengers would remind the drivers when they forgot to turn off their engine.

The Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities award committee, deciding on the awards, consisted of the co-chairman of UBC Commission on Environment, Mikko Jokinen, Head of Environmental Department Øystein Holvik from the city of Kristiansand and Environmental coordinator So Hie Kim-Hellström from the previous award winner (2007), Växjö.

### MORE

[www.ubcwheel.eu](http://www.ubcwheel.eu)



Agnieszka Tokarska (City of Gdańsk): *Where did you get the idea for the City Signs of Culture project?*

Szymon Wróblewski: *It developed from the experience we gained in Plama club. For years, the club has been carrying out many projects in the public space: The FETA Street and Open-Air Theatres Festival, the Music Among the Tower Blocks series of rooftop concerts, Images Painted with Fire... Each of these projects enriches the city with a certain kind of art: theatre, music, visual arts.*

A.T.: *The award committee focused mainly on the idea to develop an on-line base of Gdańsk murals at [www.miejskieznakikultury.pl](http://www.miejskieznakikultury.pl). In what direction will on-line base develop?*

Sz.W.: *The web-site and the project itself, first and foremost promote a new way of thinking*





## Developing Creative Industries in Turku

The CoC held its annual working session in Turku on 22-25 October. The history of the city dates back to 1229, which makes Turku the oldest city of Finland. Turku is often said to be the only medieval European town in Finland, since all medieval European towns have four things in common: a river for transport, a cathedral for religious power, a castle that represents the secular power and a marketplace for trading. Turku has them all!

The theme of the working session was the Cultural Dimension of Baltic Cooperation – Developing Creative Industries. The participants had an overview of creative industries in Turku region presented by director Kalle Euro from Turku Region Development Center. Professor Alf Rehn from Åbo Akademi University gave a speech about Remastering the Creative City – on Innovative Infrastructures and Embedded Creativity. Planner Päivi Rytäsä (Centre for Cultural Entrepreneurship) topic was Creative Sector Incubator in Turku. The aim of the centre is to support and help early-stage growth companies in the South-west Finland. Additionally, Turku Design now! group, the Culture Card, the Turku Library and the Baltic cooperation of Turku cultural services were also discussed during the session.

Turku has been elected to the European Capital of Culture 2011. The participants of the annual working session could see that the Cultural Capital year being shared with Tallinn, illustrates the strong position that culture and history hold in Turku.

MORE

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## COMPETITION OF THE COMMISSION ON TOURISM

Taking the initiative to spur the UBC member cities on to activities in the field of sustainable tourism, the Commission on Tourism put on the table a concrete proposal. Fitting into the UBC's mainstream, namely "How to make the Baltic Sea Region more accessible and attractive", the CoT announced its first competition for the Baltic cities in 2009 on "the "Best Tourist Destination, Idea or Project" developed by the UBC member cities this year.

The objective is to identify and to promote the best tourist product, destination, event, idea or project developed by the Baltic cities, as well as to promote the region as a tourist destination.

The jury consisting of Cēsis, Kaunas, Pärnu, Trelleborg, and chaired by the city of Szczecin, seeks out those projects which promote the BSR as a tourist destination, promote the UBC as an international NGO, strengthen regional links among tourist organizations, are innovative in their own areas but have wider regional or cross-border impact or which promote sustainable tourism in the Baltic region.

The best projects, initiatives or ideas shall be rewarded financially. The winner city will receive 2,000 Euro. The other two best projects will receive 1,500 Euro and 1,000 Euro, respectively. The jury shall announce the results by 30 November 2009. Certificates and diplomas will be granted during the next spring meeting of the CoT in Rakvere, Estonia.

MORE

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UBC Cultural Prize for the Creative Use of Information Technology in 2009 went to Gdańsk

## Traces of Gdańsk on the route of the City Signs of Culture

Interview with Szymon Wróblewski, originator of the project

about our city, about making art in the public space. A city, for me, is on the one hand a developed creation, but on the other hand also something that is constantly developing. Developed, as certain elements have merged together so much that we have ceased to notice them. Developing, as I can still see there a place for, say, the City Signs of Culture – a series of commentaries on the surroundings, interwoven with the cityscape. A City Signs of Culture is closely and permanently tied to the space that surrounds it. Just like Galeria Wrzeszcz, which says that the "gallery" is not the shopping centre which was built nearby, or the John Paul II and Lech Wałęsa mural, which is a memento of the Mass held in Zaspas, in 1987. A City Signs of Culture bonds together two elements: the developed city we find and the developing city which we create today.

A.T.: The CSC on-line base includes works by the artists of the Monumental Art Festival. Will then the CSC project focus only on murals or will it include works from other street-art genres?

Sz.W.: It is an open project. It pursues artists, who most of all are ready to get to know the city, to anchor their work in the cityscape, so that it "becomes intimate" with the city, so the viewer forgets how a certain element of this cityscape looked like before the image was made. It's true that today the City Signs of Culture are mainly murals... It's the clearest form of spreading ideas. However, this does not close the door to sculptors, theatre artists, or even musicians.

A.T.: Do you think that Gdańsk has a chance to become Poland's street-art centre?

Sz.W.: I think that Gdańsk really can become Poland's street-art centre and it's my role to make sure that this street-art isn't just a painting on a free wall, painted wherever, only that it complements the city, that it is a comment, that it turns the viewer to the place's history and function, that says more about the city.

A.T.: One of the ideas behind the creation of the CSC on-line base was to promote alternative routes of touring the city. Could you give us an overview of your most interesting proposals?

Sz.W.: Your first point in touring the city should be the purchase of an all-day ticket for SKM Rapid Urban Rail. The second step is to choose a train stop: Gdańsk Stocznia will lead us to The Shipyard by Iwona Zajęc, Gdańsk Politechnika has Kliniczna Junction nearby, Gdańsk Wrzeszcz means Galeria Wrzeszcz, Gdansk Zaspas greets us with colourful benches and a monumental gallery you can see already from the train platform... Don't be afraid to go further, go into the estate and get lost among the thirty-metre paintings. Those who are hungry for information about art in public spaces can find a helping hand in us, the staff of Club Plama, which is located precisely in Gdańsk's Zaspas district, the European District of Culture.



