



Summary of the XIII UBC General Conference, Gdynia, 27-30 October 2015

INTRODUCTION

The XIII General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 27-30 October 2015 in Gdynia, Poland, at the invitation of Wojciech Szczurek, Mayor of Gdynia.

The first day of the conference - an open forum - was titled "Building smart cities in the Baltic Sea Region". The conference discussed opportunities and challenges of the cities using smart solutions in all areas of life.

The second conference day started with the joint meeting of the commissions followed by four parallel workshops devoted to: Smart & attractive city, Sustainable urban mobility, Interreg V programmes and UBC communications.

The second day afternoon was devoted to the internal UBC matters such as reports, elections, finances, etc. The conference was attended by over 200 participants including representatives of member cities, as well as invited guests from governments, international organisations, NGOs etc. List of participants is enclosed.

General Conference interacted with UBC Youth Conference attended by 75 young people and civil servants from UBC member cities.

TUESDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2015

COMMISSIONS' MEETINGS

The new UBC Commissions: Cultural Cities Commission, Inclusive and Healthy Cities Commission, Planning Cities Commission, Safe Cities Commission, Smart and Prospering Cities Commission, Youthful Cities Commission and Working Group on Gender Equality held working meetings to discuss action programmes for the forthcoming two years.

WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2015

OPENING

Per Bødker Andersen, the President of the Union of the Baltic Cities, opened the XIII UBC General Conference.

Bartosz Bartoszewicz, Deputy Mayor of the City of Gdynia, warmly welcomed the participants on behalf of the host city.

Mieczysław Struk, Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship and Dr Iwona Woicka-Żuławska, First Counsellor, Deputy Director of the Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland, held the opening speeches, on behalf of the region and state respectively.

PLENARY SESSIONS

The first day of the conference was moderated by Piotr Wołkowiński, a consultant working on participative consultation of the inhabitants concerning the city strategy, leading a think tank on the changes required in the social policy, building a social innovation accelerator.

The following speakers delivered presentations during the plenary sessions.



Plenary Session 1

- Pauliina Haijanen, Member of the Committee of the Regions, Head of Interregional group 'Baltic Sea Regions'
- Judit Törökné Rózsa, Head of Unit Competence Centre Inclusive Growth, Urban and Territorial Development, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission
- Michael Berz, Unit Key Enabling Technologies, Digital manufacturing and Interoperability, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission
- Jean Peyrony, General Director of Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT), Executive Director of Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional City Networks (CECICN)
- representatives of UBC Youth Conference expressed opinions and posed questions to the politicians attending the General Conference

Plenary Session 2 'Cities promoting and using smart solutions in practice'

- Jyrki Myllyvirta, Mayor of the City of Lahti
- Raimond Tamm, Member of Tartu City Council, Board Member of Tartu Science Park
- Simonas Kairys, Vice-Mayor of the City of Kaunas
- Dr Andreas Schubert, Senior Expert Comprehensive Strategic Urban Development, Hanseatic City of Rostock

Plenary Session 3 'Examples of invented smart solutions making life easier in the urban areas'

- Dr Inge Schröder, Managing Director, Wissenschaftszentrum Science Park, Kiel
- Katarzyna Ziemann on behalf of Aleksandra Dębska-Cenian, Head of Social Innovations Department, Pomeranian Science and Technology Park, Gdynia
- Stefan Uppman, Business Development Manager, Videum Science Park, Växjö

Plenary Session 4 'Report of the UBC Task Force on Youth Employment & Well-being'

- Matti Mäkela, Head of the Project Management Office, Education Division, City of Turku

Presentations and speeches are enclosed.

THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2015

JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONS

The new UBC Commissions held a joint meeting in order to present their work and action programmes to the conference participants.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

The following four conference workshops were held in parallel:

1. Workshop 'Smart & attractive UBC city'
Coordination: New UBC Commissions
2. Workshop on Sustainable Urban Mobility
Coordination: City of Gdynia, Roads and Green Areas Management



3. Funding opportunities for cooperation projects across the borders – regional INTERREG V Programmes for the BSR 2014-2020

Coordination: Programmes – Interreg BSR, South Baltic, Central Baltic, Botnia-Atlantica, Northern Periphery and Arctic

4. UBC Communication Workshop

Coordination: UBC Communications manager

Reports from the conference workshops are attached.

YOUTH CONFERENCE

In parallel with the General Conference the UBC Youth Conference “Youth for Equality, Equity and Peace” was held at the same time in Gdynia. The conference was attended by 75 young people from UBC member cities. The youngsters took part in the General Conference plenary session ‘Cities promoting and using smart solutions in practice’. They were able to express freely their opinions, goals, expectations. The Youth Conference was held within the project financed by EU Erasmus+ program.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly was opened by Per Bødker Andersen, the President of the Union.

