

SOCIAL CHARTER FOR UBC MEMBER CITIES

Municipalities have to promote the well-being of their inhabitants and their free self-government for their own affairs. They act thereby at the same time in responsibility for the future generations. The General Conference of the UBC has adopted the following Social Charter in order to give a political sign for a social policy to develop the social cohesion in their municipalities as a social dimension in the Baltic Sea region with similar and good living conditions for everyone. The charter offers a conceptual framework that provides the basis for the development of the social dimension of sustainable societies. The perspectives of gender and sustainability need to be used in the monitoring and evaluation of the other targets. These two dimensions are crucial in achieving the objectives of social sustainability.

1. Civil Society

The cities confirm to emphatically promote communal life and the acceptance of responsibility by the citizens. With their voluntary commitment the citizens achieve an indispensable contribution to social cohesion, to local democracy and therefore identification with their community.

The cities will improve and/or create regulations for involvement and codetermination at the level of city representation as well as outside this representation in the field of social functions and activities of the city.

The influence of the state must follow the principle of subsidiarity and must be considerably downgraded in favour of self-administration.

The cities confirm to create sustainable conditions for voluntary activities of citizens and the community serving organisations of the citizens (NGO's).

2. Protection from general risks of life

The cities confirm to do all they can, both on local and state level, to ensure that all persons living in the place are free of any fear of the life's great risks such as sickness, old age, unemployment and to become homeless.

3. Advancing the role of children and youth

The cities confirm to regard the work with and the protection of children and youth as a part of their educational policy with the goal of guaranteeing them a free and self determined development of their own personalities. To achieve this it is necessary to increase young people's possibilities to have influence on decision-making processes. The cities will promote equal possibilities in all aspects of life for both girls and boys.

4. Protection from discrimination and abuse

The cities confirm to implement a policy for the aged, handicapped and chronically ill persons supporting them in arranging their lives in such a manner that they feel well.

Trafficking in women and children requires local prevention programmes as well as broad collaboration throughout the region.

5. Gender equality

The cities confirm to (re)organise, improve, develop and evaluate policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages by all actors normally involved in policy-making. Planning communities based on gender equality perspective is of vital importance for creating social sustainability in cities. The strategy used is gender mainstreaming.

6. Sustainability

The cities confirm to support a sustainable development that satisfies the needs of today's generation without endangering future generations.

7. Social Report

The cities confirm to report regularly to their city committees on basis of the 6 above-mentioned task fields. This social report is submitted regularly to the UBC General Conference.

Adopted on occasion of the VI UBC General Conference held in Rostock 13 October 2001.

Revised on occasion of the X UBC General Conference held in Kristiansand 24-25 September 2009.