## Energy and climate in focus

The Energy Commission held an information seminar in Kalmar, Sweden, on 18 September. At the session representatives from UBC municipalities, Vinnova (Research and Innovation for Sustainable growth) and Onealyze gathered. A focal point of the meeting was information about the work of the Energy Commission and about finding new solutions for energy efficiency. In connection to the meeting a study trip was also made, a visit to Moskogen in Kalmar, a new biofuel-power heat and power plant that will produce 140 GWh of electricity and 360 GWh of district heating per year from renewable biofuel from the Kalmar region. We find it very important

to mix theory and practice in the development of the BSR.

### Joint Energy and Climate Platform

The UBC is active in the network JECF, Joint Energy and Climate Platform. This is a network of denary BSR organizations\* focusing on energy and climate prior to the COP 15 in Copenhagen in December. The UBC is the only local organization in the network and the Energy Commission is the representative of the UBC in the work. The goals of the network are threefold:

- to convey a clear "Regional Energy and Climate message" to national and intergovernmental authorities
- to support ongoing and future regional projects, aiming to achieve a sound Energy and Climate Future for the BSR
- to raise public awareness of Energy and Climate challenges in the BSR

### The members of the JECF:

Baltic Island Network (B7), Baltic Assembly (BA), Baltic 21, Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet), Baltic Development Forum (BDF), Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC), Baltic Sea-States Sub-Regional Cooperation (BSSSC), Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM), Nordic Council and the UBC

The Energy Commission is the coordinator of the JECF during the year 2009 and we wish to advocate both the local level in the network and the work in the BSR towards the European Commission. The Danish company EA Energy Analyses has written a report about "Sustainable Energy Scenarios" in the BSR on behalf of the JECF. They have looked at Big-Tech and Small-Tech; how we produce and how we consume energy. The UBC represents the Small-Tech and we can see in the report that actions in the Small-Tech area are the ones that will make the most difference. It is of great importance to think about our energy consumption and there are great saves to be made. You can order the report from the Energy Commission, info@ubcenergy.org.

### MORE

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## 55<sup>TH</sup> UBC EXECUTIVE BOARD MET IN MIĘDZYDROJE

UBC Executive Board focused at its meeting in Międzyzdroje on 1 July 2009 on the organization of the upcoming X General Conference. The new documents – UBC Strategy and Sustainability Action Programme as well as follow-up of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region were discussed.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, informed about the latest version of the programme of the conference, the speakers and ensured that the work on the workshops was carried out according to the schedule.

Secretary General informed that the Auditor's report for 2007 and 2008 confirmed that accounting of the UBC is kept in accordance with the provisions of the Minister of Finance for the rules of accountancy for the non-profit organisations. Incomes and costs are correct, the principle of continuity is maintained and the financial result for 2008 and 2009 is reflected truly and fairly. Ms Marta Chełkowska, member of the UBC Board of Audit presented its report and recommendation to the UBC GC to dissolve the Presidium, Executive Board and the Secretary General for the years 2007 and 2008.

Mr Jarkko Virtanen, Deputy Mayor of Turku, presented the draft of the new UBC Strategy. Mr Björn Grönholm, Head of the Secretariat, Commission on Environment, presented the draft of Sustainability Action Program 2010-2015. The implementation will start following the decision of the X UBC General Conference. The first programme assessment will be carried out in 2012 and progress will be reported to the XIII General Conference in 2015. Following the Board's decision, both documents were sent out to the UBC member cities for comments.

Morover, prof. Esko Antola Director of Centrum Balticum made a summary on the EU Strategy for the BSR. Prof. Antola listed the weakest point of the launched document but also emphasized that the Strategy was a playfield open for active and well-prepared actors. Finally, prof. Antola presented the list of flagships with the intention of suggesting the UBC Commissions to look through and think if they were ready to take the responsibility. The Board accepted the new member, an Estonian city of Paide.

## Commission on Gender Equality

# Women and men in the UBC cities

At the UBC GC in Kristiansand the Commission on Gender Equality presented the report *Women and men in the Union of the Baltic Cities*. The report is primarily intended to be used as a tool for disseminating knowledge and promote gender equality within the UBC. One of the major activities of the project has been to document and present good examples of gender mainstreaming, and other gender equality-related work, in the UBC-cities. To move on from the commitment to the goal of gender equality, to the actual implementation of gender equal policies, services and infrastructure, we need to translate a theory into practice. Sharing of knowledge and experience can enhance the local capacity to mainstream gender equality.

In the report, the Commission presents a picture of the state of gender equality across the UBC-area. The facts and figures presented show that there is still a lot of work left to do before the objective of gender equality – implicating an equal distribution of power, resources and opportunities between women and men – is attained.

As part of the work in raising awareness of these issues, a qualitative survey, how gender equal is your city, concerning the gender equality situation in the member cities was conducted at the conference. The objective of the survey was to collect facts of gender relations in certain aspects of the local governments, but also to promote gender equality





## Ambitious plans for the future

In November 2008 Kiel and Kolding, jointly with the UBC President, the General Secretariat and the Commission's Secretariat, launched an initiative to activate the Business Commission. Following an application by the cities of Kiel (D), represented by Kiel Business Development Cooperation (KiWi), and Kolding (DK), represented by Business Kolding, on 13 March 2009 the UBC Executive Board resolved, that Kiel Business Development Corporation will take the chair of the Commission in 2010 and hand it over to Business Kolding in 2011. Kiel and Kolding already received positive reply from several UBC member cities. The Action Plan for 2010-2011 envisages regular meetings of the commission in order to animate the ambitious working programme. The following measures are planned:

### Systematic cooperation with partners in and outside BSR

In conformity with the UBC strategy, a concept will be developed with the Executive Board jointly, for international UBC cooperative ventures. For this purpose the first stage will be to present the existing structures and organisations in the BSR and Europe. The second step will be to identify potential key partner organisations. These will be proposed to the Executive Board as possible partners. As a further step potential areas of targeted and long-term cooperation with the organisations concerned will be defined. Contact will be made with the selected partner organisations at local level, to evaluate the possibilities of targeted and long-term cooperation. The aim will be to conclude and successfully implement cooperation agreements. Initial contacts already exist with the following organisations: Arco Latino, Region Cote d'Azur and Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. These contacts will be expanded and systematically developed without delay.

