

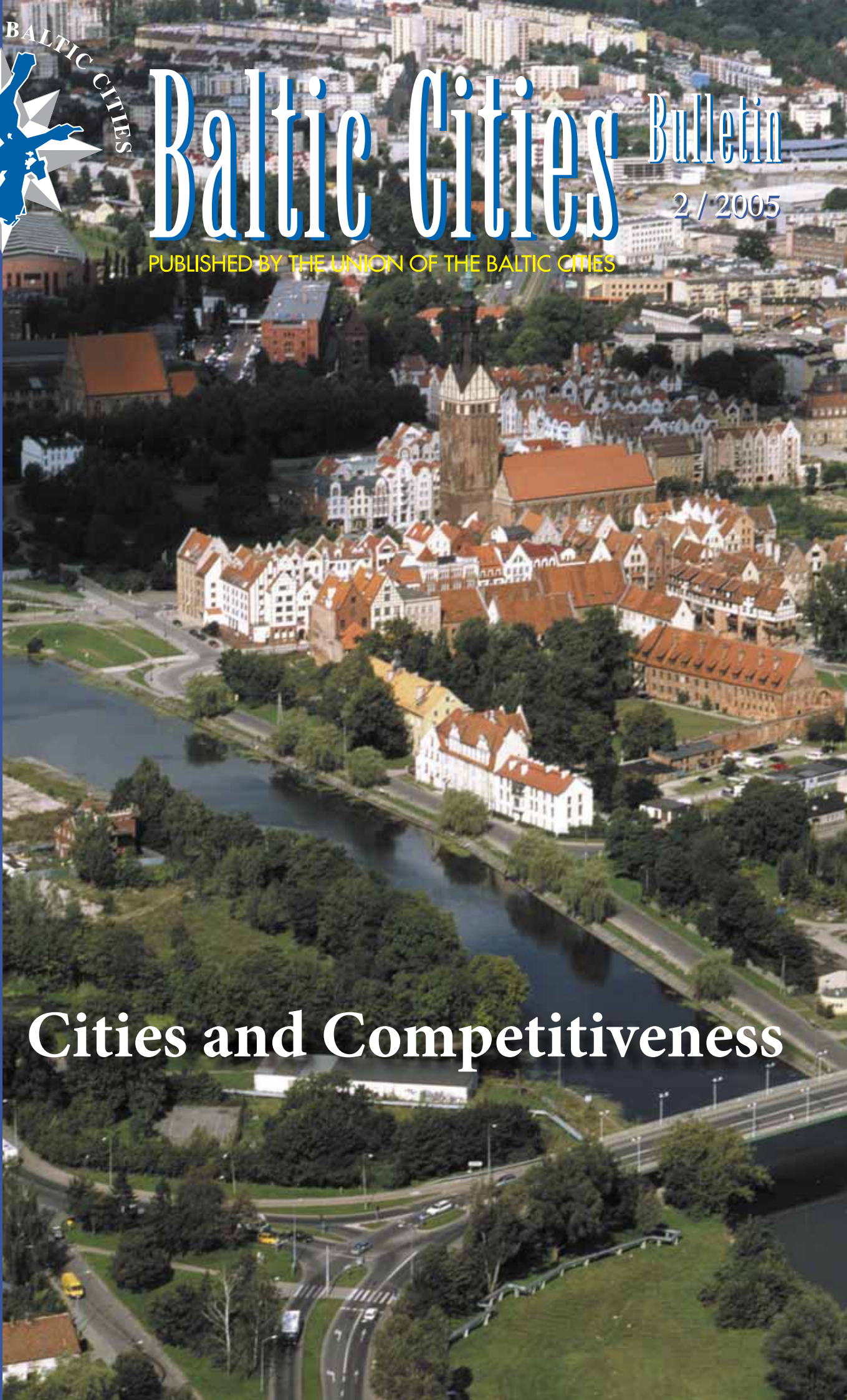
Baltic Cities Bulletin

2 / 2005

PUBLISHED BY THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

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Cities and Competitiveness





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ISSN 1506-6266

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Baltic Cities Bulletin

Dear UBC Friends,

The Baltic Sea region is perceived as the most dynamically developing region in EU and recognised as a forerunner in many fields. To keep this positive trend lasting, we cannot rest on our laurels. More than ever we are now facing the challenge to be most competitive region in Europe. However, as it was emphasised during our General Conference in Turku, in the globalised world the competition is not dominated by the national perspective any more but by the local and regional one. The cities play the increasingly important role in ensuring the welfare of the country and the success of the whole Baltic Region. The cities are those which develop as "engines of growth". How do they cope with the role of economic, cultural and social focal points? What do they do to attract investors as well as visitors? Hopefully, we will be able to find all the answers in this issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin.



Additionally, many of these answers were expressed during our VIII General Conference in Turku, Finland, 29 September – 2 October. We have been proud of the opportunity to host more than 270 participants, including representatives of 67 Member Cities, as well as invited guests from governments and numerous international organisations. Those people really care for the Baltic Sea Region and they want it to be more and more competitive. The most visible effect of this concern was the Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy for the Baltic Sea Region signed by 15 major Baltic ports and port cities on 30 September at the General Conference in Turku. The UBC unanimously endorsed this document. This is a huge step forward in terms of harmonized environmental policies and practices for the Baltic ports.

The theme of the General Conference was "Towards a New Agenda for the Baltic Sea Region". Do we really need to look for a new agenda? Excellent speeches and presentations, fruitful workshops and discussions confirmed, on the one hand, that the Baltic Sea cities have now tremendous opportunities to develop, especially in regards with the EU enlargement and new financing possibilities. On the other hand, however, they gave an impulse to consider the future role of UBC in the region. What can we do for the benefit of our member cities? The clear prerequisites to the UBC Action Plan for the next 2-year period were made by the General Conference when it adopted unanimously the Resolution. The ideas specified in this document mark the main dimensions of further development of the Union. We should support the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy objectives at the local and regional level. We should, moreover, closely co-operate with other Baltic organizations and do our best to create the one - and therefore stronger then ever - Baltic voice in Brussels.

The Baltic Sea cities and region cannot afford to miss out the chance which has been given to them. I hope that the next year will be full of successful and fruitful projects which will further contribute to improvement of our regional competitiveness.

Wishing You a Merry Christmas and successful New Year 2006!

Per Bødker Andersen
President of the UBC

Kolding, 1 December 2005



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I. CITIES AND COMPETITIVENESS

CITIES AS DRIVING COMPETITORS

The role of cities is very quickly becoming one of the most important parts of the whole discussion on how competition functions and how economic development comes about in our globalised world. Contrary to the situation during most of the 20th century when competition was dominated by the national perspective – it is increasingly about and between cities and regions regardless of national borders. The welfare of a country is becoming more dependent on how successful its cities are.

A few figures from the Stockholm Region underline this argument very clearly:

- it has 21% of the population of Sweden
- it produces almost 30 % of our GNP
- it pays 40 % of all taxes in the country, and
- it accounts for around 40 % of the total annual growth of our GNP.

In the international environment characterized by a growing mobility of people, goods, capital and ideas, the basis for competitiveness becomes more and more local / regional. There is abundant empirical evidence to support this view. Given an open economy this is not that astounding. Competitiveness or its lack depends at the end of the day on people and on what they do. People live, work and run businesses locally.

Cities have always been places for commerce and thus they always are catalysts for development - good or bad - that depends on our actions. But a city is not only a place for exchange of goods - it is before everything else - a place for exchange of ideas - a place for creativity and innovation. The cities thus have the

potential for competitiveness and thereby for economic growth and development of our communities. The question is - How do we make use of this potential?

What can cities - that is their political leaders and their institutions - do to promote the cities' or their regions' competitiveness? There is of course a row of important factors that play a role, but the key factors in my opinion are:



Competitiveness or its lack depends on people and on what they do. People live, work and run businesses locally - says Carl Cederschiöld

- good and well functioning institutions
- good governance;
- an environment that stimulates and accept innovation with an open mind;
- good climate for investment, and
- a city's responsible and comprehensive investment - policy.

The first point demands that local independence regarding responsibilities in designated areas - that is the legal competence for the local and regional level - is for real and not only a beautiful democratic decoration. Simply said - if the mayor cannot really do anything why vote for him. Efficient, professionally competent and impartial city administration is in this context equally important as the public institutions on the national level. The second point is not as clearcut and concrete but has much to do with open channels of information

and communication between the city, business and the academic world - triple helix. It is to a considerable extent about discovering what is new and what will affect the position of the city and its competitiveness in the future. The general investment climate has as always to do with well-known things such as taxes, fees, the amount and complexity of regulations, etc.

The fourth point is perhaps more difficult to handle, especially if we are talking of the EU - country subject to the rules of the inner market, the public tendering process, etc. What is the role of a city regarding investment? To simplify matters it could be divided into two parts:

- basic infrastructure – such as water-supply, sewage treatment, waste management, roads, ports, public transport, etc.

This can be done exclusively by the city - or as so called

PPP's - or by contract tendered out to private companies. The vital element here is that there should always be municipal responsibility based on the legal competence laid down in the law of the land.

- Investment in other areas - but under what circumstances?

A city can often have valid reasons for trying to promote commercial investment in order to stimulate local and regional economic development - meaning jobs and rising welfare for the citizens. In this context the trick is to avoid distorting competition on the free market and unduly favour certain private companies. To use a metaphor - this can be done by the city acting as a "midwife" for certain strategic investments. We can assist in the birth of the baby. But we will not feed and raise the child.



The instruments are among other things: land-policy, adapting and organizing schools and education to stimulate the creation of a competent labour-force, keeping the infrastructure and planning process in an efficient shape. In rare cases it can also be the role of the city to be a direct investor as long as one does not come into conflict with the EU's competition and public procurement-laws.

Sometimes such a simple thing as an efficient, service-minded and fair city its administration goes a long way to help desired private investments to be realised. In order to illustrate these principles I can again use Stockholm as an example. Stockholm has a clear need for investment in infrastructure and housing if we are to catch up with the rapid growth of the city during the nineties and the first years of this century.

With the support of the government - roughly 2 billion EURO will be spent during the next 8 - 9 years on ring roads and the Mälartunnel – the railway tunnel under the central part of Stockholm. These projects are done in order to raise the capacity for public transport - commuter trains and trains in the Mälardalen as well as the national railway system.

The city has in political unity established the goal to see to that 22.000 apartments are built the next 4-5 years – a tough

task. The city is also taking its role as midwife seriously when working together with private actors and the academic world to formulate a common vision and subsequent action plans for certain strategic areas in Stockholm.

The first one - adopted by the City Council – the Kista-Vision is aimed at constituting commonly agreed guidelines for all, the actors in Kista - a suburb 12 km NW of the city-centre and one of the most important world centres for development in the field of mobile information technology.

In the "Vision-Department" it is also worth mentioning the plan for a biotech - R.A.D Centre - at or rather on top of the old freight train station in the northern part of the inner - city. This is close to the Karolinska Institutet - the institution that chooses the winners of the Nobel-Prize for Medicine.

Finally, the city sees the need for investment in competence and professional skills among its own employees. To recruit and keep the right employees will be crucial in the future if a city is to be competitive. To that end we have allocated the fund of 2 billion SEK (220 mill. Euro) to be spent to train and educate employees and developing our working methods.

To sum up:

- Investments should be made in close cooperation with other actors in society so as to make the most of them.
- As far as possible - the level of investment should be stable over a long term period - meaning that they can be well planned and efficiently procured from an economic and technical point of view.

If you want, you could list a number of rules of thumb for what a city and its leaders can do in cooperation with private business for their city to become and remain competitive for the wellbeing of its citizens. The 10 golden rules for success would be:

1. an elaborate strategy built on an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of your city,
2. define if and where you have clusters with a critical mass - or in which areas you may be able to create them,
3. a visionary political leadership - that is a transparent policy with clear intentions that are easily understood,
4. foster an open and tolerant intellectual environment that stimulates curiosity vis a vis new ideas,
5. create the right incentives for innovators and entrepreneurs,
6. create markets as deregulated as realistically possible,
7. establish a physical infrastructure at the forefront - and maintain it - but realize that it will never be completed,
8. give much attention to the educational system, both for business and the public sector,
9. keep your city administration modern, competent and adaptable,
10. make the active and committed companies in your city like it and become ambassadors for it.

A city that succeeds with this will be competitive in our future world.

*Carl Cederschiöld
Mayor Emeritus
City of Stockholm*



City of Stockholm - one of the most competitive cities in the Baltic Sea Region

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In October 2005, the World Economic Forum (WEF) rated Finland and the United States as the most competitive countries on the basis of statistical data and interviews of corporate executives. WEF states that Finland's particular strengths include the societal environment and the educational system.

In a comparison of EU cities carried out by the Stockholm-based Nordregio research institute under ESPON programme, Helsinki and Turku were the only Finnish cities included in the European mega-cities category.

Nevertheless, even the best must be able to renew continuously because permanent



Port of Turku

FOCUS ON INNOVATION

competitiveness factors do not exist. The new strategy of the City of Turku is based on knowledge, expertise, innovation and well-being. In implementing the strategy the City will particularly stresses the international competitiveness of the local leading edge businesses, availability of skilled labour, creation of an attractive environment for living and enterprising, as well as increasing foreign investments. The universities in Turku are currently preparing a new innovation strategy that will study the challenges related to the creation, financing and commercialisation of innovations. The new solutions emphasise co-operation between the universities, companies and the City, aimed at creativity and openness.

