



Baltic Cities

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Welfare
and Health Promotion



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COVER PICTURE
City of Vaasa

Baltic Cities Bulletin

Dear UBC Friends,

The role of municipalities in health promotion and providing the conditions for well-being is increasing. Today more than 70% of European population live in the urban areas which make the cities tackle public health challenges in a much wider scale than ever. The rapid urbanization has significant impact on the public health. It is very often associated with changes in diet and the physical exertion routine, increasing obesity in society and heightening the risk of type II diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. The increasing movement of people from rural to urban areas together with the growing cross-border movement often alter the characteristic epidemiological disease profile of a country. At the same time, new diseases appear and/or old ones reemerge, such is the case of HIV/AIDS or tuberculosis. Also, new social challenges appear, e.g. ageing society, the poor and migrants problems.



As the effects that urbanization can have on health and well-being of the society are serious, it is essential to include health considerations into policymaking.

There are national health programmes indeed, however, the local actions are needed to assure their successful implementation and to guarantee the sustainable development of the societies.

What is more, even the most reasonable and effective policy is often not enough. A close and multi-dimensional cooperation with numerous local, national, non-governmental or international partners is a must in many cases.

This issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin is entitled "Welfare and Health Promotion". Being aware of the diversity around the Baltic Sea, different historical, cultural, social and economic conditions of our member cities I truly believe it creates a great opportunity to learn more on how to successfully face the challenges our times bring. The experiences shared in the pages of the Bulletin may significantly influence the quality and effectiveness of the healthcare and social services in the cities and the whole region having an ambition to be sustainable, safe and secure.

The stories present the cities' experience on how to increase and maintain the social welfare, security and participation in society. Many of the UBC members have their own local health strategies or programmes, numerous projects co-funded by the EU are implemented. There is a wide range of areas focused on, e.g. primary healthcare, health promotion, encouraging healthy lifestyles, reducing the use of addictive substances, social care, prevention work concerning cancer. More often the cities tackle the demographic challenge of the ageing society, initiating projects addressed at the seniors which main aim is to maintain their social involvement.

Have an interesting reading, be inspired!

With the Baltic Sea greetings,

Per Bødker Andersen
President of UBC

Kolding, May 2012



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Artistic activities may be more important for recovery than pills and calls. Bergen is improving an access to its cultural life.



The UBC Executive Board adopted the UBC Communication and Marketing Strategy at its meeting in Brussels held on 14 February 2012

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Health

A successful society is the one that enhances the people to pursue the goals important to their own lives, whether through individual or collective actions. A public health can be seen as indicator of such capabilities. Health is also a relatively uncontroversial measure of well-being - longer life expectancies and lower rates of mortality can reasonably be associated with the success of a society.

Economic factors

The development of medicine has reduced the incidence and effects of many diseases, but comparisons over time and countries show that this type of innovation explains only a small portion of the variance in population health. Much more can be attributed to the economic prosperity of a country or community and corresponding improvements in sanitation, housing or public utilities. But material factors alone do not provide complete explanations, however in all cities, people of lower socioeconomic status tend to have worse health than those of higher socioeconomic status.

The emotional and physiological responses generated by the challenges people encounter in daily life influence not only their risk behaviors but also their susceptibility to many of the chronic illnesses that have become the dominant causes of mortality in the developed world, including stroke and heart disease. The stress of everyday life depends crucially on the balance between the magnitude of the life challenges (referring to the tasks a person regards as most important to life) facing a person and his or her capabilities of responding to such challenges.

Ultimately, capabilities depend on access to the range of resources that can be used to resolve life's problems. As the life challenges start to threaten an individual potential for coping with them, a person is expected to experience higher level of tension, anger, anxiety, and depression that take a toll on health. In general, people with higher incomes face fewer – and generally different – challenges than those with low incomes. Even more important, however, is the contribution the economic resources make to a person's capabilities. In most societies income is a multipurpose instrument that can be deployed to meet many kinds of challenges, ranging from securing housing to finding a partner. In short, the balance between life challenges and capabilities is a function of material resources. Economic inequality has an important impact on the distribution of health across populations and nations.

