**Minutes of the 69th Meeting of the Executive Board**

 **Tampere, 18 March 2014**

1. **Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.**

Per Bødker Andersen, President of the Union opened the meeting. Mr Andersen expressed his gratitude to the hosts for inviting the UBC Executive Board to hold the meeting in Tampere. The meeting adopted the agenda, attached to the minutes.

**2. Election of two persons who, together with the President, will check the minutes.**

Ms Satu Vuorinen, Director of International Affairs, the city of Tampere and Mr Mikko Lohikoski, Director of Communication and External Affairs, the city of Turku, were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

**3. Presentation of the City of Tampere.**

Ms Satu Vuorinen, Director of International Affairs, presented information about the city.

Founded on 1 October 1779 by King Gustav III of Sweden, Tampere is now the third largest city in Finland. Currently there are over 220 000 inhabitants in Tampere, and close to half a million inhabitants in Tampere Region, which comprises Tampere and its neighbouring municipalities.

Tampere is one of the three most rapidly developing regions in Finland. It is a centre of leading-edge technology, research, education, culture, sports and business. It is an academic city with around 40 000 students at three universities and other educational institutions.

There are numerous projects and programmes implemented in Tampere aiming at its sustainable and smart development. Eco-efficient Tampere 2020 is to implement Tampere’s climate commitments, to develop operation methods in urban development, to support the growth of the environment business.

Tampere takes part in the Innovative Cities programme (INKA) leading Smart cities and industrial regeneration theme. The programme is to generate new business and new companies from high-quality competence, thus creating more jobs.

The Open Tampere program (2012-2018) is a project engine to help the birth of new growth companies, to create internationally substantial business, and to promote controlled structural changes of traditional industry in such a way that in 2018 Tampere is still attractive city for versatile business.

**4. Task Force on youth employment and well-being, info about 1st meeting on 17 March 2014, plan of work.**

Task Force on youth employment and well-being shall work until the next General Conference in Gdynia in 2015. Its work is based on the UBC General Conference in Mariehamn resolution establishing an international Task Force on youth employment and well-being. The resolution is attached.

Mr Matti Mäkelä, Turku, chair of the TF, introduced the results of the 1st Task Force meeting held in Tampere on 17 March. Task Force worked in three groups with the following themes:

- regional goals

- task force themes (youth guarantee, youth unemployment etc.)

- transfer of innovations

The TF members discussed the results and possible further steps.

Participants decided that UBC cities involved in the TF work will provide an overview on challenges, good practices and innovations/new ideas in their cities/regions on following themes, which were based on the original UBC Programme to Promote Youth Employment and Well-being presented at the General Conference in Mariehamn, in October 2013:

- guidance and support

- flexible educational paths

- cooperation between different actors

- participation

- taking special groups into account

- other services that prevent social exclusion

Cities can pick 1-6 of these themes based on their challenges and special interests. Also, they can present, for example, good practices in one theme and challenges in other. Deadline for the overviews is 16 May. Moreover, all participating cities can introduce in their overview a project or development work they are especially proud of.

Next TF meeting will be held in Turku on 2-3 June 2014 in connection with EUSBSR & BDF Conference.

**5. Consolidation process of the UBC Commissions, discussion with the leaders of the Commissions.**

The 67th UBC Executive Board Meeting held in Kiel on 20 June 2013 discussed the question of consolidation of the Commissions in order to improve the efficiency of the UBC work according to the decision at the General Conference in Kristiansand. Following the Board’s decision, its members sent their proposals to the Secretariat by 1 July 2013. Then the Commissions received the proposals for consultations. Several Commissions responded.

The General Conference in Mariehamn, 2-3 October 2013, mandated the Executive Board of UBC to actively continue dialogue on the structure and content of the UBC Commissions and obliged the Executive Board to reach a decision on the issue during the year 2014, so that starting from 1.1. 2015 the UBC shall have between five to seven Commissions which start to be operative from that date. The old Commission structure ceases to be in force on the same date.

The Commissions’ leaders were invited to the Board meeting in Tampere to discuss how to improve the structure of the commissions. Potential mergers of the Commissions shall improve their effectiveness and thus make their work more relevant to the UBC cities.