The business policy enterprises owned by the City of Turku, companies and public actors will be responsible for acquiring new investments in the strong lines of business in the area. Pilot Turku Oy is developing Turku's already strong logistics concentration and has been able to increase the foreign investments in the port and airport areas. One example of a unique benefit in transportation is the train-ferry connection to Russia and further to China via the Trans-Siberian railway. The port areas are also home to

the outstanding know-how in maritime technology, especially in designing and manufacture of the biggest luxury cruise liners in the world.

Besides strong traditions, Turku boasts the strongest biotechnology concentration in the country, a future success field which has enjoyed substantial investments by the city. BioTurku is one of the two focal areas of Turku Science Park, and the other one is ICT Turku. The Science Park comprises a total of 30.000 university students, 400 professors, 300 companies and 13.500 employees. The key duties of Turku Science Park Oy include increasing international investments in the fields of biotechnology and ICT. Networking with other strong centres in the Baltic Sea area will be increasingly important while competing globally for the investments and top experts in these growth fields. The city of Turku and its citizens are confident about the future as part of the growing Baltic Sea economy.

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Attracting investors and creating new workplaces is for Elblag – city with a quite high unemployment rate - the task of major importance. Local authorities focus their attention on this challenge.

We act in many fields promoting the city both domestically and abroad, showing our advantages. We have implemented the system of tax allowances and the system of formal procedures conveniences – says Mr Henryk Słonina, Mayor of Elblag. – In the city there is also located the subzone of Warminsko-Mazurska Special Economic Zone offering businesses income tax allowances.

These are not the only measures that Elblag takes to attract businesses. This year 90 million PLN has is allocated to municipal investment projects. Add the EU funds for the technical infrastructure to complete the picture. In this way new

INVESTMENTS IN MODERNITY

investment areas are being prepared. The best example may be Modrzewina South, the district where in 2007 the Technological Park is to be created.

We take up numerous measures to stimulate economic growth – explains Mayor Słonina. – We modernized transportation system by constructing new bridge over the Elblag river, together with the whole road system around the bridge. Due to the construction of Elblag-East multilevel road junction, we have managed to incorporate the city in the still modernized international road system of express roads no.7 and no. 22 joining them with Grzechotki-Mamonowo II Polish – Russian border checkpoint. Another idea for strengthening the city's position is development of the sea port. In the end of October 2005 the new cargo terminal was opened.

The city authorities know that the technical infrastructure and investment

area is not all what is needed. *Today we are taking care of well-educated staff. We have followed Swedish experience. To be more precise, experience of Ronneby, our Swedish partner city - says Mayor Henryk Słonina. - We have taken up activities with the aim of developing modern disciplines related to IT and logistics. We also launched the IT Centre. Its task is not only to train the professional computer staff but also to build broadband fiberglass networks and to create the necessary infrastructure for the development of IT branch.*

The Centre is still under development. It is engaged in the creation of the Technical Park and the Entrepreneurship Incubator.

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CREATING OPEN ECONOMY



The primary goal for the development of Riga, the capital of the Republic of Latvia, is to be an economically vibrant, modern and dynamic city, maintaining its natural and cultural heritage. Together with the Latvian government, Riga is attempting to create an open Western-style economy that complies with the standards of the European Community.

Given the swift economic development in Riga, there is also an increasing amount of investment. Between the year 2000 and the beginning of 2004 the total non-financial investment in Riga



has increased almost 1.5 times. In the beginning of 2004, the total value of non-financial investment in Riga reached 743

million Lats, which is approximately one half of the total investment in the country. Construction works in the City have risen 5 times during this period, reaching 187 million Lats. This is ca. one third of all construction works in the country.

Rapid increase of private and foreign investment in the economy of the city and the housing infrastructure raises also a demand for investment into the public transportation and social infrastructure sectors. Here traditionally main investors were the state and the municipality. As the investment attraction to foster the development of these sectors, e.g. by utilizing public private partnership and concession mechanisms for the financing of infrastructure projects, was not yet popular enough during the

previous years, the main investment source for the above mentioned sectors was Riga Municipality budget. The foreign direct investments into the equity capital of enterprises registered in Riga reached 993.6 million Lats by the end of 2004.

The main part of foreign investment (ca.150 million Lats or 15.3%) in Riga enterprises has been performed by investors from the US, Sweden (number two with 112 million Lats or 12.3%), and Denmark (number three with 97 million Lats or 9.9%).

Riga is also the largest centre of culture, education and science in Latvia. This is evident from the large number of cultural events, international exhibitions, scientific conferences and seminars that take place in Riga every year. For detailed information please visit our home page www.riga.lv.

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Malmö situated within the centre of the Öresundregion comprises the southernmost part of Sweden and Greater Copenhagen in Denmark. This new metropolitan area with a population of 3,6 million has become one of Europe's most vibrant regions.

Malmö has recently experienced an increase in the number of headquarters moving to the city. There are several reasons behind this phenomenon. Year 2000 the Öresundbridge connecting Malmö and Copenhagen was finished resulting in a 20 minutes travel time by car or train between the two cities. In addition to creating a more exciting region to live in, both Swedes and Danes are starting to take advantage of its neighbouring country's proximity. Today, twice as



HSB Turning Torso

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ATTRACTING HEADQUARTERS

many Danish companies have chosen to locate on the Swedish side (a total of 180) and 7000 people commute daily to work in the other country. The bridge also brings Sweden one step closer to the continent, as well as to one of Europe's largest airports, with the connecting flights world-wide. And this is one of the advantages that most companies mention when they list the reasons as to why they decided to locate their headquarters in Malmö.

Another important factor for this increasing attractiveness is Malmö University, established six years ago. Today 20 000 students and new companies make the city much more alive than ever before and adding to the companies' already

excellent recruitment pool. In total, the region has some 14 universities and 10.000 researchers.

The list of newly established headquarters in Malmö range from smaller Swedish IT companies that want to be part of the new, modern business and living area located by the sea (the Western Harbour), to well-known international companies moving from other locations abroad and consolidating their headquarters here. As a symbol for the new positive attitude and modernisation that one finds in Malmö, stands the HSB Turning Torso, a spectacular building twisting itself 190 metres above sea level.

The city of Malmö is continuously taking efforts to improve the conditions for new headquarter establishment.

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VALUES AND COOPERATION



Kristiansand City Council is working together with local businesses, University College Agder and the cultural foundation, Stiftelsen Cultiva on a declaration of values to achieve increased awareness, knowledge and pride about Kristiansand.

In September 2005 the City Council passed the Council Plan 2005-2016 called "We believe in opportunities". This vision is closely related to the project approved by the local politicians in spring 2004, namely: Profiling 2004 - "Kristiansand – a town that gives more opportunities for a better quality of life".

Anne Karen Aunevik, advisor on the Chief Executive's staff, is the council's representative on the working party tasked with finding ways for municipal and private participants to cooperate in highlighting the city of Kristiansand's advantages and for attracting new workers. *The vision is completely integrated into the Council Plan. As a result our redesigned webpage with a more vibrant profile has been made* - she says. - Also, the Profiling 2004 Project revealed that Kristiansand's advantages and distinctive features can be summarized in the following terms; *wonderful, innovative, flourishing and accessible. The process of the council*

is reaching these conclusions, contributed to strengthening Kristiansand's position as "a town that gives more opportunities for a better quality of life."

Why is it important to be aware of which values we wish to present? The council has the responsibility for building society and this is about the city's foundation for existence. The fight to attract job area is very competitive.

Many cities are aware of the importance of advertising their advantages for establishing firms in their areas. It would be very unwise of us if we failed to give information about what we have to offer. In addition, increased knowledge of the city's advantages and possibilities has boosted the well-being of the city's population - Anne Karin Aunevik explains.

The working party is composed of the Market Secretary, Kathrine Bjerke, Chair of the local Chamber of Commerce, Communications Advisor, Bjarne Sverkeli from Cultiva, Senior Advisor Helge Møll from Agder University College, the Chairwoman Ingebjørg Sveen Brunborg from Sørlandet's European office and Advisor Anne Aunevik from Kristiansand



City of Kristiansand

City Council. Initially the group will produce a seminar that can form the basis, and contribute to, a future cooperation project. These tasks include clarifying which partners will be involved. More information about the seminar is available in Norwegian on www.byprofil.no. At the same time, the council will carry out an internal survey of the work on profiling, communication and developing the vision that is already completed by sections and units.

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REHABILITATION OF THE TALKSA LAKE



Šiauliai is the fourth large city located in the North of Lithuania, famous for neighbourhood of the Hill of Crosses, attractive in terms of business, investment and tourism in terms of economic environment and geographical location.

There is well-developed industry, but the city aims to be more attractive for foreign tourists and to provide new facilities for investors. One of such facilities is the unique place in the centre of the city - Talksa Lake (56,2 ha) surrounded by the flora and parks. Because of natural conditions the Talksa Lake is a favourable location for investment of an international rowing centre. An approx. 170 ha park is located in the neighbourhood. Moreover, further



The Talksa Lake

20 ha territory is attractive for commercial and recreational development.

Unfortunately the lake had been polluted by leather industry for a long time and actually not adapted for tourism and recreation as well. Šiauliai seeks to rehabilitate the attractiveness of the lake for citizens and to create favourable conditions for investments into the sport infrastructure. In the middle of 2005 the rehabilitation project started.

The expected results of the project

are: rehabilitated south coast of the lake with the width of 20 m, cleaned bottom from the polluted composite of lake's silt and coating in the depth of 1,5 m from the water surface, natural assets of the southern part of the lake restored.

These results, following the principles of the sustainable development, uphold clean and friendly for health environment, create attractive conditions for investors and enable arrangement of international rowing competition, as well as ensure development of tourism and of new jobs.

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SUSTAINABLE KEILA



Keila – a town with a population of 10,000, situated 25 kilometres west of Tallinn, is considered attractive to entrepreneurs. The town has a railway connection and remains within easy reach of international roads, ports and major Estonian airports.

There are residential and recreational areas, as well as separate industrial areas which are not yet fully exploited. That is why in 2004, more than 200 people were employed and thousands of square meters of production premises built.

There is an industrial park of 48 hectares in the North-Western part of Keila. Having a good location and infrastructure, the park comprises more than 20 enterprises employing around 1500 people. Among them there are such internationally known enterprises like ABB, AGA, GLAMOX, ENSTO, Draka NK Cables, PKC Group, INEXA, as well as several Harju Group enterprises. Beside producers, the industrial village also accommodates companies offering transport, customs

and warehouse services. In order to foster further development of the park, AS Harju KEK obtained a production plant of 19 hectares in the Southern part of Keila.

Due to damage made by the Soviet Army, the ground water in the upper aqueducts in the area had become polluted by the mid 1990s. Keila has been known for its very poor quality of drinking water.



In order to enhance the welfare of the citizens and to develop production, a major environmental project was launched in 1997. The aim of the project was to improve the living environment of Keila. The authorities decided to upgrade or build a new water and sewage system for the whole town - a new water plant and water treatment plant. Today, two thirds of town has been upgraded.

With the help of the Environmental Agency of Denmark, a new water

treatment plant was completed in 2001. The plant services also the neighbouring areas and industry. So far, ca. 5,7 million EUR has been spent on the project that is co-financed by the help of Finland, Denmark, PHARE, the budget of the

republic of Estonia, NEFCO loan and Keila's own resources.

The water system upgrading project is continued. If everything goes as planned, the first investments can be made in 2007. For Keila, it means 5,5 million EUR from the European Union's

Cohesion Fund. Keila will probably be the first town in Estonia to be wholly covered by a common water and sewage system. More people will get new homes and their quality of life will improve. And that is what attracts more enterprises to Keila.

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BALTIC TOURISM FOR A BETTER LIVING QUALITY



Relaxing and breathing in lungful of fresh sea air, swimming and walking, looking at ships and eating fresh Baltic Sea fish, admiring huge churches or finding out more about the state and its people... Visitors to the Hanseatic city of Rostock and its seaside resort of Warnemünde can do it all.

The inhabitants of the largest town in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern enjoy



Rostock offers variety of attractions for visitors and inhabitants

our seaside resort and impressive coastal scenery, Sunday shopping and a fascinating city centre oozing with North German atmosphere. More than one million overnight visitors appreciate these features every year, not to mention one-day visitors who stroll in the fine weather through the city centre and the resort of Warnemünde. From imposing cruisers to spa concerts, from deep-sea fishing to the theatre and New Year spectacle at the lighthouse: our resort

on the Baltic Sea offers a variety of attractions. Warnemünde has become one of the most important Baltic ports for international cruise liners. There'll be a good 100 of them in 2006, from club ships to luxury sailing ships. That's more than 100.000 tourists from Canada, Japan, the USA and Great Britain, bringing the hum of foreign voices to Warnemünde and the city. It is these elegant ships, larger than Warnemünde's fishermen's

houses that draw onlookers time and again. Every weekend Warnemünde is packed with a this colourful mixture of locals and foreigners. Strolling around Rostock city center is getting ever more eventful and attractive for pedestrians too. Ancient and modern buildings have grown together harmoniously. Thus the 400-year-old Steintor has again crept towards the medieval city walls. Clinker bricks characterise the architecture of the new "harbour terraces", which fit in well with the historical image of Rostock city harbour. Locals and tourists can enjoy not merely the view over the Warnow river here. Racy sailing boats, passenger vessels, windjammers and museum ships conjure up a maritime atmosphere, particularly during the annual Hanse Sail in August.