Contact the other people, be healthier!

But the core point is that a person's capabilities can be increased not only by his access to material resources but also by his access to social resources. Social epidemiologists have shown that social relations matter to people's health. There is considerable evidence that people with close ties to others tend to enjoy better health and to recover more effectively from illness than those who have relatively few such ties. The level and intensity of contacts with others affect all-cause mortality, self-rated health, and rates of recovery from illnesses such as myocardial infarction.

The secondary associations and trust in others are said to provide a community with multipurpose "social capital" that can be used to mobilize collective action, especially to press authorities to address the needs of the community. The studies show relatively strong correlations between the density of membership in associations and average level of health across communities. Those who belong to such associations also appear to be healthier, even when factors such as age, income, and social class are controlled. Social networks provide logistic support for important tasks, such as raising children, securing employment, and managing illness. Close contacts provide the emotional support that prevents from isolation or depression.

The public health depends not only on the effective administrative capacities of a local authority or the increase of national income, but also on the development of a wider range of institutions at the societal level that improve the capabilities of ordinary people. The deliberative processes fostered by democratic

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Health Promotion

a key to a successful city

institutions have a role to play but are insufficient to generate large improvements in health. Population health has been advanced most effectively in places where institutions are accompanied by high level of social mobilization that enable communities to press authorities to take actions.

Those interested in enhancing a public health should not assume that a common institutional form will work well in all cultural settings. The effective institutional design must take into account the cultural context in which institutions will be positioned.

A public policy should also be seen as a process of social resource creation. The municipalities can improve the health of the population not only with conventional efforts directly aimed at health promotion, but also by configuring a much wider range of policies to promote or redistribute social resources.

New challenges - Baltic Sea Region response

Social and health related issues are the most difficult topics the cities cope with. Changing reality brings constantly new problems to solve and new challenges, e.g. the changes in demography related to the ageing of the society and migrations or economic crisis.

Our citizens expect basically the same public services but social anticipation and demands often grow faster than municipal capacity to respond them. Besides, the available resources are frequently too scarce making the health and social aims hard to handle.

Last year in Liepāja during the UBC General Conference workshop devoted to ageing society we introduced diagnosis of the situation connected with changes in Baltic Sea Region demography together with some proposals about the possible ways of dealing with this situation. However, we still remember that older citizens are not the only socially vulnerable group and that municipal policy should take into consideration interests of all members of the society. Treating health expenditures as the investment not only the cost was the idea presented by the Healthy Cities network.

This issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin is entitled "Welfare and Health Promotion". Being aware of the diversity around the Baltic Sea, different historical, cultural, social and economic conditions experienced by our member cities we believe it creates the consecutive opportunity for successful facing the contemporary health and social challenges. This publication may serve as one of the forums for exchange of ideas and experiences between the member cities.

A healthy population is a critical factor behind sustainable economic development of enterprises and societies. Therefore, the health sector appears as one of the important factors for the maintenance and reinforcement of the attractiveness of the Baltic Sea Region. However,

the region features places, where social and economic problems lead to high levels of mortality, morbidity and loss of work ability and productivity due to the non-communicable diseases and accidents (such as by hazardous and harmful use of alcohol, drug-abuse, tobacco, obesity, lack of physical activity and violence), and by the spread of infectious diseases (such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis). The growing cross-border movement of people poses additional challenges, such as increased spread of communicable diseases or migrants' health, therefore it should be paralleled by actions addressing inequalities in health status and in the level of health protection.

In the EU Strategy for Baltic Sea Region health related issues are comprised by the Priority Area 12. Three main actions included in the Action Plan for this area tackle:

- containing the spread of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis,
- fighting the health inequalities through the improvement of primary healthcare,
- Preventing lifestyle-related non-communicable diseases and ensuring good social and work environments.