The discussion revealed various points of view on the contents of the future commissions. There was a question of the responsibility for shaping the commissions’ work. Participants were interested to express their vision on the number and on the contents of the commissions.

One of the proposals was that the structure shall reflect the way how the cities are organised. It would be, however, very difficult, as the cities’ differ in structures. Another way of forming the commissions would be to choose the common themes of interests and to make an offer to the cities. The merger of the Commission on Business and Tourism is a positive example of this kind of process.

Also, the involvement of people in the commissions’ work was discussed as it was found by some participants more crucial than the number of commissions. They stressed the effectiveness of the commission should be measured by the number of people involved and attracted, e.g. at the meetings, not only by the money gained from other resources.

Additionally, the cooperation between commissions could be a measure of their attractiveness.

The Strategy Coordinator reminded that according to the UBC Strategy, the UBC should be re-shaped to fit the changing reality, to respond the cities’ needs more flexibly. That is why the decision on the reduction of the number of commissions was taken.

Decision:

The Board decided to establish a task force to propose the new division of commissions at the Board meeting in autumn 2014. The Board authorized the Presidium to appoint the task force members. The TF shall present the interim findings at the June meeting in Turku.

**6. UBC and the EU Baltic Sea Region Strategy (EUSBSR).**

*- possibilities with multi level governance, 1st Vice-President Marie-Louise Rönnmark*

The presentation of Marie-Louise Rönnmark, Mayor of Umeå, 1st UBC Vice-President, focused on the role the local governments should play in the implementation of the EUSBSR. According to the statistics, local actors are underrepresented in the EUSBSR cooperation: both in the strategy leadership and its implementing activities.

The main challenges for the local level rely on the cooperation structure of the Strategy that forces municipalities to:

• Work with other level of governance despite of the difference of governance/governing capacities,

• Work with policy-making and not only their implementation which requires stronger politicization,

• Work with several countries all with different governance/governing systems.

The EUSBSR cooperation system means that municipalities cannot act individually anymore but should group themselves. This requires more Investment in capacity building activities and more intense lobbying.

In 2014-2020, the EUSBSR objectives will be included in all INTERREG programmes in the BSR. This implies that it will be easier for all actors to apply to project facilities if they know how to work with the Strategy. All programmes will integrate the EUSBSR as a norm: if municipalities do not know how to link their activities with the Strategy there will be less financing possibilities for them. Municipalities will lose their democratic right to act for their sustainable development and, in the long term, they will lose their legitimacy to act as equals in our macro-region.

As a conclusion, the UBC should support its members in both capacity building and project marketing for highlighting the local expertise and best practices. A stronger lobby activity is needed to defend the democratic right of municipalities to lead and to be involved in the EUSBSR.

*- update on EUSBSR implementation and the new Baltic Sea Region programme, Strategy Coordinator*

As part of the European Union´s new funding period (2014-2020), the Baltic Sea Region programme is being currently finalized. The public consultation on the Draft Version has been opened and will be open until 28 March 2014. The Baltic Sea Region Programme covers eleven countries, eight of them EU Member States and three partner countries (Belarus, Norway, Russia). The Programme has been interlinked with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and also, where applicable, the Russian North-West Strategy.

As UBC Member cities are key stakeholders in the Baltic Sea cooperation, and as the Baltic Sea Region Programme is central for funding of our future projects, it is of greatest importance that the UBC and its Member Cities and Commissions, both jointly and on their own send their comments concerning the Draft Version, which one can reach through the website:

<http://eu.baltic.net/Public_consultation_give_your_comments_to_the_Operational_Programme_2014_2020_and_the_Environmental_Report.29104.html>

In the letter of 13.02.2014 the President encouraged member cities to:

- send their own comments on the Draft Programme to the authorities concerned; and

- send their comments and views to the Secretariat at info@ubc.net by 5 March 2014 so UBC can take them into account when preparing a draft statement.

UBC statement on the Operational Programme of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 was submitted to the Programme authorities on 28.03.2014. The statement is attached.

The Strategy Coordinator strongly encouraged to active local engagement not only in the implementation of the Strategy but also in the lobbying process towards more local perspective in the EU policies.

**7. Report: Men and Women in the UBC, Gender Commission, Linda Gustafsson and Charlotte Lundkvist.**

Linda Gustafsson presented the outcomes of the report: Women and Men in the UBC published in the autumn 2013.