### Science Parks

An international conference will be organised on the topic of science and technology parks to exchange examples of good practice. The conference will throw light on current issues and challenges, such as financing and marketing, as well as the consequences of technological change towards knowledge economies, and will develop solutions.

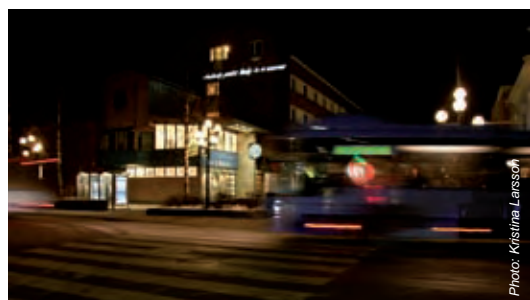


Photo: Kristina Larsson

awareness among the participants. A qualitative questionnaire with 15 questions was distributed among all of the participants of the general conference. The questions is helpful in evaluating if municipalities are doing well in implementing measures to promote gender equality and also raise awareness on things that can be improved.

Looking ahead, the Commission will continue promoting the gender equality goal within the UBC. Some successful experiences have been documented, providing good evidence that the objective of gender equality is in fact realistic and achievable and that it is possible to make our societies fair and equal for both women and men. We would like to ask you to continue sharing your experiences, difficulties, attainments and successes in gender equality work.

### MORE

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### EU-supported projects

The Commission has already become a network partner in the planned EU "User-Driven Information" project to gain improved knowledge through active participation and to ensure that information is available to the UBC member cities. It is the aim of the user-driven innovation project to establish and expand the available expertise in the region, and finally to bundle it in a German-Danish Centre, which can offer well-founded services for SMEs and entrepreneurs of the region. Moreover, the centre will also be offering its services outside the region, to make the region more attractive for international enterprises.

### MORE

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## Commission on Urban Planning Sustainable Urban Growth

The Commission held its 20<sup>th</sup> seminar and annual meeting in Linköping, Sweden in early September. The future growth is naturally supposed to happen according to the principles of sustainability, and therefore also the CUP seminar discussed increasing city density and public transportation as means of future development in Linköping and also in the UBC members. Sustainability, as urban planners understand it, includes social, economic and environmental aspects of urban development. In Linköping sustainability means the growing use of public transportation and biking in place of private cars, renovating old houses to meet the requirements of sustainability and using biomass as energy source.

There were presentations about sustainable green cities and on sustainable transport systems. The seminar programme included examples of sustainable urban planning in practice, namely Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm and Viikki in Helsinki. Also, Linköping planners described their work aimed at making the city more compact and densely built, how new development areas were being planned to get optimal effect from rapid and frequent public transport routes, and how cycling was promoted in these areas.

The seminar workshops tried to find ways for Linköping to be built in a sustainable, compact and attractive way. They concentrated on how to link up the present city centre on the west side of the river Stångån with a new area for city centre extension on the east side of the river. The workshops concentrated also on the question of how to physically connect the University to a housing district which is isolated from the University and the rest of the city. The discussions were inspiring. Good ideas of how to proceed with the issues of urban development of Linköping were exchanged. Concluding, the cities need to plan their future development on the terms of their inhabitants and the local business life. As the locals enjoy their living environment with all the services the city can provide, it also increases the attractiveness of the city in the eyes of outsiders.



### MORE

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## Qualified Vocational Education

UBC Commission on Education and Norrtälje Municipality organized a seminar in April on post-secondary education and training in the EU. It gathered participants from Sweden, Estonia, Finland and Lithuania.



Following the points of view and experiences that were presented, the Commission continues to work on the application to the EU's Leonardo da Vinci Programme with alignment on a TOI – Transfer of Innovation-project on the main theme "Develop vocational skills considering the labour market needs".

The realization of the project assumes that methods for participants from the business world and for teacher - and student exchange, exchange of lectures and vocational training places, etc. will be developed. The application is to be prepared by the end of February 2010.

### Questions and tasks in the project application

- Describe the need of qualified vocational education in the regions that participate in the project.
- What can we do to satisfy the needs of a vocational education?
- What benefits are there in cooperating with educations in other EU-countries?

- Participants? This will be a matter for the current education organization in the regions but also representatives from business world. What motivates these partners to participate?
- The budget for the project will include 25 % that the participants have to pay themselves. The EU-subsidies can get up to maximum 300 000 Euro for 2 years.

What can we focus on? The Swedish side will try to concentrate on:

- to learn from those qualified vocational education programmes that are more developed in our partner countries.
- to adjust to the methods used in other countries to be able to validate our education elements and knowledge requirements, so that they can be approved in other EU-countries.
- to be able to offer teachers and students cooperation partners, exchange of experiences and practise in other countries.
- to develop common educational programs, for example English, business economy, entrepreneurship.
- to develop the methods we use today in our vocational education programs, to involve the businesses into the education.

We now continue the contacts with partners present at the seminar but we are interested to cooperate with other partners around the Baltic Sea.

### MORE

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## Bridges over the Sea

"Bridges over the sea" – the youth conference that gave youngsters all around the Baltic Sea Region new possibilities to meet new friends, get new ideas and tools for developing the region.

During three interesting and hectic days in September the Commission on Youth Issues together with the City of Kristiansand and the joint EU project Different History – Common Future organized the fourth Baltic Sea Youth Conference in Kristiansand. At the conference more than 130 youngsters, civil servants and politicians from different countries around the Baltic Sea took part.