The Lead Partner coordinating this health sub-area of the EUSBSR Action Plan is Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being. A participation in the UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs activities creates an opportunity for the cities to collaborate with the Expert Groups operating within the framework of NDPHS. The Expert Groups focus on surveillance, awareness-raising and policy development, as well as treatment and prevention.

This June in Vaasa, Finland, during the UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs meeting the representatives of the Expert Group will present their work towards containment of the spread of HIV/AIDS and associated infections.

Let's cooperate!

A cooperation with NDPHS and Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association generates a chance for health promotion and preventive work not to be a single instrument utilized by the cities' departments on health and social issues, but a strategic approach, that may improve situation of the society and long-term conditions of life.

The contributions from the cities show that UBC members actively seek solutions, often in very creative ways, converting things which appeared weaknesses into advantages, regardless scarce resources.

Many examples prove that health promotion is an important part of strategic thinking about the future well-being of the cities. However, many of these actions could not happen without co-operation with other important actors like: local media, entrepreneurs, non-government organizations or individuals.



The Fight against Smoke in Aalborg



by Mette B. Krogh

Aalborg has undertaken drastic measures against smoking. In 2007, Aalborg football stadium was the only one smoke-free stadium in the league, which was rather unique at that time.

We know that smoking is the greatest threat to public health, and we need a systematic approach if we want to do something about it,

says Alderman Thomas Kastrup-Larsen from the Department of Health and Sustainable Development.

Efforts are being targeted, among other areas, the educational sector, certain residential areas, and the area of housing assistance for adults with mental disorders.

The number of adult smokers has decreased, but this is not the case among young people. Aalborg is working closely together with all secondary schools in the municipality towards a common strategy of smoke-free schools. Educational institutions have been offered to have their staff being trained as smoking cessation instructors. The goal is that all youth education is 100% smoke-free by 1 January 2013.

In certain neighborhoods of Aalborg with a high concentration of low paid, unemployed, single, addicts, etc., there has been a great success in proactive recruitment in relation to smoking cessation.



In the 5-month-course 37 people have participated. A stop rate of 62% is a clear indication that the method is a success.

Around 450 mentally challenged citizens receive public support at home, and approximately 300 of these are smokers. The desire to stop smoking among these citizens is just as prevalent as it is with others, but often it is considered completely unrealistic for them

to participate in the established smoking cessation courses. During 2 years of systematic approach, the reductions of the proportion of citizens who smoke during visits have been successful, and more and more are involved in a smoking cessation course. Among other things, a brochure about the municipality's smoking policy has been developed, and at the first home visit an employee has a conversation about smoking and the motivation for a general cessation.

MORE

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Recovery through Artistic and Cultural Activities

by Audun Pedersen

Until 2000, the artistic activities in mental health services got little attention. It was organized either as therapy led by professionals or seen as something to be done in between "the real treatment". The last 10 years have taught all much more about the importance of art and culture. It started with the creation of a user-driven creative center called Amalie Skram's House. Members here were given the opportunity to use well-equipped rooms to create ceramics, pictures, music, design and more. The house also offers group activities in theater, literature and other creative activities. Focus on the creativity as a personal force and the democratic management of the house, gave a new arena for people with mental disorders to find their own language.

Artistic activities may for some be more important for recovery than pills and calls.

In 2001 another project was launched. The aim was to improve access to the rich cultural life in Bergen in the arts and culture. Different methods were used to achieve this. The second goal was to give people with mental health problems venues where they could be creative and be seen and heard. The literature journal 'Power Plant' has existed for over ten years with four numbers a year. Both professional writers and users of mental health services are writing there. The project hosts a number of courses, makes art catalogs, and establishes theater groups, music ensembles and more.