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Tampere Region, the second largest region in Finland with approx. 440 000 inhabitants, is a modern concentration of industry, commerce, services, research and education. The city of Tampere is the largest inland centre in the Nordic countries. Tampere has been an industrial pioneer in Finland from the very beginning in late 1700s, and still continues as "number one" Finnish industrial city with its strong mechanical engineering and automation cluster. It has shown remarkable capability of transforming from old industrial city into modern ICT and bio technology industries centre. Versatile research and education and cooperation between companies and universities have maintained and further developed the competitiveness of the region's all industry fields, and turn it into the fastest growing area in Finland.



THE TRUE HEART OF FINLAND

Tampere International Business Office (TIBO) was established in June 2004 and its run by Professia Ltd. The goal of TIBO is to fulfil the vision – "Tampere Region to become one of the world's most attractive operating environments for knowledge intensive businesses and residential environments for experts". The starting point for TIBO's strategy is to support the existing strong clusters (mechanical engineering and automation, ICT, health and biotechnology) by attracting foreign companies which can strengthen these clusters. Besides, TIBO focuses on rousing the existing companies to invest more in the region. The strategy is built on the the needs expressed by the representatives of these key clusters and based on the partnerships with selected foreign regions. At the local level TIBO actively discusses with the business and academia representatives to serve the local needs.

The marketing actions abroad are mainly done in close cooperation with the local companies and research institutions to be able to contact the right companies and find the right expertise. The focused marketing actions demand careful planning and preparation before, and thus the number of these are quite limited per year. The regions, with which TIBO cooperates, are selected on the basis of the expertise and with the help of the Tampere Region EU-office in Brussels, which has been actively searching and contacting the potential regions. Thus, the main emphasis has been on the EU member countries. Russia, St. Petersburg area, and India, Pune area have been of interest for TIBO, too. Emerging areas at the moment include the Baltic Rim region. The selected strategy for TIBO based on the expertise of the region has proven to be successful. During its first year of operation, it has exceeded the set targets.

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CITY OF OPPORTUNITIES



Kaunas has the highest number of universities and schools of higher learning in Lithuania. It also has the biggest textiles, food and beverages, electronics, chemicals, and pharmacy factories all established here – all of which provide Kaunas with massive potential and opportunity; real opportunity provided by investment in sites and services for stimulating new investors. One example is Technopolis - a centre of technology and knowledge-based business enterprise and research with total investment expected to be almost 500 million litas. At the same time as increasing the tangible sights (and sites) and services, we are concentrating on simplifying all necessary financial and administrative systems as much as possible to make the process of starting business here in Kaunas as easy and as stress-free as possible. A new and realised system which serves as a tool

for business and investment support services based on Geographic Information System - a 'free of charge' system to improve the quality, variety and accessibility of the public services for businesses. Our ideal geographical position puts us at the crossing point of the Via-Baltica and IX B highways, connecting cities from Helsinki, to Warsaw, and linking Klaipeda on the Baltic Sea to Russia. The Kaunas airport is also the biggest international cargo airport in the Baltics. The airport also provides low cost airline flights to many major European cities. Increased flights mean we have a huge potential to attract many more international visitors here and we have invested in this through increasing and improving our tourist sites and attractions and, more importantly, thinking of innovative ways in which to communicate and market them. There have been some clear benefits of joining



Kaunas - Karolinus Road

forces and cooperating with other cities such as the promotion of Hansa City days on and around our 15th Century Town Hall Square and regular twin town initiatives. Engaging with citizens to make the growth of the city relevant and attractive to them is the way forward; if this works we will have over 340,000 local ambassadors for Kaunas!

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TOWARDS GREATER COMPETITIVENESS



During the last years numerous changes took place in the Baltic Sea region which are among other things related to the EU enlargement. The changes are also quite evident in the city of Liepāja.

The port of Liepāja has always been like a bridge between east and west and nowadays is trying to be considered as a hub ports in the Baltic Sea. Today the port of Liepāja fulfils all conditions to become a growing centre of logistics and development. One of the latest investment projects is Dan Store dry bulk cargo terminal which was officially opened in September 2005. One of the owners of company Dan Store is the world scale company Bunge – the world's leading agriculture and food processing company with experience in global trading and

that is great achievement to have such a company operating in our port.

One of the key issues of considering Liepāja as their place of investment Poul Schroeder, Bunge European Region Director, mentioned its geographical position in the centre of the Baltic port infrastructure and management as well as proximity to the rapidly growing centre of agriculture and grain cultivation.

Since 3 October the new Liepāja webpage is available for everyone. It is designed according to the main principles of portal which besides already existing electronic services will allow for municipality to implement several new electronic services for internet users until 2007. The information provided on the webpage is available in four languages – Latvian, Russian, English and German and is set up in seven basic sections where

visitors can find information regarding city, culture, tourism, entertainment, business, society and local government. Here you can find also the latest statistics of different spheres, useful information about investment climate. Tourists and other visitors may appreciate the electronic map of the city and other information regarding entertainment. Since the opening of new webpage www.liepaja.lv it has been visited by people from over 50 different countries.

Taking into consideration importance of information starting from the next year visitors will have an opportunity to subscribe for monthly newsletter.

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In the last two years, the Land of Chojnice has become more and more popular and competitive among other regions of Pomorskie Province, whilst maintaining constant dynamic growth.

All development-oriented actions taken by the Town Hall, such as modernising of the town centre or the sewage recycling plant, upgrading main roads, constructing of the Water Park and the soccer stadium, restoring the former hospital buildings, are directly targeted at further social and economic growth. These investment projects were partly covered by the EU funds. With the help of Chojnice County, in order to attract prospect investors, a branch of the Pomeranian Special Economic Zone was created. It is the area of ca. 37 acres, adjacent to its sister zone in the county of Człuchów. The argument in favour the zone is its location and easy connection with other parts

DYNAMIC CHOJNICE

of the Province via the 22 international road from Kaliningrad in Russia to Berlin. The zone is situated 2,5 miles from the Customs Office and the railroad station. The main Polish ports – Gdansk and Gdynia, and the Lech Walesa International Airport are just 75 miles away.

Chojnice's Town Council has passed a packet of resolutions called "Chojnice's Preferences for Industry, Trade and Service". These resolutions favour active entrepreneurs who already run successful businesses in our town, or are about to start up. Prospect investors also have quite large resources of highly qualified labour force to choose from. A well-developed system of vocational training in the schools offers a possibility of getting useful skills, depending on the investors' needs. There are also two high learning schools in the town, which allow for a choice of professionals in such fields a

s pedagogy, economy, mechanics, IT, marketing and management.

The leading branches of economy in Chojnice are metal, wood and furniture, food and construction industries. Chojnice has attracted capital from Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Effective promoting of economy, tourism, culture and sport has contributed to even bigger success of the town. Our business community perfectly understands the town's development mission of the town and actively supports the promotional activities. For example, a lucrative contract between Mostostal and Finnish manufacturer of gantries, KCI Konecranes, was signed on 20 October 2005, in the presence of two ski jump stars, Robert Mateja and Janne Ahonen.

Superb neighbourhood of Chojnice, with its nature and ever-growing tourist and sport base, helps tourism to constantly grow and expand. The Town Development Program has already started bringing results such as increase in employment.

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Robert Mateja and Janne Ahonen cut the symbolic ribbon at the opening of the new technological line at Mostostal at Chojnice.



IN HARMONY WITH THE NATURE



Founded 450 years ago on the River Kokemäenjoki, the city of Pori has traditionally been a Finnish industrial and port city that has rapidly transformed itself into a city of students. The city business plan is based on the principles of sustainable development.



Alluvial shores of Preiviikki bay - important areas for wading birds
Photo: Matti Riihimäki

The most notable natural areas of Pori are located in coastal Meri-Pori. Even in international terms, the Kokemäenjoki delta, Preiviikki bay and the Yyteri peninsula form a unique complex, where natural areas of botanical, geological and scenic value as well as waters rich in birdlife are concentrated in a small geographical zone. The Kokemäenjoki delta and Preiviikki bay are the most important areas of Pori represented in the European Union NATURA 2000 environmental protection network.

We have successfully founded a way how to develop ports and industrial areas in harmony with valuable natural areas. Pori region is one of the country's largest and most important industrial areas rich in the production of timber and paper products, chemical and metal

production, research and development. Near Port we can show good areas for industry, which is willing to fulfil our environmental demands. Port has taken part into New Hansa project and we are heading to sustainable and environmental friendly harbour. The Port is divided into three separate deep water harbours and has the ability to manage any size vessel entering the Baltic waters. In harbour area we have also room for wind energy. Present Wind Park is second largest in Finland and next year its production will double. We can also offer a place for the offshore Wind Park at least size of 45 MW.

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COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF KLAIPEDA

Povilas Vasiliauskas, Chairman of Klaipeda City Council Committee of Strategic Development, Chairman of the Board of Klaipeda Free Economic Zone Management Company, says that the Lithuanian port city Klaipeda stands out from other towns for two main reasons: ice-free port and the only operating free economic zone in the country. Klaipeda is a safe place for investment and a convenient place to live.

These two circumstances make a favourable impact on the possibilities of Klaipeda competitiveness. The Free Economic Zone attracts foreign and Lithuanian investors with different privileges, the port – with a possibility to transport cargo all year round.

P. Vasiliauskas emphasizes that while selecting a Lithuanian town for investment, general business environment plays a very important role. Klaipeda offers political continuity and stability in the city political management for more than ten years which makes a pleasant impression on many. Both investors and other businesses in Klaipeda can easily make prognoses of their future perspectives. Instead

of staging political battles, the local government concentrates on improving general business environment and the city's economy.

Klaipeda city politicians always cooperate with the national government on constructive basis - despite changes in the Government leadership, they usually manage to find the necessary form of a dialogue.

Klaipeda has its own vision for the future of the city - the plans for its strategic development have been created and confirmed. According to P. Vasiliauskas, these plans are under successful implementation, and that is a proof of the local government's resolution, activity and constructiveness. For many years in succession the city budget has also been successfully fulfilled, its means are allocated not just for common improvement of the living environment, but for the development of various infrastructure projects. All that is a strong and positive signal for investors.



Povilas Vasiliauskas,
Chairman of Klaipeda
City Council Committee of
Strategic Development

Mr Vasiliauskas is convinced that Klaipeda is a good place not only because of geographical reasons. Indeed, it is a wonderful spot for the development of

logistics, business, as well as it is attractive for living and recreation. Enquiries show that about 90% of the citizens are glad that they live in Klaipeda. The city itself and the suburbs on the Baltic Sea coastline near Klaipeda are very popular among Lithuanians and foreigners as summer resorts. More and more often these days they are selected by the klaipeditians for permanent residence. Klaipeda is able to supply highly educated and skilled, young labour force that satisfies the demands of the investors.

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Koszalin is an important and economically active business centre in northern Poland, offering preferential terms for investing. The City is located on the E-28 transit route connecting Berlin and Kaliningrad and S-11 connecting Koszalin with the south of Poland.

Since 2003 the City hosts the "Koszalin" Complex of the Slupsk Special Economic Zone (SSEZ), in which attractive and preferential conditions for investing have been created for the time of functioning of the "Koszalin" Complex, i.e. until 2017. Considering a great interest on the part of investors, activities aiming at extending the Complex by the next investment areas have been undertaken. The City plans to widen the SSEZ for about 40 ha, to create the conditions for new investments in the close future. Also, the Chinese Industrial



CITY WITHOUT BARRIERS

Centre (CIC) is being established in the Complex.

CIC is believed to be the first and the only industrial zone in the EU, owned by Chinese capital. The CIC was created for prospect Chinese investors who will be conducting business activity in the scope of production of electronic equipment, household articles, as well as the engineering. At present investment work at building of the first Chinese bicycle production plant is in progress.

Moreover, there was established the Business Centre (BC) in Koszalin, gathering at one place various institutions such as banks and organizations conducting activity for business and entrepreneurship promotion and for winning both national and foreign investors. Its mission - "well economically established region without any

communicative and administrative barriers between national and international business Partners" (more information: www.cb.koszalin.pl)

Koszalin has also taken further activities to stimulate its competitiveness. These are: The Koszalin Industrial Park (the Science-Technology Theme Park), which is being commissioned now, with the surface area of 11 ha, to be fully provided with necessary facilities and supplies for implementation of investments and activities aiming at reactivation of the Zegrze Pomorskie airport.

Koszalin is very engaged in improving its local infrastructure to become more competitive for investors. The amount of money for the infrastructure, gained from EU-projects in 2005 is about 5.400.000 PLN, which is nearly 12.8% of City budget as allocated to that aim.

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Umeå is one of the newest and fastest growing cities in Sweden. The average age of the 110.000 people who live in Umeå is 37. Efforts are also made to develop Umeå even more - the goal is to pass the 150.000 figure before 2050. The city offers world-class art, drama, films, industries, music and research. It aims to attract more companies, break new construction records and, not least, become the cultural capital for 2014. Umeå has been expanding for several



Umeå attracts new entrepreneurs and well-known companies

FAST TRACK OF UMEÅ

decades. Growth really speeded up in 1965, the same year that the university opened up its doors. Obviously, there is a connection. Education provides skills, which attracts companies that in turn, attract more people. In the last 30 years, housing in Umeå has doubled and this rate of growth continues. 700 to 800 new apartments are constructed each year

Umeå university gives priority to and is keen to develop many different areas of research. These include life sciences (especially medical and cell and the molecular biology of plants), human technology interaction, social welfare, ecology and gender perspectives. The Umeå University works collaboratively with companies such as ABB, Volvo, Skanska, Ericsson, and Ohrlings Pricewaterhouse-Coopers. *And there is going to be more* - says Christina Skogsberg, one of the heads of Umeå University's new Centre for Business and Society.