The conference was a mixture of lectures, workshops and social activities where the participants had the opportunity to discuss and learn more about the environmental situation in and around the Baltic Sea Region, and what "I" as an individual can do about the situation, or how to make the Baltic Sea Region a more attractive and prosperous place to live.

The participants also had the possibility to discuss and to learn more about the situation of people with different sexual preferences and how we can "bridge over" the intolerance that we can experience around the Baltic Sea Region.

The youth conference was also partly connected to the X UBC General Conference through a common lunch where the youth and the politicians had the opportunity to discuss the future development of the Baltic Sea Region, or how the youth can become more involved in the development of region. The Youth Conference was also invited by the UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs to support their workshop during the General Conference. This cooperation was very appreciated both from the youth and from the participants at the workshop and the result was very interesting. The results of the conference will be published in the third conference



ence book "Book of Inspirations" as a follow up from the previous books "Book of Demands" and Book of Possibilities". Also, there will be a conference movie produced and a Youth Baltic Strategy created for the future work.

During the conference, City of Kalmar handed over the vice chair of the Commission on Youth Issue to Mr Gunars Ansins, Deputy Mayor, City of Liepāja.

### MORE

Commission on Youth Issues

[www.ubc-youth.org](http://www.ubc-youth.org)





# European Road Safety Charter

## – road safety prevention measures taken by UBC cities



This year the UBC has signed the European Road Safety Charter (ERSC). The Charter is an undertaking of DG for Energy and Transport of the European Commission, and its objective is reducing the number of traffic fatalities as well as promoting

road safety prevention measures.

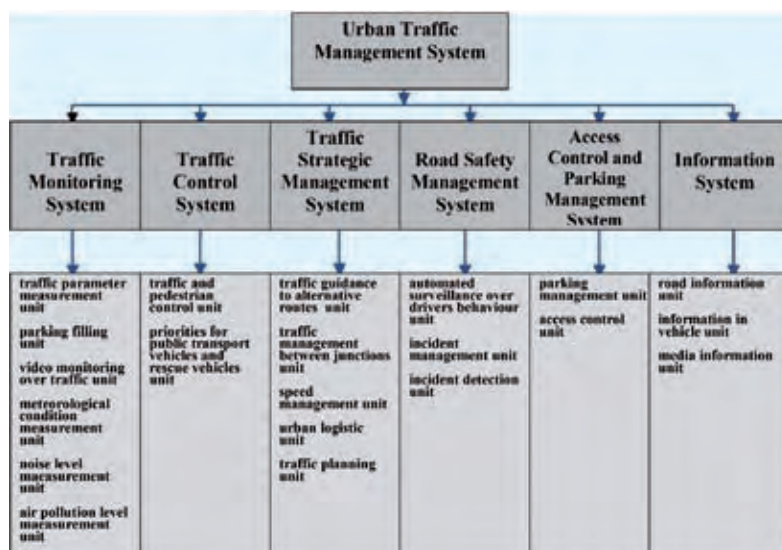
The Charter has been signed by more than 1200 institutions, including UBC member cities. With this article, UBC Commission on Transportation wishes to start a series of articles in which UBC members will have an opportunity to present road safety prevention measures taken by their cities as well as to share their experiences in reducing the number of traffic accidents. The first city to present its action is Gdynia (Poland) which runs the Commission on Transportation. By signing the ERSC in 2007, Gdynia made several commitments, among others, to take measures to reduce by 20% road accidents occurring at intersections by 2010 as well as to reduce number of road deaths and injuries. Thanks to the statistical analysis of road traffic accidents in 2003 – 2007, there have been identified the high-risk areas of Gdynia road system where engineering measures of traffic safety improvement could be taken. In the territory of Gdynia about 20 persons die annually in approximately 300 road accidents and in order to reduce this traffic risk the following engineering measures are to be carried out:

- reconstruction of five intersections, identified as high-risk areas in the city,
- erection of traffic lights where they are most needed,
- creation of pedestrian shelters and guard rails for pedestrian safety,
- implementation of a traffic and parking management system together with a monitoring system in high-risk areas,
- increase in traffic safety by building bicycle routes to ensure safer travel by bicycle.

At present the city is working on the designs of redeveloping a dozen or so high-risk intersections as well as of constructing about 15 km of bicycle routes. Two intersections will have been redeveloped by the end of 2009, others will undergo redevelopment in the near future. Within three years the city tends to construct dozen or so kilometers of bicycle roads.

High level of congestion, high number of incidents and high costs incurred when a street network is congested as a result of road incidents set the context for many cities worldwide to introduce intelligent systems for managing transportation. Consequently, the cities of the Tri-City Agglomeration (Gdynia – Sopot – Gdańsk) made the decision to develop a concept of traffic management. Thus, conceptual work on the structure of system of traffic management called TRISTAR started in 2002. Five years later, following the agreement, the concept

of detailed system TRISTAR was processed. At present Gdynia, Sopot and Gdańsk intend to apply for extra funding from European funds. TRISTAR will comprise such functional sub-systems as integrated road traffic management system, integrated public (passenger) transport management system, integrated goods traffic management system (logistic centres), integrated rescue management system (integrated rescue system), integrated transportation information system. The two most important components are foreseen to be implemented in the first stage of TRISTAR system introducing – urban traffic management system and public transport management system.



Road Safety Management System will be part of the urban traffic management system (see the figure above) and will enable to perform the following functions:

- automated surveillance over drivers' behaviour (speed exceeding and going through a red light) efficient and early detection of incidents
- quick deliver of information on incidents to rescue service
- appropriate traffic managing to avoid secondary incidents as well as minimize delays caused by congestion

Road Safety Management System will perform in the most dangerous spots within Gdynia and Tri-City Agglomeration.

If your city is interested in presenting its road safety prevention measures as well as in sharing its experiences in reducing the number of traffic accidents, please contact the Commission.