After a study trip to Aarhus, Denmark, in 2002 Gallery VOX was opened up. It allows up to 20 users with artistic background or a good talents to be in a professional environment for their artistic work. All employees have a long-term disorder. In the past few years, several of the users have had exhibitions and they create good artistic quality in several forms. Some of those who were employed here from the beginning are now on their way into ordinary work.



There is still much to be gained by helping people with mental health problems to be creative on their own terms - in a safe and accessible environment. For many users, these services are more important than pills and psychological conversations.

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Health Promotion Leadership – an Investment for the Future

by Catharina Hegrelius

The Municipality of Gävle, together with five other municipalities in the County of Gävleborg, has decided to invest in health promotion leadership and workplace health promotion to better meet the future challenges. The public sector faces challenges and structural changes e.g. an ageing population, economy and demands for efficiency, technology and new demands for services and support from citizens.

For many years the municipalities in the County of Gävleborg have networked in the field of health promotion. In 2011 the European Social Fund made possible to work with health promotion leadership and train more than 800 managers. A regional partnership with health promotion experts has also been formed. They receive a high level training and shall function as a support on both local and regional levels in the work on workplace health promotion. The project began on 1 February 2011 and will continue until 30 June 2013.

The overall objective is to integrate a health promotion approach on an individual and organisational levels. Creating platforms for continuous development of health promotion in operations and competence is decisive. The co-operation within and between the municipalities in the county is a key success factor.

The Municipality of Gävle has today two health promotion experts, who both take part in the regional partnership. Their main task, though, is to support the work on how to integrate the right approach on both on individual and organisational levels.

A health targeted approach to leadership contributes to a culture

We intend to meet future challenges in the public sector with health promotion leadership. This means that our managers must understand the relationship between work and health and that they have the competence to apply the understanding in their role as leaders. They must also have a good understanding of individual, group and organisational health factors and have the necessary skills to apply their skills in the work situation, says Siv Nyberg, health promotion expert in Gävle.



in which people strive to inspire, encourage and acknowledge positive behaviour. It creates a context that is more meaningful and nurtures both leadership and teamwork. Health promotion leadership is an initiative for sustainability in public organisations. Healthy people and healthy organizations prevent alienation and long term sickness absence.

MORE

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Gdańsk Programme 6-10-14 for Health

by Jarosław Formela

According to the research of the Centre of Child Health and Fitness Promotion in Gdańsk, in 2009 in the city overweight and obesity were noted respectively at 10,5 per cent and 7,9 per cent of the children aged 6, and at 15,1 per cent and 7,27 per cent of children between 8 and 12 years of age. These numbers have been dramatically increasing since the last few years. Obesity and overweight significantly increase the risk of civilization disease, including diabetes, cardiac disorders, metabolic disease, etc.

'Health Programme of Prevention and Early Detection of Children and Youth Civilization Disease' was initiated by the Centre of Child Health and Fitness Promotion in Gdańsk and University Clinical Centre in Gdańsk. It has been running in 2011 – 2013. Comprising youngsters aged 6, 10 and 14 years, it is aimed at early diagnostics of the risk of overweight, obesity or faulty posture. Gdańsk is a pioneer in implementing such a wide-scale health programme focused on child obesity.

The complex health and educative campaign is addressed not only at children and youth but also at their parents and schools. Almost 26 thousands of the young patients will be examined within 3 years. Also, all primary schools and gymnasia in Gdańsk, in total 100, take part.

'6-10-14 for Health' consists of:

- screening of the respective groups and survey analysis to select patients at risk,
- counseling for those who have been qualified for a medical attention;
- medical intervention,
- complex educational programme for children/youth and their parents, including information on diet, physical activity, etc.,
- training of the school staff in the field of overweight, obesity and civilization disease.

In 2012 the Programme gained a positive assessment of the Agency for Health Technology Assessment in Poland. The role of AHTAPol is to assess and appraise all medical technologies and services claiming public money funding.