Another center for world class research is the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Umeå. Take for instance the Umeå Plant Science Center. The cooperation between this university and the Umeå University, carries research into tree genes which can lead to a whole new forest industry.

Six reasons for setting up business in our city are: high level of education, skilled labour, few traffic jams, closeness to everything and plenty of leisure opportunities. Add to this a growth rate of 2,4 per cent and you have several reasons why the city attracts both new entrepreneurs and well-known companies.

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PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN CESIS

Today public private partnership plays a very important role in the overall economic development of the city or whole country. In fact, this kind of partnership has allowed implementing notable infrastructure projects in many countries all over the world. The Cesis Municipality tries to find best ways in cooperation with local entrepreneurs who not only take thoughts about profit-making but feel responsible for the community or support for solutions of different problems. Celebrating its 800th anniversary Cesis looks back in eventful history and sets targets for successful development in the future. One of the priorities of Cesis is tourism, especially cultural tourism attracting more and more visitors every year



Director of Latvian Investment and Development Agency Mr. Andris Ozols (on the left) and Mr. Gints Skenders, Mayor of Cesis, signing agreement on PPP.

and brings in certain benefits. As the Municipality does not have enough resources for cultural activities as well as for renovation of infrastructure, here local entrepreneurs can play ever more relevant role. As we do not have long experience in implementation of PPP projects in our country, four municipalities signed five agreements on the pilot projects in small cities, two of them will be implemented in Cesis. In recent years Cesis has achieved a high rate of development. Although we upgraded streets, renovated schools, built new sport complex, and started building a new school, the needs are still big. For that reason private public partnership is good mechanism for sustainable development of the city. Cesis signed an agreement with the Latvian Investment and Development

Agency to develop two pilot projects – street repair in Old Town and building a new kindergarten. 300 children are waiting for new premises. It is no longer possible to postpone solving those problems. The city has started negotiations with external experts who will work out a PPP model here in Latvia as the State does not have such experience. It is hoped that several projects will follow up. Most important gain from PPP is solving actual problems for the city by involving private investment and relieving stress on the municipal budget. This is essential impetus for development of entrepreneurship, consequently more work places will be established as PPP projects will be implemented by local entrepreneurs. As a result regional development and sustainability will be strengthened and Cesis will be attractive city not only for visitors but also for further investments.

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POWERFUL VAASA

The Vaasa region on the west coast of Finland is a dynamic region with excellent prerequisites for business. Trade traditions and a remarkable entrepreneurial spirit equip the region with a strong will to succeed.

The international energy cluster is the leading engine of the industry in the region. Of 6.800 enterprises in the region, more than 800 are energy technology companies. Characteristic of the region are extensive subcontractor networks that are also vital for the large international companies' operations. A number of educational institutions and research units ensure top-level competence also in the future. An essential factor in the development of the region and in making it increasingly more competitive is cooperation. The Vaasa Region Development Company, owned by 10 municipalities in the Vaasa region, was founded to act as a driving force behind cooperation and

networking. The company creates power through cooperation by convening the municipalities, educational institutions, research units and enterprises for discussion. These collaborate through and with the company to achieve the common goal – development.

Experiences show that the Vaasa Region Development Company does indeed fill the previously open position as an energetic engine for development. A competitive environment is not created over night but rather needs time and, most importantly, will. A central task for the company is to promote regional business and market the skills and competence of the region. In addition, the company functions as a gateway to the region by assisting foreign companies in establishing operations and connecting with local networks. The Vaasa region is a pleasant environment to live, study and work in. The natural beauty of the landscape by the sea attracts new inhabitants and also tourists to the region.



Inexpensive housing and numerous job opportunities topped with short distances – everything is within a 20 minutes' drive from your home – give the region a competitive edge as regards quality of life. The city of Vaasa draws a great number of students to study in the bilingual (Finnish and Swedish) environment, which gives the city a young and energetic atmosphere.

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Already for the fifth time businessmen and politicians from Poland and abroad have met in Gdynia to promote Poland as an attractive business partner. Why Gdynia? What is the source of the city's attractiveness? Undoubtedly it is Gdynia's quality mark, and her exceptionally favourable location at the cross-roads of two Pan-European transportation corridors.

Undoubtedly, it is also the city's economic potential, well-educated people, modern infrastructure as well as a wide range of offered services and good recreational facilities. There is an extra bonus - in Gdynia you will find the best schools, a highly qualified workforce, and an absorptive market.

Gdynia's dynamism is reflected in almost every field of activity. The residents' entrepreneurial spirit and the steady and uninterrupted development of the city attract like a magnet. Gdynia was the first city in Poland to launch, on the international scale, a promotional campaign dating back as far as the year 2001. The September 2005

ATTRACTIVE GDYNIA

summit was already the fifth one. For two days between 22-23 September during the International Economic Forum over five hundred representatives of Polish and foreign economic and political circles discussed crucial development issues. The Forum is a successor of Gdynia's Investment Forums – *Thinking of investing - think Gdynia*. The four international investment forums previously held in Gdynia had been attended by representatives of international consultancies, the largest developers and major companies from the region.

The International Economic Forum Gdynia 2005 brought together representatives of major Polish and regional companies, banks and financial institutions, local and regional authorities, diplomats and experts, as well as Chinese businessmen who want to do business in Poland. The significance of the Forum went beyond our continent. The themes of the Forum were aimed at bringing to the attention of our companies the importance and opportunities offered by the Far East markets especially in the fields of maritime economy, finance



International Economic Forum Gdynia 2005

and tourism. After the first day's plenary session three panels were held. The first one focused on new markets, including the Far East and China in particular, in the context of broadly understood maritime economy; the second one covered finance for small and medium sized enterprises, and the third one tourism – especially in the Baltic Sea Region.

Our challenge was to advertise Gdynia's qualities abroad and to attract foreign businesses.

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HONEST BUSINESS IN KÄRDLA



With the population of 3800, Estonian Kärđla is a small city on Hiiumaa Island. People earn their living both in the public or private sectors. As the life on Hiiumaa is very enjoyable, many local people have established here companies, which give work to many people. The citizens of Hiiumaa prefer safe and stable life in every sense of the meaning. Is our



M&P Nurst. Most of owners of private companies in Kärđla are local residents

city attractive? Of course it is. There is plenty of empty land. No skyscrapers, big supermarkets or spa-hotels. Yet, the nature is untouched, there are many forests, nature paths, bird-watching towers and secure living environment.

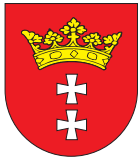
Living on the island has is very specific. Transport to the island and away from it takes time and resources. Big city centers are far from here. International investors think often long before coming to Hiiumaa. Many of them do not come at all, because the profitability could be smaller than in some other places. Hiiumaa is for those who appreciate other values than money only. Those values are clean nature, honest people and secure environment. People, including tourists are coming to Hiiumaa to rest, away from the riots of a big city. They have often a feeling that when they are sitting in a plane in Tallinn or in a ferry in Rohuküla harbour all worries will stay on the other side of the sea and they will arrive in the

paradise.

It is a good place to live and to work here. No organized crime. Hard-working residents are sincere and honest. Even today car doors can stay unlocked during visit to shop, because you know that nobody will steal your car or valuables from the car. Kärđla was named in years 2000 – 2003 the safest city in Estonia. From business fields plastic and forest industry and tourism are mainly represented. Most of owners of private companies are local persons but we also have joint ventures and companies which are based on foreign capital. Quite common is that products go abroad. So almost every entrepreneur has or wishes to have partner or partners from abroad.

The investors are welcome on the Hiiumaa.

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Gdańsk is a city whose nature has for centuries been determined by its strategic location on the crossroads of the European trade routes, as well as an open approach to changes and the entrepreneurial spirit of its inhabitants. Emphasising the city's European roots the city authorities embark on various actions to meet the challenges of the new united Europe. To that aim they pursue broad-scale investments to upgrade the quality of the infrastructure and the living standards of the local population to the level represented by other cities of the European Union. This is reflected in the share of the investment spending in the total municipal expenditure. The authorities also introduce organisational and legal changes to accelerate investment processes in the city. The city reaches for



Gdansk, Długi Targ Street

SPACE FOR DEVELOPMENT

various financial instruments e.g. loans and municipal bonds. In order to secure relatively cheap sources of finance the authorities have the city assessed for its creditworthiness by independent and objective rating agencies. Since 2000 the assessment has been entrusted to the international rating agencies of Standard and Poor's and Fitch Rating. Since 2000 Gdańsk has also retained the long-term domestic and foreign currency credit rating of BBB with the projections remaining stable. In line with the development-oriented municipal policy in 2004 the City passed the resolution to

offer a hundred percent exemption from the property tax to entrepreneurs developing production and services in IT, telecommunications, electronics, biotechnology and industrial control systems, provided that while creating or

expanding their business they create at least five new jobs.

The city authorities also took another initiative. They have called a competition for the *Gdańsk Koga award* and the *Leader of Enterprise in Gdansk* title. The idea behind the initiative is to promote creative and dynamically developing SMEs in the city. Particular recognition is given to businesses based on the principles of honesty and reliability in business and customer relations. The winners are granted a number of promotional benefits and preferential participation reserved in trade fair events organised by International Gdańsk Fairs SA. Whoever chooses to locate his/her business in Gdańsk can be sure to find favourable climate and space for development here.

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Szczecin-Świnoujście Bi-Port, strategically positioned at the mouth of the Oder River, performs a significant role in the BSR. The port's central location in the BSR makes it one of the major market centres in the region and in Poland. Its direct availability to the Polish, German and European waterway system provides suppliers a more competitive transportation cost structure with complete intermodal connectivity and adjacent real estate available for development. The port itself is the best-kept secret for those seeking to move goods fast and cost-effectively via water, air, truck or rail.

The economic results place both ports among the strongest competitors in the sector. As the biggest Polish bulk cargo handling centre, also servicing Panamax type vessels, ferries and Ro-Ro vessels, Świnoujście port offers most modern ferry terminals in the BSR. One of the major investment projects in the bi-port is

COMPETITIVE EDGE

currently development of the distribution and logistics center.

According to the plan, a distribution and logistic centre will be built on 30 hectare land situated along Hryniewieckiego and Kujota Streets, the main transportation route in the immediate vicinity of the transshipment facilities for conventional general cargo, and a container base on the Ostrów Grabowski Island, currently under construction. In 2004–2006, the Szczecin and Świnoujście Seaports Authority, implementing the investment, will provide land improvement and infrastructure necessary for the functioning of the Centre. The implementation plan includes the construction of roads, car parks for trucks, together with utility facilities, railway tracks, transformer stations and 15 kV MV and 0.4 kV LV electricity supply lines, lighting of internal roads, telecommunication ducts, rainwater drains and sanitary sewage system.

The comprehensive investment will make the port's offer more attractive, improve conditions for cargo handling

and storage, create possibilities for developing professional distribution, as well as improve client service by introducing electronic cargo identification and tracing. Connections between the Logistics Centre, container terminal and a well-established, common road system will strengthen functionality of the two investment projects. The construction of the Centre will be financed through the Sectoral Operational Programme – Transport for 2004 – 2006. At the moment, talks are underway with PKP Cargo to include railway sites in the Distribution and Logistics Centre, together with the existing railway tracks. The tracks will constitute a basis of developing an intermodal terminal with storage yards, warehouses and railway transshipment equipment.

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II. UBC TODAY

VIII GENERAL CONFERENCE TOWARDS A NEW BALTIC SEA AGENDA

Over 270 participants from 67 UBC member cities including guests from governments and organisations gathered at the VIII UBC General Conference in Turku, Finland, to discuss the challenges which the Baltic Sea Region faces nowadays as well as to think of the future role of the UBC.

The theme of the Conference was *Towards a New Baltic Agenda*. The first two days 29 and 30 September were full of various presentations devoted to this issue. The third day, 1 October, was dominated by the UBC internal matters like elections, fees, budget etc.

Keynote speakers

Traditionally, conference participants were warmly welcomed by the Mayor of the hosting city of Turku - Mr Armas Lahoniitty. Moreover, Mr Pertti Paasio, Chairman of Turku City Council conveyed on behalf of the Prime Minister of Finland Mr Matti Vanhanen a greetings to the General Conference. Also, the Prime Minister of Estonia, Mr Andrus Ansip delivered the address to the GC presented by Ms Laine Jänes, Mayor of Tartu. The Conference was opened by the UBC President Mr Per Bødker Andersen.

The main theme of the Conference was discussed from many different points of view. The honorable speakers presented many aspects of the Baltic Sea Region development. Among the lecturers there were: Mr Pavel Telicka, European Coordinator for Rail Baltica, Ms Elisabeth Helander, Director, European Commission, DG Regional Policy, Carl Cederschiöld, Mayor Emeritus (Stockholm), Mr Viktor Surikov, Mayor of Kronshtadt, Mr Emilio D'Alessio, Vice-Mayor of the City of Ancona. The Conference hosted guests from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda whose representative Mr Stephen Kabuye, Chairman of Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Cooperation, submitted address on behalf of LVRLAC.

The participants could contribute to the general discussion more directly by taking part in forums which were held concurrently during the second day of the conference: 1. Maritime Logistics Corridors in the BSR 2. Promoting Human Contacts in the BSR 3. BSR Cities and the EU Budget Framework 4. BSR Cities and the New Neighbourhood Policies 5. Active and Attractive City:



VIII UBC General Conference, Sigyn Hall, Turku

physical activity promotes wellbeing 6. LVRLAC - UBC Cooperation Forum. After the forums, concluding reports were presented to the audience.