**MORE**

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## Active and Fit Commission on Sport Grant Competition 2009

Physical fitness and functional capacity naturally decrease as people become more advanced in their years. With the ageing process progressing, they develop mobility restrictions and consequently start suffering from various problems. Hence, in this 2009 grant session entitled "Active and Fit" UBC Commission on Sport wishes to promote and award projects which offer rehabilitation opportunities to elderly people with mobility restrictions and thus propagate physical activity among elderly people.

While distributing grants, the UBC Commission wishes to award those projects which offer (1) rehabilitation activities targeted at increasing the mobility of the elderly, (2) promote sport and physical activity as a rehabilitation tool, (3) encourage elderly people to keep physically active and to practise sports on a regular basis as well as (4) increase functional capacity of elderly people. "Active and Fit" grants are addressed exclusively to UBC member cities and they are aimed at awarding projects offering rehabilitation activities for elderly people. The projects should be realised between 1 October 2009 – 31 March 2010. The awarded grant may cover any expenses related to the project implementation, preferably it should cover costs of rehabilitation activities targeted at enhancing the mobility of the elderly.

**MORE**

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# NEWS from member cities

## Supporting innovation and activity of youth

Today's current economic situation affects youth work just as much as any other field. You can either accept the current situation admitting there is nothing you can do about it but wait or realize it is a perfect time to become innovative and creative by using effectively the resources we do have today and support youth initiatives and activities. Below there are some examples from Tallinn.

Tallinn celebrated the Year of Youth in 2007 focusing on youth and new innovative activities. Many interesting projects were started and most successful are still running today, three years later. One of these is Future Fibit – fascinating fashion show held in October every year where young designers get an opportunity to show their designs. Young people experience the life of real fashion world and show: everything has to be strict, fast and go according to the plan. Future Fibit is a part of a well known larger fashion event called FIBIT (Fashion Is Back In Tallinn) organized by one of the biggest shopping centres in Tallinn - Viru Keskus. Young people have always been grateful for the experience and opportunity to exhibit their designs, and it is hoped that some of them will have started their career there. Future Fibit is also a good example of how local government and private sector can cooperate.

Another project was held in spring 2009 - knit graffiti. Knit graffiti is very popular in some countries but has not really got that big in Estonia. All youth centres (11) took part by getting young boys and girls to knit. For knitting patches in different size and shape, they used old knit wears and yarns that people brought to the youth centres. In this way some people, who had never been to a youth centre, found their way

there which was also one of the goals. On the Tallinn Day, 15 May, park benches and lamp posts were covered with knit graffiti.

Tallinn's Youth Week 2009 was held in September. Again, all the youth centres in Tallinn took part in it by organizing different events but at the same time focusing on cooperation with youth NGOs. Many youth NGOs used the facilities of youth centres and organized their activities there. Additionally, there were events held on the streets of Tallinn – different relevant information for parents and youngsters was available, youth groups could perform on open air stage. Many interesting workshops were held – on how to use again second-hand things, how to pay attention to security issues, etc. Youth work in Tallinn offers alternative, interesting and non-expensive possibilities in economically hard times.



### MORE

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## "Gdańsk rescues the sailing ship" project applies for the South Baltic funds

In November 2008 Gdańsk bought the ketch General Zaruski to save it and bring it back to its former state and duty. After revitalization the ship will serve as the flagship of the city. It is aimed to promote the city and serve as a sail training ship for the youth, just as it was planned by Mariusz Zaruski.

Since that time there have been many interesting events taking place. With the support of such companies like DNV, Leica Geosystems and the Technical University of Gdańsk, the hull of the ship was scanned by modern laser scanner. As a result 3D model was created that allows to take a virtual walk along the ship "Zaruski". Thanks to the very precise laser measurement, the constructors preparing the working plan of the reconstruction could compare the current state of the hull with the previously documented one and introduce all necessary changes. To take a virtual walk along the ship "Zaruski" enter the website <http://www.zaruski.pl/2009/08/20/zapraszamy-na-wirtualny-spacer-po-kadlubie-ts-general-zaruski/>.

In July the ship was visited by the Chairman of European Maritime Heritage, UNESCO agenda that gathers shipowners of traditional ships. He examined the hull and ran a presentation about revitalization of old sailing-ships. During a 2-day conference he introduced



Swedish experience regarding revitalization of traditional yachts and suggested many practical and technical solutions. The Project „Gdańsk rescues the sailing ship” was also present during all important sailing and touristic events like The Tall Ships Races, Water and Wind Fair, Polyacht, Shanties under the Crane, etc.

Presently, the Municipal Centre of Sport and Recreation in Gdańsk, the shipowner, has already the technical plans of rebuilding of yacht. The discussions with the company,

which will overhaul the yacht, are in the final stage. Meanwhile, the original elements which are to be used during the rebuilding of the ship "Zaruski" are being repaired.

Recently, the decision has been taken to apply for the funds within the South Baltic Programme for crossborder co-operation 2007 - 2013 (Priority Axis 2: Attractiveness and Common Identity, 2.3. Sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage for regional development), in order to promote sailing, tourism, maritime and ecological education in the BSR. All companies and institutions interested in this project are requested to contact the Municipal Centre of Sport and Recreation.

### MORE

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# Baltic Local Agenda 21 Forum

## faces new challenges and opportunities

A BLA21F network meeting took place as a part of the Baltic EcoRegion partner meeting in Lahti on 22-24 September 2009. Baltic Local Agenda 21 Forum - BLA21F - is a way to carry out the Rio process on the local level. The Forum was founded in Lahti in 1997. Over the years, several development projects have been implemented as part of the network. The activities have focused on the Eastern part of the region. Nowadays, BLA21F network also forms a part of the Baltic 21 Eco-Region policy framework. Although joint activities and projects are ongoing, the network has recently lost some of its former activeness. The purpose of the meeting in Lahti was to come up with new ways to strengthen the network.