REPORT ON UBC ACTIVITIES AND RENEWAL PROCESS

President Per Bødker Andersen submitted the report on UBC activities and renewal process during the period October 2013 - October 2015. The General Conference approved the report. The activity report is attached.

UBC STRATEGY

President Per Bødker Andersen presented UBC Strategic Framework 2016–2021. The conference took note of the document and decided that the strategy should be sent out for comments the member cities. The Strategy seeks ways to serve its member cities more efficiently and to strengthen the UBC bodies. The document is attached. The conference adopted also UBC Sustainability action programme 2016-2021 as an annex to the strategy. The programme is attached.

RESOLUTION ON THE REFUGEES

General Conference adopted a Resolution on the Refugees stressing the wars are about to empty the countries of its most important asset, their people. This has led to massive refugee flows and human disasters. The resolution underlined now we are in a situation where we all must help each other and work together. Both the EU and the major powers must work together to put an end to the war. The resolution is attached.

RESOLUTION ON DUMPING SEWAGE IN THE BALTIC SEA

General Conference adopted also a Resolution on Dumping Sewage in the Baltic Sea urging all ships to take immediate actions to stop dumping their sewage into the Baltic Sea.

The resolution also proposes that all decision-makers should work towards the goal to prohibit sewage dumping in the sea as soon as possible.



AUDITOR'S REPORT

Paweł Żaboklicki, Secretary General, informed the General Conference that the audit of UBC accounts for 2013 and 2014 had been performed by the licensed auditing company Bilans from Gdańsk. The report states that the Union financial transactions and records within the mentioned period have been handled properly. The conference took note of the report. The auditor's report is enclosed.

BOARD OF AUDIT REPORT

Marta Chełkowska, Director of Tourism & Promotion Department, Marshal Office of Pomeranian Region presented the report and recommendations of the Board of Audit. The General Conference took note of the report. The report of the Board of Audit is enclosed.

ABSOLVING THE BOARD, PRESIDIUM, SECRETARY

Following the proposal of the Board of Audit, the General Conference acknowledged the fulfilment of duties by the Executive Board, Presidium, Secretary General in 2013 and 2014.

MEMBERSHIP FEES 2016-2017

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the Executive Board's proposal of the membership fees for 2016 and 2017 (no change comparing to the period 2014-2015). The General Conference approved the membership fees for the financial period 2016-2017. The table with fees is enclosed.

PROPOSAL ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Polish member cities proposed that the member city hosting the UBC Secretariat should have a seat in the Executive Board outside the national quota. The General Conference decided that the city hosting the Secretariat gets an observer status in the Executive Board.

ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

After appointment amongst the member cities in each country the following cities were confirmed as members of UBC Executive Board in the next two-year period: Naestved (Denmark), Elva (Estonia), Lahti (Finland), Rostock (Germany), Liepāja (Latvia), Kaunas (Lithuania), Kristiansand (Norway), Gdynia (Poland), St. Petersburg (Russia), Växjö (Sweden). The City of Gdańsk, the host city of the Secretariat was granted with observer status.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

The General Conference elected for a two-year period:

Per Bødker Andersen, Councillor, Kolding, as President of the Union

Marie-Louise Rönmark, Chair of the City Council, Umeå, as first Vice-President of the Union

Jarkko Virtanen, Deputy Mayor of Turku, as Vice-President of the Union

Ando Kiviberg, Mayor of Viljandi, as Vice-President of the Union

ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF AUDIT

The General Conference re-appointed Marta Chełkowska, Director of Tourism & Promotion Department, Marshal Office of Pomeranian Region, Jukka Vilen, City Director, Kemi, and appointed Roger Kaliff, Chairman of the City Council, Kalmar to the UBC Board of Audit for a two-year period.

SECRETARIAT

Following the proposal of the Mayor of the City of Gdańsk, Paweł Adamowicz, the General Conference decided to maintain the UBC Secretariat in the City of Gdańsk, for the next four-year period.



AUDITOR FOR 2015-2016

The General Conference appointed the licensed auditing company Bilans from Gdańsk as the UBC auditor for 2015-2016.

VENUE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 2017

The City of Växjö, Sweden was elected to be the host city of the next XIV General Conference to be held in 2017.

CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

Per Bødker Andersen, the President of the Union, expressed his warm thanks to the City of Gdynia, delegates from member cities, young people, speakers, guests and the UBC secretariat for their outstanding contribution to the success of the XIII UBC General Conference.