Memorandum of Understanding

During the closing plenary, the UBC endorsed the Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy for the Baltic Sea Region signed by 15 major Baltic ports and port cities. This document's aim is to ensure the common environmental practices at the ports dealing with ships' emissions to the air, handling of waste and managing waste waters.

General Assembly

The General Assembly was opened by President Andersen who submitted the report on UBC activities during the period October 2003 - September 2005. The President thanked the outgoing Vice-Presidents, - Mr Armas Lahoniitty, Mr Arno Poeker and Mr Gundars Bojars, for their outstanding contribution to the UBC success. Subsequently, the representatives of the UBC Commissions and Networks presented reports and action plans to the assembly.

UBC Finances

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, presented the auditor's report on UBC accounts for 2003-2004, prepared by the licensed auditing company BILANS from Gdansk. The report confirmed that the Union financial transactions and records have been handled properly. The conference approved as well the Executive Board proposal for the UBC budget and membership fees for 2006 and 2007. Additionally, Mr Bartłomiej Sochanski, Szczecin, outgoing member of the Board of Audit, presented the report of the Board of Audit. The conference elected and welcomed the new members of the UBC Board of Audit - Ms Ewa Back, Mayor of Sundsvall, Sweden, Ms Marta Chełkowska, Vice-Mayor of Leba, Poland and Ms Silvia Loebner, Head of Audit Department, Wismar, Germany.

Elections

The General Conference elected Mr Per Bødker Andersen as President of the Union, Ms Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor of Umea, as first Vice-President of the Union, Mr Aleksi Randell, Chairman of City Board, Turku and Ms Laine Jänes, Mayor of Tartu, as Vice-Presidents of the Union. The Conference elected the new UBC Executive Board as well.

Next Conference

President Andersen presented the proposal of the resolution from the VIII UBC General Conference which was unanimously adopted by the conference. The effects of works of the Union within the next two-year period will be evaluated during the IX General Conference which will be held in the City of Pärnu, Estonia, in 2007. Mr Armas Lahoniitty handed over the UBC flag to Mr Mart Viisitamm, Deputy Mayor of Pärnu, wishing Pärnu a successful conference in 2007.

The full report from the VIII General Conference is available on the UBC website: www.ubc.net



THE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD GOES TO KAUNAS

The winner of the Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2005 is the City of Kaunas from Lithuania with the practice Modernization of the public transport network in Kaunas City. The practice is a good mix of many medium-sized actions based on the city master plan adopted in 2003. The renewed bus and trolleybus fleet reduces gas emissions according



The Environmental Award Ceremony (from left to right): Mr Mindaugas Kucinovas, Kaunas, Mr Mikko Jokinen, Co-chair of UBC EnvCom, Mr Per Bødker Andersen, President of UBC, Mr Eligijus Dzezulskis-Duonys, Kaunas.

to the European standards. The city of Kaunas is modernizing the public transport and modifying its route layout. Microbuses and taxi vans operated by private companies are integrated in the same control system with municipal transport, which improves co-ordination of public transport. The route mapping and management are regularly modified according to analysis of the up-to-date passenger flows. This allows better timetable management and customers' service.

As an incentive for customers, Kaunas has introduced a new and comprehensive ticketing system covering all modes of public transport. The customer needs only one ticket to use the public transport network. As an additional incentive the new vehicles provide a more comfort and convenience. The vehicles have lower floors and mobility ramps; they also allow greater access and mobility to disabled people, the elderly and those with pushchairs and prams.

The modernization process has already reached concrete results: 60 % of the citizens use the public transport and the air quality in the city has improved significantly. Furthermore, renewal of vehicle fleet improves convenience of traveling and increases status of public transport systems. The practice is a convincing example of an effective public-private partnership, as the public transport network is complemented with private services, such as taxi vans and microbuses.

Kaunas received the Baltic Cities Environmental Award 2005 on the occasion of the VIII General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities in Turku, Finland 30 September 2005.

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED

UBC endorsed the Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy for the Baltic Sea Region on 30 September 2005 during its VIII General Conference in Turku, Finland. On the same occasion, the memorandum was signed by 15 major Baltic ports and port cities.

The Memorandum of Understanding creates the basis for common environmental practices in all ports on the Baltic. It is a voluntary agreement on common environmental practices dealing with ships' air emissions, handling of waste and managing the waste water. This is an important and practical contribution for better living environments in the port cities, as well as for improving the condition of the Baltic Sea. Through the Memorandum cities are committed to encourage their port administrations to implement measures for reducing air emissions from shipping and to harmonize their technical facilities and procedures for waste and waste water management and noise abatement with other port cities. Correspondingly, the ports engage themselves to effectuate these measures and practices to reduce

environmental impacts. Ship owners' task is to contribute to new procedures by using the best available technology. The signatories include cities and ports from all around the Baltic Sea, for example the city and port of Stockholm, city and port of Turku, port of Rostock and Szczecin and Swinoujscie Seaports. All other Baltic ports, port cities, shipping companies and stakeholders are now welcome to sign the Memorandum.

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, UBC President addressed the participants on the occasion of the signing ceremony by saying how important the Memorandum initiative is. He told how the UBC has supported the initiative of the Baltic Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy already for several years. The Memorandum is the result of the New Hansa of Sustainable Ports and Cities Project. The future actions include the Memorandum follow-up conference, which will be organised by Stockholm in

2007. The Commission on Environment Secretariat will monitor the improvements made at the ports and cities, and will report at the Stockholm Conference on Sustainable Ports and Port Cities in 2007. The UBC environmental team will also promote the memorandum and organise gathering of more signatories.

The New Hansa of Sustainable Ports and Cities project is part of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 - Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities. It is co-funded by the European Commission Baltic Sea Region Interreg III B Programme and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment.



Memorandum Partners

Further information:

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43RD EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING AT CHOJNICE

There are two strands today in the UBC – one aiming at common Baltic policy towards Brussels and the other one - to keep the organisation tightly together – concluded the members of the 43rd UBC Executive Board Meeting. This time the Board met on 11 June 2005 at Chojnice, Poland, upon the invitation of the Mayor Arseniusz Finster.

The meeting was dominated by the organisational matters related to the VIII UBC General Conference in Turku, Finland, as well as by the UBC European policy. Additionally, the discussion devoted to the UBC future development was held.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski, Turku, informed the Board about the speakers invited to present the keynote speeches during the General Conference. Before the Board Meeting, the preliminary invitations to the GC have been sent out to the member and non member cities, international organisations and to the speakers.

President Per Bødker Andersen

reminded that UBC together with other Baltic organisations sent to the European Commission the joint statement on the objective 3 of the reformed cohesion policy from 2007. The statement emphasizes the fact that the cross-border cooperation in the BSR may be severely harmed if the limit of 150 km for maritime border is introduced. However, the

European Commission replied that it intended to introduce 150 km threshold for the cross-border strand. The Board members informed that they urged respective ministers to take up this issue during negotiations on new cohesion policy 2007-2013. The Board concluded that the lobbying on this issue must be continued.

The working group on UBC future development consisting of: Mikko Lohikoski (Turku, chair), Lillian

Westerberg (Stockholm), Ingemann Olsen (Kolding), Ina Sidlauskienė (Klaipėda),



The UBC Board Meeting in Chojnice, 11 June 2005

Paweł Żaboklicki (UBC SG) presented the results of its work and recommendations. The WG suggested basically more active work of the UBC Commissions especially in connection with new financing possibilities as well as more frequent meetings

and thematic seminars. The WG agreed also that it is important to ensure a more effective UBC's presence in Brussels.

Last but not least, the Board discussed the candidates to the UBC Presidium and membership fees for 2006-2007. The Board maintained also its support to the Pärnu's (Estonia) proposal to hold the IX General Conference in 2007.

Further information:
www.ubc.net

THE CLOSING SEMINAR OF THE ABC PROJECT

The last seminar of the ABC Project was recently held in Malmö, Sweden. 50 architects and planners from eight different countries and 27 cities, gathered in a sunny and warm city of Malmö to participate in the five-day-seminar focusing on the theme: "Renewal of city districts – aspects of integration and Public Private Partnership in developing cities".

The essence of the ABC-seminars is the cooperation and the practical planning work which all participate in.



The new members (from left to right): Gvido Princis, Riga (chairman), Latvia, Sirpa Kallio, Helsinki, Finland, Gunilla Kronvall, Malmö, Sweden, Peter Hee, Kolding, Denmark, Lars-Göran Boström, Umeå, Sweden, Jonas Jakaitis, Vilnius, Lithuania

This was completed by two series of high-qualitative lectures treating the topic. As usual in the ABC Project, the seminar started off with an introduction to Malmö and the Swedish planning. The former was done both by a lecture and a tour around the city. Malmö was described as a dynamic but a complex growing town. This knowledge was also offered on the following day during the lectures on the theme of the social and physical integration, which is a very important question often discussed in the Swedish society. The lectures gave inspiring ideas to use in the practical city planning. Among other things they stressed the importance of using the local conditions as a starting-point when developing plans for the city. It was also highlighted how important it was with creativity, imagination and the need for less rigid perspectives on issues as integration and segregation.

During the afternoon the workshops started. Architects from the City Planning Office guided the participants in the present areas: Norra Sorgenfri and Limhamns Industrial Area and Harbour. The areas represent well the topics of the Malmö seminar.

The third day offered lectures on the theme of the Public Private Partnership from four different angles, and gave quite a lot information about how to build different kinds of partnership and the meaning for the city.

During the closing day, on 9 October, the workshop groups presented their ideas. The City Architect Agneta Hammer was one of the representatives from Malmö who picked up the ideas and pieces of advice offered by the participants.

It was the sixth and the closing seminar of the ABC Project. At the same time it was the end of a very successful project. It was also, hopefully, an inspiring starting point for possible future forms of cooperation based on the experiences from the ABC. During the last seminar day Lars Brattberg introduced the idea for a coming cooperation project: "A Baltic Academy of City Planning". During the closing day of the ABC seminar in Malmö, a new committee of the Commission on Urban Planning and Public Design was elected.

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ANNUAL MEETING AND CHANGE OF CHAIR

The Annual Meeting of the Commission on Transportation took place in Gdynia on 21 October 2005. The seminar on trolley bus systems was arranged. The focus of the annual meeting was the change of chairmanship within the Commission.

Since 2001 Lisa Sundell and the City of Göteborg has chaired the Commission on Transportation and during this time managed to build a stable network of 47 cities from 9 countries. The Commission worked to enable exchange of experiences and transfer of know-how by arranging seminars in Riga, Cesis, Tallinn, Paldaski, Kaunas, Örebro and Göteborg. The Commission has focused on three large areas in order to encourage



New Commission's Chairmen: Carinne Lancerau, Örebro - Deputy Chairman and Marcin

sustainable transport solutions: public transport, cycling and mobility management. The Commission has also worked to develop transnational projects and is currently involved in the BUSTRIP project together with the Commission on Environment.

To encourage more members and make the network more active, the leadership will now be shared between the City of Gdynia, taking the Chair of the Commission, and the City of Örebro taking the Deputy Chair. Marcin Wolek, the new Chairman, presented his ideas on strengthening the network in the future, increasing the co-operation between both cities and external partners, constructing and using a website as a cooperation and

information exchange platform, and close co-operation with other UBC Commissions to develop projects.

Regarding the future working areas for the Commission the both chairmen emphasized that this has to be formed together with the member cities. The new chairmen therefore welcome current and prospect members' ideas and proposals on how to develop the work in the future.

The retiring Chairman of the Commission on Transportation wishes the new Chairman and deputy Chairman the best of luck for the future activities within the Commission and thanks all the participants and the City of Gdynia for hosting the seminar and the Annual meeting.

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PUBLIC TRANSPORT SEMINAR ON TROLLEYBUS

On 20 October the UBC Commission on Transportation in cooperation with the CIVITAS TELLUS project organized in Gdynia the Public Transport Seminar on Trolleybus Systems. The place of the seminar was not accidental. Gdynia is an active city and has gained about 100 million EUR of European funds for significant infrastructure projects. It is also one of the three cities in Poland that has a trolleybus system. Moreover, it is the only one that is developing it rapidly.

Deputy Mayor of Gdynia Marek Stepa and Chairman of UBC Commission on Transport Lisa Sundell (City of Göteborg) opened the Seminar.

The first presentation was made by Marcel Rommerts representing European Commission, DG TREN. He underlined the role of clean and efficient public transport systems. In fact almost 80% of EU citizens live in urban areas. For better living conditions it is very important to secure a very high quality of public transport systems that would provide an alternative to individual car

users. He gave an example of Arnhem City where trolleybuses are part of an attractive urban image.

Guido Bruggeman presented the areas of activity of the EBRD. His analysis showed that there are 366 trolleybus systems in Europe, mostly in the developing countries outside the EU (ie. Russia, Ukraine, Romania). From his point of view cities sometimes have too many urban transport systems (ie. tramway, bus, trolleybus). This creates serious problems in fulfilling all of the investment needs and in strengthening competitiveness of the public transport system. Klas Sörensson (Skånetrafiken) and Leila Nielsen (Arriva) presented the process of building the first trolleybus system in Landskrona, Sweden. Three trolleybuses of Solaris/Ganz operate the line between the railway station and Landskrona city centre. Bernt Nielsen, Director of Public Transport of Göteborg titled his presentation as "Why did Göteborg not introduce trolleybuses?" He said that the strategic decision of the city was introducing



The Seminar participants

CNG fuel into the public transport. Main advantages of CNG are in his opinion lower emissions than traditional diesel engines, lower investment costs compared to the trolleybuses as well as the higher flexibility of services.