During the meeting, the network partners from Lahti, an Estonian nongovernmental organization EMI-ECO, and Region Zealand, Denmark, presented the current situation of Local Agenda 21 work in their own regions and gave examples of their recent activities. Furthermore, the presentations covered the trends, challenges and opportunities related to the local agenda work and the development of BLA21F network. In addition, green drama method was used in working towards common goals and developing common project ideas.

A holistic view of sustainable development, participatory approaches, regional learning and the intergration of Local Agenda 21 to other agendas are current trends. Getting greater stakeholder involvement from both citizens and the business sector, raising awareness on sustainable development and empowering people to act sustainably still present essential challenges to LA21 work. One key question is how a local government can use its many roles as a leader, regulator, service provider, consumer and change facilitator to promote sustainable

*Creative presentation of a group work during the green drama activities. In the picture from left to right: Christine Jakobsson, Baltic University Programme, Dörte Ratzmann, BMU, Nina Høgmo, Norwegian Centre for Science and Education and Irma Tolonen, Lahti Region Environmental Service.*



development.

Recent economic downturn has seriously impaired cooperating resources, especially in the three Baltic states. This makes the development of the network difficult, but on the other hand, now these countries would need support provided by the network even more. Getting new participants would substantially increase resources, opportunities to initiate activities and the exchanged know-how. Furthermore, new fields of activities, such as climate change cooperation, could be initiated.

### MORE

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## Helsinki Centre in St. Petersburg moves to Finland House

Helsinki Centre that promotes urban relations, communication and business development objectives of Finnish cities in St. Petersburg and in Northeast Russia will move to Finland House in St. Petersburg in 2010. Finland House has been inaugurated by Prime Ministers Vladimir Putin and Matti Vanhanen on Sunday, 25 October 2009.



Helsinki Centre started its operations in St. Petersburg in autumn 2008. The service was launched by Helsinki, and the cities of Tampere and Kotka with their regional partners joined in as co-operation partners. The objective of the Centre is to unite forces to strengthen and support the operations of these Finnish cities with the co-operation networks of St. Petersburg and Northeast Russia. Focal co-operation issues are traffic connections and logistics, co-operation in the fields of research and culture, tourism as well as communications and media connections. Helsinki, Tampere and Kotka aim at intensifying co-operation especially with the administration of St. Petersburg.

Mayor Jussi Pajunen of Helsinki and Governor of St. Petersburg, Mrs. Valentina Matvienko signed the seventh co-operation protocol between the cities in connection with the inauguration of Finland House. According to the protocol, the cities will intensify their co-operation with organisations of the Baltic Rim, among others. The co-operation plan for the years 2010-12 includes projects in different sectors, e.g. waterworks in treating sewage and drinking water, collaboration in promoting environmental projects, as well as in tourism marketing.

### MORE

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## A distinguished centenarian

Szczecin's Pionier Cinema ("Pioneer") was enlisted in the Guinness World Records Book and on 26 September 2009 it celebrated its 100-year birthday. The Pionier Cinema was founded by Albert Pietzke, under the name of Helios and its first screening was made on 26 September 1909. Since its very beginning, it performed an educational role in the city, by offering an ambitious array of films. Today, the cinema carefully selects its repertoire and specializes in presenting European films.

Since the beginning the cinema has had a specific and charming atmosphere, and its present owners take pride in the fact that they managed to preserve this unique atmosphere typical of the XX century. The cinema went through a thorough renovation in 2002, which brought modern equipment. In the cinema, in the part called "Kiniarnia" (Cinema Café), you can see a movie sitting at a table, in a café-like atmosphere, sipping some wine. There is also the piano which was produced in Szczecin in 1898. The cinema is a member of prestigious Europa Cinemas and Studio Cinemas networks. In August 2005 the Pionier cinema was awarded the title of the oldest still working cinema in the world.



Guinness World Records  
CERTIFICATE

### MORE

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## The festival of thousand tables

On 26 September 2009 the Association of Palanga Hotels and Restaurants together with the municipality already for the second time organized a festival for the whole family "Palanga Table 2009". By this festival the biggest resort of the country celebrated the International Tourism Day and started the season of autumn events. During the festival the whole town sat at thousand tables, inviting all guests from Lithuania and abroad. Tables stretched for almost 1-kilometre distance along entire J. Basanavičius Street, leading to the sea. The guests were welcomed by the biggest table in Lithuania (4-metre high, table top area - 24 square metres). Palanga folk

artist Linas Žulkus in an extremely short time – 1 hour – made the smallest amber table in Lithuania (10-millimetre high, table top area - 130 square millimetres), which was 400 times smaller than the biggest table. Pal-

anga folk artists and amber guild craftsmen not only offered to acquire unique souvenirs and amber-ware, but also encouraged the visitors to try out various crafts. The best Palanga groups and performers were giving a concert during all day of the festival. The partners of this year festival – Lithuanian Grill and Barbecue Association – organized the first national fish barbecue championship for the Palanga Mayor's Cup. Reception offices of the town mayor Vytautas Stalmokas and director of Administration Valerijus Kuznetsov were open all day long, where the public could learn about the nearest future projects to be implemented in Palanga, and the town residents and guests had an opportunity to talk directly to the city authorities and specialists. Participants of other event held in Palanga at the same time – International Kite Festival – also took their places at the table. In the sky near the sea bridge one could see a unique exhibition of three-dimensional kites: flying octopuses, a sea horse, a cat, an orca whale, a shark and various fish. Next to the exhibition there was a workshop where visitors could learn how to make a kite and make one yourself. The town sport school invited to the table to play table tennis, chess, checkers and other table games, the company „Kurortų pramogos“ gave an opportunity to take a ride on electric carts, cycle carts and the most popular transport of the resort – bicycles. Palanga Tourism Information Centre invited tourism specialists from Lithuania and abroad at the table. The festival was finished with the award ceremony of the first national fish barbecue championship, traditional table nominations awards and with the evening of the world top 100 music video clips.