'6-10-14 for Health' Programme is financed by the city of Gdańsk and run by the University Clinical Centre in Gdańsk. The participation is free of charge.

MORE

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Socially Innovative Gdynia



by Aleksandra Dębska-Cenian

Gdynia has been actively implementing social innovations in various fields for years, creating solutions that serve as nationwide examples. The effective work in the field of social welfare, or even broadly – the social policy, requires a constant setting up of new goals and searching for the ideas that are “ahead of their times”.

Such approach inspired creating a space dedicated to growth of social innovations. It is located at the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park (PSTP). For several months now, in the Park next to IT specialist, biotechnologist and designers, a reality aiming at the development of social innovations has been created. The goal of the established social innovation module is integrating the community, networking, inspiring, and supporting – substantially and financially – development of social innovations.

The module is developed in the strategic partnership with the Social Welfare Centre in Gdynia. The partnership itself already reflects the fact that Gdynia manages a modern welfare and relies on searching for innovations that resolve the most difficult social challenges

such as homelessness, disability, aging of the society, or accumulated social problems. Another role of the social innovation module at the PSTP is supporting the innovative initiatives, especially those related to the participation of Gdynia’s residents. One of such initiatives is a successful organizing local community, like the one in Gdynia Chylonia district.

In 2011, Pomeranian Science and Technology Park has been a Country Partner of Social Innovation Europe (SIE) – European Commission’s initiative launched in March 2011. The partnership enables access to knowledge, experience, projects, organisations and innovative methods in social actions throughout whole Europe. Gdynia has even more assets in developing social innovations when it comes to collaboration with the international experts. As of July 2011, one of three Polish offices of the United Nations Development Programme has been operating in Gdynia at the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park. In addition, last year in September, PSTP hosted TEDxGdynia dedicated to social innovations. Later that year in November the Park co-organised SIX Winter School, a 3-day workshop event attended by the social innovators from all over the world cooperating within the Social Innovation eXchange (SIX) network.

MORE

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Photo: Hamish Jordan



GULDBORGSUND

Get on the Bus – and Get Healthy!

by Gitte Piil Eriksen

Guldborgsund Municipality participated in February 2008 in a national health survey project, called KRAM. The survey discovered a lot of challenges in health promotion. The citizens’ health behaviour was significant below the middle, among municipalities with low levels of education and income.

Following this national health survey Guldborgsund continued the focus on the KRAM-factors (K stands for diet, R smoking, A alcohol and M exercise, and “kram” is the Danish word for a hug). KRAM is a simple message and easy to communicate.

The Health Department in Guldborgsund arranged KRAM-ambassador courses for local workplaces, bought a minibus named the KRAM-bus and interviewed citizens to the local newspaper. The interviewed were citizens who had quit smoking, lost weight, started running or started other health improving activities. At KRAM-ambassador courses employees get inspiration to initiate health promoting activities at their workplace. It can be fruit schemes, healthier food in their canteen or for meetings, quit-smoking courses, establishing an alcohol policy, or exercise classes after work. The KRAM-bus offers employees and citizens a health check consisting of carbon monoxide measurement, pulmonary function testing for smokers over 35 years, fitness and blood pressure measurement, as well as body analysis consisting of BMI and percentage of fat. Depending on the results, the person is



offered a health interview with a health consultant. The KRAM-bus comes around in the municipality twice each year and visit businesses and institutions by appointment. The results show that the individual takes responsibility for his or her own lifestyle.

In 2010 Guldborgsund participated in a new nationwide health survey. New data showed that citizens were in the process of changing health behaviour. Citizens now smoke and drink less than people in comparable

municipalities and they are more physically active. The data actually places the citizens’ health profile among municipalities with a higher degree of education and higher income. This could indicate that the efforts done in connection with the KRAM-factors are working. Measuring of the person’s individual health data is highly motivating for the citizens to see their own health described in numbers and being able to compare the development over time.