The second part of the seminar contained presentations of the cities that have a long experience in developing and maintaining trolleybus systems.

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CHANGES IN THE UBC IS COM

The meeting of the UBC Information Society Commission (UBC IS Com) was held on 27 October in St. Petersburg in Smolny (the City Government). The subject was "Participation of the cities in creation of integrated information space of the Baltic Sea Region".

The meeting was aimed at discussing the role in developing of the mutual interaction in the field of information society and information technologies between the UBC member cities. Another goal was specifying joint priority directions for further cooperation to ensure grounds for creation of long-term projects considering the preparation to the II World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society (Bilbao, 9-11 November, 2005).

Evgeny Tsivirko, chairman of the Committee on IT Innovations and Communications of the Government of St. Petersburg, became the new chair of the IS Com.

Within the course of the IS Com



Evgeny Tsivirko – Chair of the IS Com, Chairman of the IT Innovations and Communication, St. Petersburg

meeting the participants made their reports devoted to the state of art and main trends of development of the information society and IT in their cities. The participants have discussed perspective directions of cooperation within the IS Com framework.

In his report E.Tsivirko marked the potential and prospects of St. Petersburg in the international cooperation development in the BSR. He stressed the role of the UBC as the organization that appeared

to be the most important ground to take decisions. E. Tsivirko also highlighted the state of art of IT innovations in his city: *Information society processes in St.-Petersburg are objective processes ensuring formation and development of integrated economic space, that is mutually connected to trade markets functioning, markets of information and knowledge, capital and labour.* Evgeny Tsivirko suggested the participants of the meeting to take an active part in the Commission's activities. The joint Action Plan of the UBC IS Com for the year 2006 was adopted. Also, on 27 October Smolny hosted the meeting of the Senior Officials on Information Society of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

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NEW LEADER OF THE COMMISSION ON TOURISM

During the UBC General Conference in Turku in September 2005, the Commission on Tourism held a separate meeting at the Tourist Information Centre in Turku.

Mr Kyrre Dahl from Kalmar, Sweden, who has chaired the commission since 1999, decided to leave this position at the end of 2005. During the meeting in Turku the city of Koszalin in Poland was elected as a new leader. Koszalin, also called "the green city", annually has around 37 000 visitors coming for recreation or cultural events. 40% of the city area is covered by parks, green spots and forest. Koszalin chose to take over the leadership of the Commission to increase the



The UBC Commission on Tourism

understanding of the role of tourism in the united Europe. The city, which is located on the Baltic, is dependent on tourism development in the area and wishes to play an active role in the work of the UBC.

During the Swedish chairmanship, the ambitions of the commission have been: to increase the value and understanding of questions concerning tourism in the political system, to build a network of people working in the field of tourism, to develop activities in exchange, to focus on education and to be a helpful hand in initiating EU-projects.

In total, 47 cities around the BSR have been participating in the projects initiated within the Commission on Tourism. 17 projects have been initiated, dealing with tourism related issues in one way or another. Among the larger ones, above all two projects should be mentioned:

1. BSR Interreg III B Baltic Welcome Centre, which deals with the development of service and quality at tourist information centres. With a total budget of 1 500 000 Euro, partners from Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Norway, have worked

together for 3 years, developing quality guidelines for TIC:s in the region. Cities in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia and Poland have participated in the project with funding from the Phare and Tacis programmes.

2. BSR Interreg III B Ancientimes (Ancient Times) deals with making the common history of the BSR more alive. It is a pilot project on how to integrate culture, history, education and tourism in one concept. The project aims at developing cultural heritage sites into attractions, where the visitors not only learn about their history but also actively take part in the activities in an authentic environment. The total Interreg budget is 1 600 000 Euro and there are partners from Sweden, Germany, Denmark and Norway. Also in this project a Latvian city is participating within the Phare programme.

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ENVCOM DISCUSSED UBC AGENDA 21 IN SOPOT

The UBC Commission on Environment met in Sopot on 20-21 June. The meeting gathered good participation from all over the Baltic Sea Region. The main topic was the advancement of the thematic focus areas of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme.

The mayor of Sopot, Mr Karnowski, opened the meeting. He stressed the importance of UBC and especially its Commission on Environment for his city. He reminded that Sopot was one of the first members of UBC and that it takes part in the UBC Agenda 21 programme very actively.

UBC Secretary-General, Mr Pawel Żaboklicki and the co-chairs of the EnvCom, Mr Guldbrand Skjönberg and

Mr Mikko Jokinen, had acknowledged Sopot's successful work in environmental issues and mentioned the growing amount of traffic as a future challenge. Mr Żaboklicki acclaimed UBC EnvCom for its good work, in particular its successes in getting project funding. Mr Żaboklicki also transferred the regards of the executive board meeting that had acknowledged EnvCom's success in getting the whole 10 million Euros budget for Agenda 21 action programme 2004-2009 mobilised.

The meeting was also given a full report on UBC's policy liaison and contributions towards the EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. The Baltic Cities Sustainable Development Survey was reported on. It is a unique survey with

an answering rate of 72% and giving a thorough picture of sustainable urban development around the Baltic Sea.

The meeting also debated on several case presentations from member cities and studied local sustainability practices on excursions at Sopot. The next full-scale two-day meeting of the Commission on Environment will be organised in Lübeck in May 2006.

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COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

The meeting took place on 9 September 2005 in Norrtälje Campus Roslagen which is the centre for higher education in the area.

Kurt Pettersson, chairman of the commission, described the Research School taking place at Erken laboratory for the 5th summer in a row. Among the meeting members there is also a great desire to continue *the Meeting point of different cultures for youth in Hiiumaa* next year. There was a presentation from the Kvisthamra school regarding their Comenius project *Fairy tales and European history*. Children have cooperated with fellow students from Spain, Germany, Italy, France, and Romania. The project has been very successful and the school is now looking to apply for a new project. Among other things the students have done a theatre play, writing of their own books and learning about other fairy tales from all over Europe. Some persons have also visited the "pen-pals" in different countries during vacation with their families. This was followed by Lillian Westerberg from the Board of UBC who talked about the structure of the organization and her thoughts on how to find a more effective organization in the future.

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HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

It is the tradition of UBC Commission on Sport to award annual grants for the organisation of sporting events. While allocating the grants, the Commission takes into consideration various priorities being in accordance with topical tendencies. In 2005 the Commission on Sport paid special attention to sports projects promoting healthy lifestyle, which complied with the topic of the 10th Jubilee Annual Meeting of Commission on Sport, namely *Healthy Lifestyle through Sport*. The meeting was held this April in Klaipeda (Lithuania).

Healthy Lifestyle through Sport grants were awarded to raise awareness of the importance of sport as an integral element of healthy lifestyle and to promote healthy lifestyle practices, particularly in connection with sport. Their aim was to encourage people, especially the young, to lead a healthy lifestyle by playing sports as well as to reinforce importance of sports in maintaining health.

During this year's meeting the Commission allocated grants of total amount of 5 000 EUR

for the realisation of the following five sports projects:

1. Table Tennis a Way to Healthy Lifestyle, organised in Koszalin, Poland from May 15 to June 11, 2005 (awarded 1000 EUR)
2. Summer Beach Tournaments, organised in Gdynia (Poland) from June 27 to August 26, 2005 (awarded 1000 EUR)
3. Liepāja Sporting Weekend, organised in Liepāja (Latvia) on July 16, 2005 (awarded 1000 EUR)
4. International Youth Day 2005, organised in Pärnu (Estonia) on August 12, 2005 (awarded 1000 EUR)
5. Go in for Sports and



Promotion of healthy lifestyle among young people

You Will Live Healthy, organised in Panevėžys (Lithuania) on August 10-28, 2005 (awarded 1000 EUR) Altogether 4740 competitors participated in sporting activities organised within the awarded projects.

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KNOWLEDGE BASED BALTIC SEA REGION

In the middle of summer, the Secretariat of the Commission on Business Cooperation in Kaunas, willing to present trends and activities of the Commission, decided to publish a brochure that could be distributed during the General Conference.



Reacting to the EU's policy of creating a "Knowledge Based Society" and considering the last Business Commission Meeting in Tallinn, as the most suitable topic for all UBC BizCom members

(Western and Eastern) was chosen about creation and development of the Science and Technology Parks (STPs) around the Baltic Sea Region.

Therefore, members of the UBC were asked to send to the Business Commission Secretariat a one-page information about one (preferably the biggest or the most successful) STP project going on in their cities, answering to the questions like "what is the name of the STP project?", "some basic facts about the project", "what is the mission of the project? vision? objectives?", "what are the future plans for the project?". The determined deadline was September 5, 2005.

Some of the members have fulfilled this request on time, some of them have made it after the deadline, however the Secretariat of the Commission on Business Cooperation thanks all of them for an active participation and

a well-meant cooperation, especially Cities of Espoo, Kotka, Turku (Finland), Gdynia, Koszalin (Poland), Kalmar, Växjö (Sweden), Narva, Tallinn, Tartu (Estonia), Kristiansand (Norway), Næstved (Denmark), Rostock (Germany), Panevėžys, Kaunas (Lithuania). A booklet named "Science and Technology Park Projects around the Baltic Sea Region" will be distributed to all the UBC member cities. We truly hope that all of you will find the subject of interest in this publication and it will be developed further on in the next years.

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YOUNG AND ACTIVE CONFERENCE IN VILNIUS

During the VIII General Conference in Turku, the Network on Youth Issues was given a chance of becoming the commission. This has provided a great opportunity to reconstruct the organisation, which will be done this autumn. A new task for the Commission will be to serve with contacts for young persons wanting to use the EVS (European Voluntary Service).

On 13 – 16 October the CYI arranged the Youth Conference *Young and*

Active in the Baltic Sea Region in Vilnius, Lithuania. 95 youngsters and civil servants from Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Russia, Poland and Lithuania participated.

Main discussion subject was how to involve youth's influence on different levels. The participants also got the chance to learn more about their own and other people's priorities in their lives.

As a result of the conference, quotes from the participants, project ideas and

youth issues will be printed and handed out in a booklet, which we choose to call "Book on Demand".

We hope that many of you will have the chance to read this book, and that you will take that chance if getting it.

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THE COMMISSION ON CULTURE SESSION

The UBC Commission on Culture (CoC) would like to invite to discuss the role museums and galleries play in the modern world in the 8 CoC working session to be held in St. Petersburg on 6-9 December 2005.

The Role and Value of the Museums in the modern world. The organizers of the conference are: the CoC supported by the Saint-Petersburg City Administration (Committee for External Relations and Tourism, Committee for Culture), the Leningrad Region Government and the Union of Russian Museums. The venue was chosen because St. Petersburg is one of the best recognized cultural centres of Europe and one of the most significant

centres of the Baltic Sea Region and Northern Europe. It is believed that by creating a network for sharing experience between the museums within the UBC will provide extensive possibilities for cultural development of the region.

The following subjects are to be discussed at the conference:

1. Significance of museums in the contemporary world;
2. Specific features of museum management;
3. Museum pedagogy and its potential;
4. Museums as organizing social and cultural centres;
5. Museums and modern art;

6. Museums as centres of ecological education;
7. Significance of museums in fostering the planetary thinking;
8. Cultural heritage preservation issues.

The long-term cultural and historical relations of St. Petersburg with the countries represented in the Union of Baltic Cities will make it possible to find new areas and forms of interaction, sharing experience and international cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region during the conference.

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IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The project **Managing Urban Europe-25 (MUE-25)** aims at developing an environmental management system that addresses sustainable development in the whole functional urban area. Only very few cities in the world have been able to achieve this goal by applying the existing systems. The project Managing Urban Europe-25, which is co-ordinated by the Commission on Environment, started in March 2005. The project is contributing to fulfil the UBC Agenda 21 Action programme 2004-2009-Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities, in which one of the focus areas is good governance and sustainable urban management. The goals of the project are also closely linked to the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment within the VI Environmental Action Plan of the European Union.

MUE-25 will elaborate and test an integrated, community based, practical and efficient management system for local governments. This system will also include more sustainable development dimensions than just the environmental ones. All 23 partners

gathered for the first time at the kick-off meeting in Riga, Latvia, June 13-15. The meeting was a key event in mobilising all project partners and motivating them for implementation and strengthening their commitment. The project partners had a chance to express their needs and expectations towards the project and exchange experiences of previous work on environmental management systems. Strategic and methodological approaches of the project were discussed to reach understanding and consensus on the basic concepts.

The 14 project partner cities play an important role in the project as they should both provide information on successes and failures so far and carry



The kick-off meeting in Riga, Latvia

out testing of the framework model to be developed in the project. During summer and beginning of autumn all partner cities have completed a questionnaire which aimed to develop understanding of the environmental management issues in the cities. The experience gained from the cities will be compared and evaluated to identify the most effective means of securing local sustainability management in relation to different administrative contexts. These experiences combined with further research activities will enable the development of an improved model on environmental management system.

The model will be proposed to the MUE-25 Strategic Committee at the meeting in Siena, Italy, October 26-27. The actual testing phase of the model in the cities will start during 2006. The methods, toolkits and training material developed in the project will be available for other cities in EU-25 as well.