A traditional feast "Palanga Smelt 2009" and the winding music concerts "Brass Summer" were the other important events in Palanga attracting a lot of visitors from Lithuania and abroad.

MORE

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### Project INTERFACE for foot passengers

Foot passengers crossing South Baltic Area by foot has lost its importance during the last decades. Transport operators have adjusted to cargo and car passenger traffic. Only a minimum of service standards is offered by ferry ports. Waiting areas are unattractive for passengers. The access of people with reduced mobility from the city center to the port is more than difficult.

The main objective of the INTERFACE project, approved in April 2009 within the South Baltic Cross-border Co-operation Programme 2007-2013, is to develop foot passenger traffic making it comfortable and environmentally friendly alternative for SBA cross-border travel. It aims to upgrade the service environment in ferry ports. It will facilitate the access for people with reduced mobility, improve interoperability between ferry and transport means linking ports with city centers, implement intermodal passenger information, prepare investments to close gaps in transport infrastructure and promote improved connections. The project major target groups are foot passengers, traffic operators, ports and port cities. Project activities are focused on the transport axes Karlskrona-Gdynia, Gdańsk-Baltiysk/Kaliningrad, Trelleborg – Rostock and Gedser-Rostock.

Hanseatic City of Rostock is the Lead Beneficiary of the project. The budget of the project is 1,6 MEUR, from which 1,2 MEUR is co-financed from the EU.

There are 22 partners involved, including local and public authorities, traffic and port operators. Partners from Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Poland and Russia will work together as well as ferry operators Scandlines, TT-Line and Stena Line.

The project will last three years (April 2009 to April 2012). Designing the website dedicated to the project is the first part of work.

MORE

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## NEWS FROM MALBORK

### Magic Malbork Show

It was the first edition of a new cultural event "Magic Malbork Show" that took place this August in Malbork. The number of visitors who came to see all the attractions was surprising even for the organizers. Music concerts, street theatres, huge soap-bubbles, dance performances and night spectacle with music, acrobats, fire show, lasers etc. – all of this brought to our town many thousands of people. Next edition of Magic Malbork Show is going to take place on 7 August 2010.



Photo: Michał Pawłowicz





# BIKE TRIP

## around the Baltic Sea

After almost two and half months, inhabitant of Koszalin Wojtek Grela came back from the expedition around the Baltic Sea. He rode his bicycle even 120 km per day, dragging his own hotel and kitchen



with himself. The aim of this journey was the North Cape - Nordkapp. A travel route led through Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland to Norway and back through Denmark and Germany. The weather was perfect for cycling and camping outside for two months. However, two last weeks were hard time for Wojtek. In Denmark he took his bicycle on board of the train and came back home in September. He had to impose the financial discipline because farther to the North, everything was more expensive. A two-month journey around the Baltic cost 1,500 Euro.

There were not too many chances for admiring the Baltic Sea itself. Wojtek recalls his meetings with the sea in Riga, Tallinn, Finnish Oulu and then in Denmark. "Everywhere outside Poland the Baltic Sea looks like the lake – there are no beaches, there are no waves. Water sometimes breaks against rocks or gently spills to the grassy edge".

The best view for Wojtek were fjords. "Fjords are beautiful. The nature is extreme, wild and amazing". Crystal-clear water, waterfalls, rocks left him speechless.

Wojtek Grela likes travelling alone. Someone's company during such expeditions is like surcharge. If you are alone, you can make a quick decision without any problem.

Wojtek made 6 thousand kilometers around the Baltic Sea. "Cycling still gives me pleasure, especially here in Koszalin", Wojtek admits, "but this time I have "satis superque" with camping out".

**MORE**

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## Narva – the autumn capital

This autumn Narva was granted a special status – the autumn capital of Estonia, thus joining Tallinn, Pärnu – the summer capital, Otepää – the winter capital, and Türi – the spring capital, becoming the center of cultural and sports events for the season.

In addition to the festivities of the official handing over the scepter of the capitals, where Mayor of Tallinn, Edgar Savisaar was present, the delegations from all four capitals took part in the openings of the exhibitions of the Narva caricaturist V. Mokijevski and the Russian artist M. Chagall. The programme of the events that will take place in the autumn capital before the end of the term, which officially expires at 19:46 on 21 December, is full of various concerts, competitions in many different kinds of sport, theatrical performances, photography and arts exhibitions, and events for the youths.

Among the highlights of the events there was the international chess competition "The Stars of the Baltic Sea", held on 4-9 October at Narva Castle. The tournament, organized for the 4<sup>th</sup> time already, attracted young chess-players from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, Finland, Russia and Estonia. The honorary guest of the tournament, the grandmaster Viktor Korchnoi, performed a simultaneous display game with the participants. Together with congratulations to the winning national team of Poland, Mayor of Narva, Tarmo Tamiste, emphasized that chess is one of those games where there are no losers. All participants have gained a lot of experience from the matches, mastered their strategies and more importantly, found new friends. This is particularly important in the times when the relationships between the neighboring countries are sour, and the chessboard becomes a nice place to settle the disputes peacefully.



Narva will certainly do its best to ensure that the following requirements listed on the official Autumn Capital Certificate are fulfilled: "Narva is obliged to receive guests at the highest possible level, make sure that the autumn storms are of moderate force, the migrating birds are seen off properly and all the people adopt a good mood".

**MORE**

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### New projects in Malbork

Realization of three big infrastructural projects co-financed from the external funds is starting in Malbork. In the immediate vicinity of the town centre and Malbork Castle we are going to build an outdoor auditorium for 5.500 people, stage and screens, where spectacular cultural events will take place, starting from summer 2010. Within the next project's realization, surroundings of Malbork's railway station will change completely, thanks to new road and pedestrian infrastructure, car parks and aesthetic small architecture. The last project includes restoration of medieval building and adapting it for totally new functions – planetarium, modern library, exhibition hall, craft workshops, restaurant, etc. If your municipality is interested in cooperation with Malbork, please do not hesitate and contact us. At present, we are looking for a partner from Norway, Iceland or Lichtenstein to write a project connected with cultural exchange and organizing cultural events, but we are also interested in other proposals.