The report highlights the importance of a continuous work to promote gender equality as well as the need for further action to improve the status of women around the Baltic Sea. It shows that some progress has been made, for example in the distribution of income between women and men, but gender inequalities are still dominant. For example, women are still underrepresented in political and economic decision making and have a limited access to the labour market as well as lower incomes. The report also shows that human trafficking and men’s violence against women are still major problems in the region that need to be addressed.

The Commission reminded the UBC Statement against trafficking, adopted at the 45th UBC Executive Board meeting in Kaunas, on 10-12 February 2006, to once again focus on this important issue.

Since 2007, the Commission has focused on addressing issues on the labour market, integrating a gender perspective in social and urban planning, combating male violence against women, prostitution and human trafficking. This work continues with a focus on working with the method of gender budgeting.

The President encouraged the Commission to publish regularly results of its work on the UBC website so the member cities can be consistently updated on the status of actions promoting gender equality in the Baltic Sea region.

**8. Information from Strategy Coordinator.**

*- Information on BSR Urban Forum for Smart Cities project (BUF) - update*

Strategy Coordinator informed the Board members on the latest developments of the BUF project.

As the cities are playing a crucial role in the Baltic Sea Region development, UBC Board has, together with the Baltic Development Forum (BDF) and the City of Turku taken the initiative to prepare a concept for a “Baltic Sea Region Urban Forum for Smart Cities”.

The project was approved and received the financial support by the Seed Money Facility of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Baltic Urban Forum concept was launched at the UBC General Conference in Mariehamn and ideas as well as initial concepts were discussed in the initiative group workshop on 19-20 January 2014 in Tartu, Estonia.

Currently the initiative group is developing and focusing the concept of the Baltic Urban Forum.

The Baltic Urban Forum concept plan will be presented and further developed in Riga, Latvia on 23 April 2014, just before the Energy Cities Annual Conference (23-25 April 2014) in Riga. UBC Member Cities and representatives are invited to participate in both events.

As the Baltic Urban Forum will play key role in the Baltic Sea Region development in the next decade, we hope that member cities, but also interested businesses or citizens organizations can use this excellent opportunity to provide input to the concept.

The workshop will take place in the premises of the Riga City Council, Ratslaukums st. 1 , on 23 April 2014 between 11-16.

More about the Baltic Urban Forum concept development at: <http://smartcitylab.eu/buf/>

More information about Energy Cities Annual Conference at [riga2014.energy-cities.eu](http://www.riga2014.energy-cities.eu)

UBC member cities will get 20% fee reduction for the Energy Cities Annual Conference.

*- EUSBSR Annual Forum and BDF Summit in Turku, 3-4 June 2014*

Mr Lohikoski invited to the EUSBSR Annual Forum and BDF Summit in Turku, 3-4 June 2014, that will be a great opportunity to express the local interests and lobby for a better understanding of the city’s perspective on the European level.

He proposed to hold the UBC Board meeting in connection with the Forum.

**9. Report on UBC activities within CECICN in the period 2013-2014. The report is attached.**

Mr Wolfgang Schmidt, city of Kiel, reported on the CECICN activities in 2013-2014.

The Conference of European Cross-border and interregional City Networks CECICN was set up in 2010. Its objective is to boost territorial cooperation among border cities in Europe and to reinforce the message concerning the importance of territorial cooperation. CECICN gathers now nine cooperating networks that represent more than 600 cities in border regions and 37% of European population.

In the reported period the network issued 4 statements on the EU policies and attracted 3 new members. In 2014 CECICN plans to develop the cooperation around Europe 2020 Strategy, to enlarge the organisation, and to tighten the links to the Committee of the Regions.

The Executive Board took the report to knowledge.

**10. Implementation of the recommendations of the UBC Task Force on development, working methods.**

The Executive Board established the Task Force in June 2011 in Karlstad with the aim how to strengthen the performance of the organisation. The task force worked out the report presented at the Board meeting in Umeå, 8 March 2013 which then was sent out to the member cities for comments. The General Conference in Mariehamn, basing on the proposals of the TF, adopted the amendments in the Statute.