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UBC SURVEY ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The **Baltic Cities Survey of Sustainable Development 2004/2005** is a monitoring tool for the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities. Twenty nine indicators used in the survey gave an overall picture of sustainable development in the UBC network. The first round of the survey draws the baseline and a benchmark for the cities to improve their performance. The laborious and time consuming survey got a very high return rate, 72 % of the cities sent their sustainability data to UBC EnvCom Secretariat for a closer analysis. The survey shows that previous work with Local Agenda 21 is producing tangible results in the UBC member cities. For instance, with regard to Sustainable Management and Good Governance the UBC member cities are on the right track. Almost 80 % of the cities have already integrated sustainable development into their overall strategies. However, cities

cannot reach the goal of sustainable development on their own. To be successful they need to mobilise citizens and stakeholders to co-operation, which is also the target of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities.

The results in the field of Good Living Environment and Nature Protection suggest progress in the air quality and waste water management. Most UBC member cities have air quality above the European standards. Waste-water treatment is an established practice in the UBC cities.

The targets of Sustainable Use of Energy and Resources are still distant. UBC member cities are dependent on non-renewable energy. The share of renewable sources of electricity and heating is under 20 % of the total energy consumption in most cities. Majority of the cities recycle their waste to some extent, but most cities do not have data on recycling per waste fraction. Eight

member cities do not even have plans to start recycling processes.

As far as Sustainable Economy and Transport are concerned, there is a need to further develop public transport. Only 28 % of the member cities can provide easy access to public transport for the considerable majority of the inhabitants. Social Integration and Health is a somewhat problematic focus area. The answers of health issues are mainly based on the estimates.

The survey partners were Åbo Akademi University and Turku Polytechnic. Also Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung was involved in the process. The next rounds of the survey will take place in 2006/2007 and 2009.

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III. NEWS FROM MEMBER CITIES



Baltic Metropoles (BaltMet) is a network of the major metropolises around the Baltic Sea. Mayors of Berlin, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Malmö, Oslo, Riga, St. Petersburg, Stockholm, Tallinn, Vilnius and Warsaw have joined forces in order to enhance the competitiveness and integration of the Baltic Sea – the leading macro-region of Europe in terms of growth and innovation.

Mare Nostrum is clearly a region of contradictions. However, particularly these differences offer the cities of the region competitive advantages in the global competition for business and investment. The special dynamism of the Baltic Sea area lies in the growth potential of the new EU member states, the huge market potential of North-Western Russia and the most effective innovation systems of the old EU member countries.

Baltic metropolises, the hot spots of the growth process, take part in the global competition for the flows of capital and know-how. On their own, they have difficulties to succeed. In order to gain the advantages of the economy of size, increasing integration of the metropolitan areas is inevitable. Therefore networking - intensified co-operation and harsher competition - is considered as the BaltMet mission. Co-operation makes us bigger, competition smarter. In this competition, cities try to reform their old structures in order to improve the city as an attractive location for international investment and companies as well as for talented workers.

The BaltMet network has started two INTERREG projects, namely BaltMet Inno and BaltMet Invest. The BaltMet Inno project intends to create common understanding of the local innovation policy strategies and to connect the relevant innovation policy actors representing science, business and public authorities across the Baltic Sea. The BaltMet Invest will develop coordinated investment strategies for the three capitals of the Baltic States. In the Mayors'

Meeting in Berlin in February this year, the BaltMet Mayors consolidated their commitment to enhancing innovation and brain circulation in the Baltic Sea Region. In their latest meeting in Stockholm in October they also expressed their interest in supporting environmental investments and the development of transport corridors.

BaltMet looks forward to co-operation with the UBC and other networks involving cities and states of the Baltic Sea in order to develop Mare Nostrum further on as the most competitive region in regard of sustainable growth and innovation.

Further information:
www.baltmet.org

VI Baltic Sea Conference

It is an international conference during which present-day political and economic problems are discussed.

Particular attention is given to the international guests from the European Union and its institutions, from the Baltic littoral states and the twin cities of the Hanseatic City of Rostock. The international guests and the discussed subjects have made the Baltic Sea Conference an event of Europe-wide



Quo vadis Balticum? photo:©Maika Krüger

importance. The Herder Association wants to bring together renowned representatives from politics, economy, science and education in order to offer them a platform for discussing current subjects. This Association, a non profit organisation supported by the federal state and the city of Rostock, is the main organizer of the OSTSEEFORUM that has taken place since 2000 always in the eve of the Hanse Sail. This year

VI Baltic Sea Conference focused on the subject: "Quo vadis Balticum? The role of the Baltic States in the BSR and the co-operation with Mecklenburg-Vorpommern". It was supported by the speaker of the state parliament of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Ms Sylvia Bretschneider and by the mayor of the Hanseatic city of Rostock Mr Roland Methling.

Mrs Bretschneider explained to over one hundred guests how the state parliament of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern supports the development of co-operation in the Baltic Sea area by means of numerous activities. She also underlined the growing importance of the youth meetings in the Baltic Sea states in order to lay the foundations for future co-operation projects.

High-ranking representatives from the three Baltic States took stock of the current situation of their countries one year after their accession to the EU. Meelis Ojassoo, Councillor of the Estonian Embassy in Germany, Dr. Martinš Virsis, Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia in Germany and Prof. Dr. Vytautas Landsbergis, Lithuanian member of the European Parliament made speeches on their countries. Additionally, Mr Stefan Forester, Vice head of the representation of the European Commission in Germany, Dr. Roland Machner, representing the Baltic Sea Forum Hamburg, and Mr Christoph Flügge from the Senate of Berlin made speeches that were of great interest to the listeners. The plenary discussion, chaired by Prof. Dr. Martin Benkenstein, helped to go into the subject of the conference in greater detail including the participants' opinions and questions.

At the end of the conference the chairwoman of the Herder Association, Dr. Ines Nagijew, announced that the VII Baltic Sea Conference in 2006 will focus on Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's growing importance as health care region and corresponding opportunities for co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region.

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VI Baltic Contemporary Art Biennale

The Baltic Contemporary Art Biennale is an ongoing project, organized in Szczecin under the auspices of the UBC Commission on Culture. Since its debut in 1995, each edition presents international artists, performers and musicians, exploring the newest trends in contemporary visual arts and the way art functions within society. Each exhibition is devoted to a particular topic, a curatorial practice enables organizers to achieve coherence of content and form. Thanks to the wide network of contacts established through MARE ARTICUM – the Baltic Art Magazine that is published by the National Museum in Szczecin – the professionals that act as contributing editors to the magazine recommend participants from around the region, who are selected based on the artistic merit of their work as it relates to the theme being undertaken.

The sixth edition of the Biennale, entitled HABITAT, will feature an exhibition that runs for two months in Szczecin and includes screenings, lectures, concerts and publications. HABITAT literally means the social environment and the way it is organized. And for most Europeans, their habitat is an urban one. HABITAT will present works in all media that focus on urbanization and the social, political and cultural context of urban processes, as well as the problems generated by them. The theme will be addressed from a variety of perspectives – from the individual, private, intimate surroundings to the modes of participation in, and creation of, public spaces. Accompanying screenings and lectures are being produced in co-operation with Szczecin University. While the Musica Genera Association, a local group, is arranging concerts for the opening weekend of the event. Lectures and screenings will feature sociologists, ethicists, architects, artists and curators who, in their research and practice, focus on the organization of social space in its material (architecture/planning) and spiritual (values/beliefs) aspects. The concert program will present experimental music inspired by the technological aspects of urban development. A detailed calendar of

events will be available shortly. We welcome visitors to Szczecin, for the opening of HABITAT exhibition on 9 December 2005.

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Wildlife Vaasa 2006

Wildlife Vaasa Festival is Finland's international Nature Film Festival, which focuses on Nordic and European natural history incorporating worldwide participation. Its main objective is to stimulate and encourage co-operation between filmmakers, producers and other professionals within this field and to promote their work worldwide.



Wildlife Vaasa festival is a biennial event and was held initially in Vaasa in November 2002 and again in November 2004. As a highly successful event the festival has attracted more than 200 nature films and more than 100 delegates from around the world including television broadcasters, producers and media educators. Today Wildlife Vaasa festival is currently one of the leading events of its kind in Scandinavia considering the number of entries and delegates. The festival is organised by the Terranova Nature Centre of the Ostrobothnian Museum in close co-operation with Vaasa city and Vaasa Regions Development Corporation (VASEK).

Wildlife Vaasa 2006 will be implemented again in co-operation with Living Europe and will take place in Vaasa, from 22 - 26 November 2006. The festival's Nature film competition consists of 9 different categories with 4 new categories, introducing also a new category with films made by environmental friendly companies from

around the world. The festival includes also a nature film competition for children and youth self-made films. Moreover, music concerts, stunning presentations from wildlife filmmakers, panel discussions and an excursion to the pristine wilderness of Kvarken Archipelago will be included in the festival program. Meanwhile, the forecoming year is very special for Vaasa because of the city's 400 years anniversary. Furthermore, the city's surrounding area of Kvarken has UNESCO nomination. The combination of such circumstances together with our festival will create a perfect atmosphere for joy and celebration with a rich program of cultural events including the UBC-Culture Commission's Meeting in Vaasa in November 2006.

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Cesis expedition in Siberia

The first mass deportations that touched so tragically the fates of many of Latvian families took place in 1940 – 1941, during the period of the Soviet occupation. During the Soviet period, the repressions were very carefully kept in secret by the official administration. Only after the independence of the Latvian state was regained in the 90-ies, the real degree and amount of the tragedy was realized. Many of the deported have never come back. Why did they choose and are still choosing to stay away from their motherland? What are the stories of their families?

Since 2001, the Cesis City Council has actively initiated and supported a number of projects with the Omsk region in Russia. The aim of these activities is to help deported persons and their descendants in Russia to preserve and strengthen their Latvian national identity, facilitate the exchange of cultural information between Latvia and Russia. Cesis City Council has won and implemented the project named "Retrieving our memory: the Lost Human Stories on the Soviet Deportations in Latvia" financed by the Culture 2000 Program. The project activities are targeted to retrieve and re-join together Latvian human memories and



New pier in Międzyzdroje

On March 19, 2005 a new pier was inaugurated. A longer phase of planning launched in 2003 to extend the pier from 100 to 400 meters began. The construction was realized by the "Skanska" company. The contractor was the company "Adler-Schiffe Polska Sp.zo.o.", who received the right of use for the next 40 years as a result of its investment.

Already in the 90s piers were build on the neighbor-island Usedom in Ahlbeck, Heringsdorf and Bansin. These piers led to regular connections between the German seaside resorts and the Polish harbour. The extension of the pier at Międzyzdroje permits the usability for vessels so that in the future a direct connection between the German "Kaiserbäder" and the upcoming health resort Międzyzdroje will be installed.

In the meantime the connection between Poland and Germany will take place by the Świnoujście Harbor only. It is assumed that clearance can be opened in 2006, so that the planned direct connection between Germany and Poland can be opened up definitively. The journey will be reduced to 60 minutes to the comfort of Polish and German tourists.



The view of new pier in Międzyzdroje

Widening of the routes, e.g. to Bornholm, are aimed at for the next years, likewise a connection from the island Rügen over Usedom to Międzyzdroje. On both sides of the border there will be offerings to the tourist which include beside the journey for the vessel, the visit of showplaces of the respective health resort.

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interpretations on the Soviet deportations in order to present the public view from the present perspective on what suffer can cause the reaction political ideologies and regimes. Also, what are their social and cultural implications, how past events and experiences can help solving modern problems of migration, political and social violence.

Five ladies from Cesis travelled 4000 km to the Siberian Omsk to research the lives of victims of retaliation 1941 – 1949 and the so called "old Latvians" who went to Siberia looking for better life in turn of XIX/XX c. They were sincerely welcomed by beautiful flowers in Omsk late evening. Presentation of flowers in that part of the world is a proof that you are a really expected guest. Three Latvian generations live in Tara. Grand parents speak aureate Latvian language, but their children have just entry in the documents showing their nationality – Latvian. All the materials were fixed and recorded for storage at the Cesis History Museum.

After work in Tara the expedition went to Latvian Augsburg and Kurzemes ozoli villages to gather information on Latvians who went to Siberia in the end of XIX c. looking for a better life. Unfortunately regime, mass retaliation and dictatorship affected everyone, took away property, hands, health, even lives. With plenty of stories, evidences and emotions the expedition returned to Cesis.

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Keila - hot-air balloon capital of Estonia



Keila Municipality has been organizing hot-air balloon competitions for years. In Estonia, hot-air balloons and Keila have become synonyms. Also last summer, a hot-air balloon competition – Olympus CUP 2005 – took place at Rakvere and Keila

"Although organizing such competitions is not local governments' task, we still want to invite hot-air balloons to Keila. Furthermore, we want to offer this magnificent show also to people from other areas in Estonia" -

says Ago Kokser, Mayor of Keila. "The team that organizes the competitions in their free time has done such a good work that the competition has become popular among the pilots from our neighbouring countries. There are more people wishing to participate than we can receive. Keila has become the "importer" of hot-air balloons and as such, we wish to promote them" - he adds.



Hot-air baloon competition in Keila

At present, there are only a few balloons in Estonia. The best pilot in Estonia – Sergei Usanov – who lives at Keila, admits that his hometown is the most hot-air balloon friendly town in Estonia.

