



Gdańsk, 24 March 2016

A CALL FOR STORIES:

Refugees - a challenge and a chance for the cities of the Baltic Sea Region

At the UBC Conference on refugees situation, held in Rostock on 14-16 March 2016, the Resolution entitled “Refugees - a challenge and a chance for the cities of the Baltic Sea Region” was adopted. It clearly indicates the road the UBC cities should go accepting the newcomers.

They must be enabled to live in dignity and be provided with access to employment and essential services such as education, housing and health care. They need to be encouraged to integrate into their new societies and to become fully fledged citizens of these municipalities. All inhabitants contribute to the local well-being.

The Conference was a first such opportunity to present the cities’ experiences and also a good starting point to further discussions. The refugees’ integration process is long-lasting one and should get continuous attention. The UBC’s idea is to collect the best practices and solutions and spread them across the region and Europe. Therefore, the next Bulletin will be devoted to the refugees’ integration.

Refugees - a challenge and a chance for the cities of the Baltic Sea Region

The Editorial Board would like to invite the cities to share their experiences and ideas that help the newcomers integrate effectively. What measures could be taken to welcome them in our societies?

- How to increase the level of understanding that refugees are an asset to society?
- How does your city involve and support people and NGO’s?
- What does your city offer to the newcomers? Does your city implement any innovative solutions, programmes, etc.?
- UBC stresses that integration is not only a task for refugees who have to learn to live in new social environments, but also for the inhabitants of the receiving cities who have to learn new lessons about multicultural living together. Are the inhabitants of your cities prepared for that?
- How does your city face and combat radicalization tendencies like religious extremism and nationalism?
- UBC cities stated that education and labour are the basis of any integration, how does it work in your city?
- What are the biggest challenges?
- The Editorial Board would also welcome the refugees/migrants stories from your cities.



As usual, apart from the main theme, we are looking forward to receiving stories on interesting events and daily news from our member cities.

Please forward this message to your city officials and workers who work with refugee issues.

Looking forward to your reply,

Paweł Żaboklicki
UBC Secretary General

Please follow these guidelines when submitting your story:

- Deliver the story by e-mail to: anna.dargiewicz@ubc.net in MS WORD format. Please remember to kill the viruses before sending it. Please expect confirmation of reception. Lack of confirmation means that the message is not delivered.
- Each member city may submit two articles - one related to the cover theme and one to the chapter "News from Member Cities". All stories shall be sent in English.
- Each article may have max 400 words, no more than 1 page A4, font TimesNewRoman 12pt. The editorial board sometimes needs to shorten the stories in order to include more stories into the Bulletin. It is also important to include the author's name and contact details for any follow-up questions related to the story.
- Please make all efforts to include a smashing photo or a digital picture to illustrate the article (JPG format, min. 300 ppi, one e-mail - one picture, the file should not exceed 3 MB). Remember to send us also the coat of arms of your city, if you have not sent it earlier.
- The deadline for stories to the Bulletin is **25 April 2016**. Please respect this timetable as we are unable to print out stories received after this deadline.

If you have interesting issues to report, please do not hesitate to send them. The bulletin is distributed in around 4000 copies all around the Baltic Sea Region to over 200 Baltic cities and numerous key organizations and institutions, including the EU.