Växjö kommun
The Greenest City in Europe

The UBC Board

UBC Commission structure

Background
The General Conference in Mariehamn has mandated the Board to form a new structure for the present 13 commissions to be in action 2015. The idea is to strengthen the work by reducing the number of commissions by merging or termination. Different aspects can be considered; not just from how the commissions are organized today, or how work in different fields in the member cities is organized, but also what we can expect for the future in relation to the EU Programme for the Baltic Sea Region.

One idea
One important issue for commissions in the future is to consolidate their economy throw funding's from EU for project related to their objectives. In the operational programme of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 is stated four priorities.

1. Capacity for innovation with three specific objectives
   Research for innovation infrastructure, Smart specialization, Non- technological innovation.
2. Efficient management of natural resources with four specific objectives
   Clear water, Renewable energy, Energy Efficiency, Resource-efficient blue growth
3. Sustainable transport with five specific objectives.
   Interoperability of transport modes, Accessibility of remote areas, Maritime Safety, Environmental friendly shipping, Environmental friendly urban mobility.
4. Institutional capacity for macro-regional cooperation with two specific objectives
   Seed money, Coordination of macro-regional cooperation.

With the EU Strategy in mind and a form of top down approach UBC commissions could be organized in the following way

A. Business + Education + Tourism (Business innovation commission)
B. Environment + Energy (Resource management commission)
C. Transport + Urban planning + Local safety (City planning commission)
D. Culture + Sport + Health and Social Affairs (Daily life commission)

Macro-regional cooperation shall be handled by the board.
Gender and Youth issues can be horizontal commissions or networks.

Aspects
Merging commissions in the UBC organization can strengthen the financial base and give better resources to administer their work, on one hand. On the other hand it can lead to problems to recruit city member staff as they have to take responsibility for matters that they

normally not is working with on a daily base. If they find the agenda in a commission mainly is about things they locally not have influence on they soon may withdraw or will not get local funding for their participation. This leads to another conclusion with a more bottom up approach where we form commissions from how cities normally are organized.

Another idea
To strengthen relations between cities it is essential that commissions are build out of how departments are organized in cities and how it can make representatives fell like colleagues working with common tasks. From a Swedish point of view this should lead to the following structure of commissions.

A. Business and tourism
B. Education
C. Elderly and handicap care
D. Urban planning including transport and local safety
E. Water and sewage management
F. Environment and nature resource management
G. Culture
H. Sport
I. Social security and welfare

Gender and youth issues are mainly what should always be on the agenda for each of the commissions. Maybe it is not so and therefor there may be arguments to keep them as for today, even if this confirm two classes of commissions.

Consideration
The UBC Board has a challenging responsibility to form a new organization for its commissions. Commissions are forming the core of the union and are the most important links for cities to UBC. Representation and engagement in commissions is the main reason for cities to be member of the organization. On the board meeting in Tampere much time must be given to have a thorough discussion about this.

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