Hot-air balloons came to Keila in the middle of 1990, when we learned that our twinning towns – Birstonas in Lithuania and Sigulda in Latvia – were the centres for hot-air-ballooning of their countries. Every year, on an important occasion, Keila invited Lithuanian pilots to fly over Keila. In 2003, the organizers decided to offer the wonderful show also to other towns. The lucky number one was the town of Viljandi, situated in central Estonia. The first part of the competition was held there.

The first part of the competition in the summer 2005 was held at Rakvere. The competition began with a grand night show and was received by the audience as never before. The competition, which lasted from 17 to 21 August, was also blessed with superb weather. The conditions were perfect for ballooning. All the scheduled flights took place, which is extraordinary in hot-air balloon competitions. There were 14 teams from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and Sweden.

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Welcome to Narva

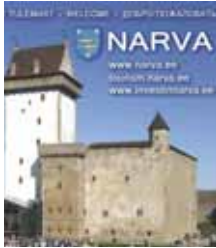
The Narva Hotel, which opened its doors in September 2004, became the first hotel in North-Eastern Estonia to be awarded the three star status.

The post-Soviet hotel has re-opened and currently offers 85 sleeping positions with plans for further expansion. Over two thousand tourists visited the Narva since its reopening. The hotel management notes that this figure corresponds to their initial expectations, while the director assures about the growth in tourist showings in Narva is justified in the actual statistics.

In August 2005 Inger Hotel was opened, too. "Inger" stands for the name of a mermaid who according to the legend lives in the river Narova. The new hotel can accommodate up to 86 guests at a time. On the ground floor there is a restaurant "Salvador" for 115 visitors. From now on, tourists don't just pass through Narva like they did in the past, as there was no relevant infrastructure.

The city of Narva was recently represented at the international tourist exhibition "INWETEX – CIS TRAVEL MARKET'2005", which took place in October in Saint-Petersburg. This is one of the largest tourist exhibitions in Russia, therefore it was extremely significant for Narva to advertise itself at this forum. Tour-operators, tour-agents, insurance companies, hotels, associations, national organizations and mass media took part in the exhibition. Narva presented itself by means of fresh information materials that have been specially prepared for the exhibition. Beside the tourist potential of the city as a whole, the two new hotels – "Inger" and "Narva" – were advertised.

Participation of Narva at this exhibition can considerably raise interest of Russian tourists in Narva. Russian tourists may feel comfortable in the town, since practically all the inhabitants do speak Russian.



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Chess stars of the Baltic Sea

The name stands for an international tournament of the youngsters from the BSR, which was held in Narva on 6 - 9 October 2005. This was the first competition of such level, having gathered 60 best young chess-players from 5 Baltic countries: Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russian St. Petersburg.

The event took place on the initiative of the local municipality and the chess club "Maletäht" ("Chess Star" in Estonian) and was dedicated to the 90th birthday of the famous Estonian chess-player Paul Keres born in Narva.

Narva has united young talents from 5 countries at chess tables in the Knight's Hall of the medieval castle. 10 strongest players in all official age categories from 10 to 18 represented each participating country. A round team tournament



has allowed to determine not only the strongest national team, but also the winners in each age group, who, de facto, have become the champions of the Baltic Sea Region.

The winning team came from Poland. The following positions have been taken by the teams of Lithuania, Saint-Petersburg, Latvia, Narva and Estonia. In October next year young chess-players from the Baltic countries will come together again. The "Maletäht" director Mr Leonid Peleshev emphasizes that the circle of participants will be expanded and invitations to the Narva competition will be sent also to representatives of Finland and Sweden. It was decided to apply for inclusion of the tournament "Chess Stars of the Baltic Sea" into the official calendar of International Chess Federation. The chief umpire of the tournament, the international category referee Mr Alberts Cimiņš has noted the high level of organization of the competition and the fact that the participants of the "Chess Stars of the Baltic Sea" were provided

with all necessary re-creation conditions, including city excursions.

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Nordic jobs

For couple of years, working in another Nordic country has been an opportunity for young people. In Sweden it's been the greater city areas such as Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö which have been the main targets. Since the summer 2005, the possibility also exists in Norrtälje, a small town 70 km north of Stockholm.

Nordic jobs are for people between 18-28 years of age. They work in a Nordic country and pay tax and are paid for the work normal wages so they can pay their living costs. The matching of employers and employees are made by a secretariat which is located in Malmö, Sweden. They also help the students find a place to live. To the secretariat come 8000 applications between January 1 and May 31 to be matched up with different companies. Applicants from all the Nordic countries and the Faeroe Islands and Greenland are welcome to apply. The companies are presented with a couple of interested people who they can choose from. All the administrative work is done by the secretariat.

In Norrtälje, it all began with a meeting where the secretariat had announced that they were in great need of companies that wanted to hire youth from the Nordic countries during the summer. Over 8000 applications come yearly to the secretariat and only 600 jobs are available. The possibility of offering the company places and a good living environment is the reason why Norrtälje saw a possibility to try to bring the programme to Norrtälje. Also the location, close to Stockholm and Åland made the decision easy.

The cooperation began with a possibility to have Anna Bäcklund later also the project leader to start looking for possible companies. The municipality gave a list of possible locations and Anna started calling around. She was also greatly supported by the local organization of "Norden". She found many interested



companies and it turned out to be 13 persons who later came to Norrtälje and worked from 8-10 weeks during the summer of 2005. The companies were both from the public and private sectors. Students stayed on Campus Roslagen, university college of Norrtälje town and worked with companies in the area. In the spare time there were many activities organized both a trip to Åland and a traditional Swedish cray fish party.

The project in Norrtälje has been very successful and the preparations are under way for summer of 2006. There are also suggestions that there will be an extension to include the Baltic States and Russia. The secretariat in Malmö is applying for financing from the Nordic Council of Ministers. Hopefully, such a programme can be operational by the summer of 2006. Decision will be taken in December 2005.

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Promoting entrepreneurship in Tallinn

Tallinn Entrepreneurship Day was held on September 27, 2005. This promoting event was organised by the Business Development Unit of the Tallinn City Enterprise Board. Topics of the Second Entrepreneurship Day were Innovation and Change.

Aims of the day are raising awareness of entrepreneurship, promoting entrepreneurial spirit among citizens, encouraging business start-ups and expansion, and extending cooperation between public, private and third sectors. The target group consists of potential (including students and pupils) and actual entrepreneurs but also business federations and unions.

More than 50 different parallel activities with 4500 participants were carried out during the day in the form of seminars, company visits, exhibitions and presentations. The activities were prepared according to local needs and supported the topics of the day. The city of Tallinn organised the day in close cooperation with local partners from public and private sectors. To name just a few: Tallinn University of Technology, Junior Achievement Estonia, business federations and unions, business

incubators, Tallinn Science Park (Technopol), etc.

Tallinn Entrepreneurship Day concluded with the award ceremony where Entrepreneurship Awards were conveyed in 5 categories. The biggest provider of new workplaces was granted to Elcoteq Tallinn. The best start-up company was given to the family-owned sewing company Promodern.



Prospect entrepreneurs?

The best development project was granted to GoGroup for the creation of the multifunctional travel centre Baltic Railway Station and GoHotel Shnelli. The best incubator enterprise was MEC Insenerilahendus – the first Estonian enterprise specializing engineering the ship-building constructions. And a special award "Applied Scientific Work 2005", which was granted in cooperation with Tallinn University of Technology, was issued to the working group headed by Juhan Laugis for the development of tram information and management systems.

For more information visit <http://investor.tallinn.ee> and <http://ettevotlus.paev.tallinn.ee>

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Pomeranian Science & Technology Park in Gdynia

Science and technology parks have a long tradition and an interesting history all over the world. The Pomeranian Science & Technology Park (PSTP) in Gdynia is quite a new initiative developing since 2002. Gdynia Authorities found that idea to be a very good instrument for supporting hi-tech companies and an impulse stimulating new investors - which makes local economy more

competitive. PSTP is a space managed by a professional team that organises and provides diversified services. Its main aim is to stimulate the culture of quality and innovation as well as the creation of knowledge- and innovation-based companies through incubation and spin-off processes. Special attention is devoted to the transfer of modern, advanced technologies in order to form a basis for the creation and development of new enterprises.

International cooperation plays an important role. PSTP together with the Klaipeda Science and Technology Park (Lithuania) will realise a joint project focused on the stimulation of cross-border contacts related to technology transfer and implementation of innovations into enterprises. Thanks to the creation of a modern conference infrastructure, with a possibility to organize videoconferences, the communication between cooperating Science & Technology Parks as well as entrepreneurs, inventors and scientists from both regions will be easier. It will influence the intensification of joint activities aimed at economic development based on knowledge and innovations. Initiatives of this kind – such as science and technology parks - influence the diversification of regional economy. PSTP creates a good climate and a nice environment for business growth and technology development within the whole Pomeranian Region. Nowadays, in PSTP there operate 25 innovative



Visualization of Pomeranian Science & Technology Park

companies (related to biotechnology, environmental protection, IT, and industrial design). In the year 2006 another 9000m² of modern laboratory and office space will be available for new businesses within the Park, as well as a conference complex, board-rooms, exhibition halls, relaxation areas and canteens. PSTP in Gdynia is always open for innovative ideas and open-minded people.

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Bay Watch in Klaipeda

The sea gives us much pleasure and joy. However, even the smallest waves can sometimes be very dangerous and crafty for people. This summer in Klaipeda alone fifty six people were saved by the lifeguards, but efforts to save other six were in vain...

Lithuanian and Latvian coastal municipalities joined their forces to guarantee the best European level life saving service on the sea beaches and to develop a unified bay –watching system in the Baltic Sea Region. The project "Bay Watch" is the first in INTERREG IIIA program, priorities North and South. The overall objective of the project is to promote the safety level for beach visitors on the Baltic Sea coastline. This will be achieved by the development of a unified and internationally standardised training system for life-guards, preparation of common saving system and standards, purchasing of appropriate life saving equipment and construction of the necessary facilities. A very important part of the project activities is to inform the society about actions to be taken in the emergency situations on the beaches. The project involves six partners – all representing the most popular beach resorts in the Southern part of the Baltic coastline - Jurmala, Saulkrasti, Liepaja, Palanga, Klaipeda and Neringa. Of no less importance is the establishment of the cooperation network for lifeguards.

The Blue Flag concept is the highest standard for beaches and marinas introduced in 1985. 25 countries participate in the Blue Flag campaign, including Lithuania and Latvia. 4 beaches in each country have been awarded this flag, the Smiltyne beach in Klaipeda among them. The Blue Flag campaign is based on 27 different strict environment and water standards criteria - safety on the beach provision, as well. Qualified bay watchers should be on duty during bathing season, they must be supported by respective life saving equipment and facilities. The society should be educated on safety aspects and know how to act in emergency.

Currently in Europe there are 3 schools for lifeguards – in Italy, Germany and Belgium, preparing also bay watchers. There also is an International Life Saving Federation in Germany, with

its main task to reduce injury and death in, on and around the water. Relevant functions in Lithuania are fulfilled by the Lithuanian Water Rescue Association.



The Baltic beaches should be safer

While developing the project, partners cooperated with the German and Italian colleagues, they had arranged study visits and seminars which were a valuable introduction to the serious work in INTERREG IIIA program.

June, July and August were the first months of "Bay Watch" project cooperation. All partner towns will purchase modern saving equipment – mobile bay watching centers, saving boats, trailers for transportation of boats, water moto cycles, etc. The total budget of the project is 888 655 Eur.

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New projects in Jurmala

This year Jurmala City Council has submitted two projects to receive financing from the European Regional Development Funds.

On 2 September the project "Aspazija's house renovation and its effective use for tourism development" has been submitted by the society "Aspazija's heritage", Jurmala City Council's co-partner. The Project aims at strengthening and making new possibilities to maintain the historical wooden architecture and popularizing the literary heritage of Aspazija (the most popular poetess of Latvia) in Jurmala.

Also, on 5 September Jurmala City Council submitted a project "Renovation of the historical hall of Dzintari concert hall, development of new tourism projects and reduction of tourism seasonality in

Jurmala city" to the Central Finance and Agreement Agency. It is planned that after the renovation work, there will be places for approximately 600 to 650 persons and it will be used for culture events all year long.

Moreover, another important project is united beach-rescue (life-guarding) system development in the Baltic beach region. The aim of this project is to offer the safety on the beach, promote the development of united rescue system, and increase cooperation between patrols. The partner of project – Jurmala City Council (lead partner), Liepaja City Council, Saulkrasti City Council, Palanga City Council, Klaipedas City Council, Neringas communal concern.

Co-financing part of Jurmala is EUR 213 590 and total financing is EUR 53 397,50. The accomplishment period of this project is 24 months (May 2005 until August 2006).

Another interesting projects is: "Family Recreation Park in Jurmala". Recently Jurmala City Council has approved a detailed plan of the recreation park in Dzintari. The total area of the park is to be 131 108 square metres and it will be financed from the funds of Jurmala City Council. The area will include the information centre, an exhibition hall, a cafe, rental centre of sports equipment, a sightseeing tower, mini-golf and street ball courses, a Skate Park, a roller skating track, a playground for children and public conveniences. The parking lot will be able to take up to 151 cars.

The park is anticipated to open within 6 months.

And the second project - the owner of the water amusement park "Nemo" company "Nemo Real" has planned to build a new large-scale recreation centre near the presently resting area. It is planned that the recreation centre will include the closed skiing park available also in summer. Additionally there will also be a hotel with conference halls and a shopping centre.

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VIII UBC General Conference, Turku, Finland 29.09 - 02.10.2005

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

The Union has an observer status with the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM), the Committee of the Regions and the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE).

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