The TF recommended, moreover, some changes in another document specifying the working methods of the organisation - Internal Regulations so that it reflects the changes in the Statute.

The proposals concern e.g. setting up the commissions, evaluation of the commissions, cost reimbursement rules, etc.

The Task Force report including proposals is attached.

Decision:

The Board decided the proposals shall be implemented starting from the next UBC Board meeting in June.

**11. Energy Cities proposal on cross membership with UBC.**

Proposal from Energy Cities on cross membership with UBC is attached.

Energy Cities is the European Association of local authorities in energy transition. From 2013 to 2015, Energy Cities is under the Presidency of the City of Heidelberg (DE) with a Board of Directors of 11 European cities. The association created in 1990 represents now more than 1,000 towns and cities in 30 countries.

Its main objectives are:

• To strengthen your role and skills in the field of sustainable energy.

• To represent your interests and influence the policies and proposals made by European Union institutions in the fields of energy, environmental protection and urban policy.

• To develop and promote your initiatives through exchange of experiences, the transfer of know-how and the implementation of joint projects.

UBC and Energy Cities has been cooperating since 2007. The crossed membership agreement would develop the cooperation further.

Decision:

The Board decided to accept Energy Cities proposal on cross membership and expressed hope for mutually beneficial cooperation between both organisations.

**12. Financial report and budget.**

Secretary General presented the financial report for 2013. Mr Żaboklicki informed the income was mostly generated by the membership fees, General Conference fees and the assets saved in 2012. The main expenditure were: the costs of the commissions, meetings including the General Conference and Executive Board, services/maintenance. Five annexes are attached to the report: membership fees, expenditure of UBC commissions, contributions to the secretariats, projects with external funding, cities’ contributions to the UBC events. The report is attached to the minutes.

Paweł Żaboklicki informed the Presidium decided on the Commissions’ funding in 2014 on the basis of the evaluation of their work in 2013 and action plans 2014. Information on funding for Commissions in 2014 is attached.

Mr Żaboklicki informed not more than 40% can be spent by the lead city(s) for: secretariat, remunerations (including projects), subcontractors, travel, mailing, office supplies, promotion materials. Changes in the commission budget require President's approval.

Secretary General also presented the proposal of the UBC budget for 2014. The budget proposal is attached to the minutes.

Decision:

The Board took note of the report and approved the budget for 2014.

**13. Next 70th UBC Executive Board meeting back-to-back to EUSBSR Annual Forum and BDF Summit in Turku, 3-4 June 2014.**

Upon the invitation of the Mayor of Turku, the UBC Board will hold its next meeting in Turku, on 2 June 2014, in connection with the EUSBSR Annual Forum and BDF Summit.

**14. Proposal from Commission on Business to hold the autumn Executive Board meeting and BizCom meeting in Nice. Proposal is attached.**

The UBC Commission on Business and Tourism submitted the proposal to hold the autumn meeting of the UBC Executive Board in Nice.

The City of Nice has expressed a deeper interest to come in contact with the Baltic Sea Region. Apart from Sophia Antipolis, Europe’s leading science and technology park dedicated to IT, Nice is a seat of the Cote d’Azur Eco-Valley, the first French operation of national interest (OIN) to be entirely devoted to developing cleantech and smart cities.

The Commission on Business has been cooperating with Cote d’Azur region for several years.

Decision:

The UBC Business & Tourism Commission and the Secretariat were commissioned to check with the city of Nice the possibility to organize a joint meeting of the UBC Executive Board and the Commission in Nice, France in autumn 2014.

**15. Any other business.**

Application from Dolina Charlotty resort to become UBC supporting member.

Dolina Charlotty is a resort located halfway between Slupsk and Ustka on the Baltic Sea coast.

It is distinguished by a great lakeside location surrounded by beautiful countryside. Beside spa and wellness facilities, Dolina Charlotty is a host of the Rock Legend Festival and other international events. Application is attached.

Decision:

The Board authorised the Presidium to decide on conditions for Dolina Charlotty resort to become UBC supporting member.

The documents are available at:

http://www.ubc.net/documentation,76,2365.html

Per Bødker Andersen Paweł Żaboklicki

Chairperson Secretary

Satu Vuorinen Mikko Lohikoski

Adjuster Adjuster