### Malbork awarded with the Flag of Honour of the Council of Europe

The Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs Commission in the Council of Europe awarded Malbork with the Honorary Flag of the Council of Europe. The award is aimed at the municipalities which were appreciated for their input in the field of broadening European thought and transnational cooperation.

The ceremony of commissioning the Flag took place on 25 July 2009 in the town centre, during "the Siege of Malbork" event. Because of the ceremony Malbork was visited by delegations from partner towns from Germany, Lithuania, Sweden and France, and from amicable town of Larvik in Norway. The Flag was handed to town authorities by Mr. Klaus Bühler – the representative of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly.

**MORE**

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# The Millennium of Lithuania in Klaipėda

In 2009 Klaipėda and the whole country celebrates the Millennium of Lithuania. In 1009 the name of Lithuania was mentioned in historical annals for the first time. Among major international events dedicated to the Millennium jubilee was the finals of the prestigious "Tall Ships' Races Baltic 2009" in Klaipėda.

Having visited other UBC cities Gdynia, St. Petersburg, and Turku, the wonderful fleet of 99 sailing vessels arrived to the Lithuanian sea port. With 36 largest A and B Class sailing ships from 27 countries, it was the largest ever maritime event in Klaipėda. For four days on 31 July - 3 August, Klaipėda was crowded with international crews, the quays of the Cruise Terminal and



the Dane river smartened up with hundreds of masts. The crews of the prestigious Races numbered to almost three thousand sailors, including not only professionals, but half of them 15-25 year olds. Many of the trainees have tasted navigation, romance and racing under sails for the first time in their lives. Six Lithuanian vessels took part at the Races this year. Totally over 100 Lithuanian youngsters sailed on board of English, Dutch, Norwegian, Russian and Lithuanian ships.

A real fiesta of the sea, youth and international friendship was arranged for the sailors, citizens and over a million city guests. Everybody were overwhelmed by a fantastic Sea Festival that could not compare to any former Sea Festival that had been traditionally organized in Klaipėda for more than seventy years. Almost a million and a half visitors admired the Tall Ships fleet at the quays and the wide cultural program of the event.

Leaders of the main organizer of the Races, Sail Training International, were generous in giving the highest standard evaluation to the event



in the Lithuanian port city, calling the first-timer Klaipėda "a wonderful discovery".

For five days in July Klaipėda could have truly been called the same as Vilnius this year – the Capital of European Culture 2009: Klaipėda hosted the 46<sup>th</sup> festival of European cultural heritage EUROPEADE. 159 groups – 3800 musicians, singers and dancers from 22 countries, including the most remote regions of Spain, Italy, Portugal, Cyprus, Greece, Scotland, and

Greenland gathered in Klaipėda. 5 mass evening concerts in Summer Concert Hall, dozens of smaller concerts in all squares of the Old Town all day long, a European Party, night entertainments with local people, the magnificent EUROPEADE parade, colourful in dozens of national costumes, singing and dancing along the main streets of Klaipėda lasted for more than three hours - all that can only be described as the genuine fiesta for your soul. EUROPEADE widely disclosed the power of culture for human heart, since the Festival magically turned everybody – the guests and the audiences, into a united European family, based on true respect and admiration to each others' cultural treasury. The Flag of the festival for EUROPEADE 2010 has been handed over to the town of Bolzano, North Italy.

**MORE**

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## News in Jūrmala

This year Jūrmala celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and with the opening of serial of events, also a new city home page was launched in the middle of October. The information is available in 10 languages: Latvian, English, Russian, German, Finnish, Lithuanian, Estonian, Swedish, Norwegian and French. The new website is more visually attractive with the elements of modern technology applied.

Starting from August 2009 Jūrmala Tourism Information Centre is taking part in the Top10intheCity project, which gives the opportunity to get information about the city in the virtual and mobile environment. This offer is free of charge. The project Top10intheCity is for all Internet users, as well as those who use the Internet via mobile phone service. It serves as a virtual city resort guide and provides information about the city – accommodation, eating out, tourist sights, the culture of the city, architecture, and history, as well as the daily calendar of the events and the information provided by the tourism information centre.

Also, new hotels were opened. In May, a first hostel in Jūrmala – Riga Beach Hostel – was opened in Dzintari. It is located only 100 metres from the beach. Just a month later, the Amber SPA boutique hotel opened in Bulduri. Another hotel - Light House - is located right on the beach of the city, and offers the rooms presenting the specific traits of certain city or even a country.

Also during autumn and winter Jūrmala welcomes its guests, and offers variety of different events. All information is available on the city's home page. Soon a Christmas market will be open in the main pedestrian street – Jomas, offering traditional souvenirs, as well as jewellery and knitted clothing, produced by local entrepreneurs and individuals.

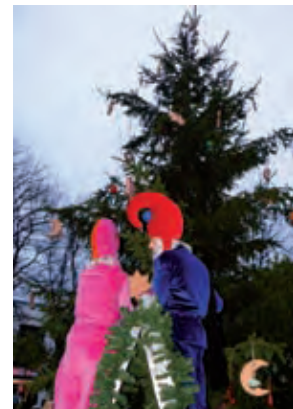


Photo: Mauri Mahlamäki

## JYVÄSKYLÄ - the City of Light

The City of Jyväskylä in Finland has been awarded the first prize in the 2009 city.people.light awards, the annual competition organized by Philips and the Lighting Urban Community International Association (LUCI) to reward projects which demonstrate the contribution lighting can make to the well-being of those who live, work or visit a city.

**MORE**

<http://www.jyvaskyla.fi/yhdyskuntatoimi/cityoflight>  
<http://www.luciasociation.org>  
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X UBC General Conference, 23 - 26 September 2009, Kristiansand, Norway

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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 and EU Coordinators Network. 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.