MORE

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Becoming a Centre of Excellence

by Priit Eelmäe, Triin Lepp and Talis Vare

Centre of Excellence in Health Promotion and Rehabilitation (CE) has been established in Haapsalu in 2012 in cooperation of 15 partners from private and public sectors. CE focuses on two specific areas:

- population's mobility and physical activity,
- mud cure and curative mud.

Tallinn University Haapsalu College, a public university in Haapsalu, launched Health Promotion curriculum in 2008. By now 30 students have obtained the profession of health promotion specialist and 50 more are currently studying to become one. The purpose of health promotion studies is to provide general knowledge about health development, health promotion comprising the evaluation, planning and managing of health situation in community, designing health policy, and training skills for working in public, private and non-governmental systems in the field of public health. Within the curricula, a special emphasis is put on real-world examples and case studies.

Haapsalu Neurological Rehabilitation Centre (HNRC) was founded in 1958 in order to provide treatment for the victims of the poliomyelitis epidemic. Over the last 50 years HNRC has developed into a modern rehabilitation centre mainly specialized on adults and children with different neurological conditions. The majority of patients are people with spinal cord injuries and brain damage but also patients with progressive neurological conditions, multiple traumas, congenital developmental disabilities, etc.

The purpose of the everyday work in HNRC is to restore, develop and maintain the maximal functional independence of patients in eve-



Body weight supported treadmill training in clinical gait lab

ryday activities by multidisciplinary team-work. The team consists of a doctor, a nurse, a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist, a psychologist, a speech therapist, and a social worker. Clinical research and applied science projects in CE are implemented in HNRC. HNRC with its specific and unique neurological clients/patients and modern high tech equipment is excellent environment to test new ideas in physical and rehabilitation medicine. The general frame of the rehabilitation is to create situation where minimum three hours of active supervised rehabilitation services (physiotherapy, occupational

therapy, psychological counseling etc) are delivered per day accepting patient's specific needs and supporting integration to everyday life. Additionally, supportive procedures, e.g. massage, heat and electrotherapy, hydrotherapy, etc. are possible to use.

The mission of CE is to promote the research based mobility and physical activity of the working-age population, as well as rehabilitation activities, and also to promote regional development.

MORE

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Jēkabpils Supports Healthy Lifestyle

by Laura Afanasjeva



One of the functions of a local government is to promote healthy lifestyle and sports. Local government is entitled to promote formation and operation of sports organizations, including sports clubs. Jēkabpils municipality together with local entrepreneurs has the opportunity to form the basketball club 'Jēkabpils' that will play in Latvian national basketball league. By taking part in this undertaking, the municipality promotes sports life and encourage youngsters to live active and healthy lifestyle. Members of the Jēkabpils City Council at the recent council meeting approved the idea to form a society 'Basketball club Jēkabpils'. The mayor of Jēkabpils, Leonīds Salcevičs, was authorized to represent the Council in the founders' meetings of the club. Basketball is the one between football, volleyball and others that gathers children of all ages, as well as grown-ups. Already there are 10 age groups of youngsters in the city that play basketball. The main goal of this club is to support a development of high class basketball players.

MORE

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Blekinge Health Arena

Storytelling about Welfare and Health



by Eva Dahlberg

Karlskrona Municipality is responsible for the Blekinge Health Arena project which is the next step in developing Sport, Health, Tourism and Experience. It will:

- Create opportunities for increased quality of life,
- Create an environment where entrepreneurs and business, connected to activities, develop and grow,
- Develop health programmes for everyone based on functional training and tests well-founded in sports methods for training and tests.

There is the unique, fully equipped Test Lab centrally located in the Arena. With great possibilities for education, testing and training an environment and a centre for development, research and future success for everyone from sport at top level to ordinary people in the whole region were created. The Test Lab is an open area and experimental environment developed to create new ideas which will lead to a good life style. New business possibilities will be created based on sports and health.

For ordinary people Get-started Programme was developed. The programme is ten weeks long and the aim is to get people to change their lifestyle. The programme starts with Miro Zalar, retired Swedish pole vaulter, who gives an inspiration lecture about training, a balanced diet, sleep, goals and motivation. The participants will carry out a training session and some tests. After four weeks there is a lecture about a balanced diet and after ten weeks the

Blekinge Health Arena is a cooperation of the Municipality of Karlskrona, Region Blekinge, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Landstinget Blekinge, SISU Idrottsutbildarna, Blekinge Idrottsförbund, TelecomCity, Netport, the Swedish Navy, sports association and business.



participants will do the tests again. And hopefully they are ready for the next step.

There are some companies attached to Blekinge Health Arena. They offer different kinds of services for everyone, for example flotation tank, massage, chiropractic, personal trainer, training groups – indoors and outdoors, stability training.

MORE

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Elbląg against Children Obesity

by Ewa Pietryka

Elbląg's authorities undertake a number of actions aimed at preventing obesity and overweight among children and young people.

The scale of this problem in the city has been identified in collaboration with the local School Medicine and Health Promotion Clinic "Szkoł-Med" in Elbląg. Research shown that almost 11% of the examined population were overweight and obese.

The study confirmed that obesity and overweight are among the biggest health problems of children and young people in the city. Overweight and obese children were taken care of by psychologists and school counsellors. Specialists assist students in overcoming difficulties associated with the return to a healthy weight. Physical education teachers are also help overweight or obese students by providing individual assistance in the proper selection of gymnastics targeted at preventing obesity and enhancing overall mobility.

The schools in Elbląg organise extracurricular sport and leisure activities. In this way they promote the idea of spending free time in an active way (dance classes, hiking, games, corrective gymnastics and activities resulting from the implementation of diverse programs and innovations).

Elbląg created conditions for the implementation of various forms of physical activity, including activities for overweight or obese children. Recently, sport facilities in Elbląg's schools have im-

proved considerably. Old sport fields were modernised and new ones built. There are also new tartan athletic tracks and long jump runways. A skating track with asphalt surface was modernised in one of Elbląg's primary schools.

The city subsidizes also local prevention and health promotion programs targeting children and young people aiming at raising awareness among school pupils so that they could take care of their own health.

Building a new swimming pool in Elbląg is also being considered to improve the offer of extracurricular swimming lessons.

Medical research in Elbląg confirmed the presence of numerous physical developmental deficits in primary school students. It is clear that these children should be offered leisure and fitness activities, and many of them should participate in the swimming classes.

At present, a very strong interest in swimming lessons for children and young people is being observed in Elbląg. There is the huge demand from Elbląg's schools to use the municipal swimming pool. All 15 primary schools apply for participation in the swimming learning program, which includes more than six thousand children. The construction of a new indoor swimming pool undoubtedly responds the needs of the society.

MORE

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Public Health Work in Karlstad

by Lina Helgerud

Since June 2011, Karlstad has had a public health strategy in the municipality. The strategy reveals the ambitions and objectives of the municipality with respect to work being carried out to improve the conditions for good health amongst Karlstad's residents. Karlstad public health strategy is divided into four areas of operation that comprise both comprehensive and partial objectives. Prioritised target groups are children, youth, the elderly and people with disabilities.

The first area of operation, **Living conditions for good and equal health**, concerns improving the most basic conditions for health, which is also one of the basic human rights. This is about improving the conditions for participation and influence, improving the opportunity to lead more independent lives by supporting the access to one's own residence and social security.

Healthy lifestyle, the second area of operation, starts out more from the attitudes, habits and behaviour of the residents of Karlstad. In this area, the objectives deal with eating habits, physical and cultural activities, mental health, risk-taking behaviour and unhealthy practices that can lead to addiction or illness. The challenge is creating environments that provide good conditions for citizens to make active choices that improve conditions for health and also bring about a positive trend in the development of their health.

The third area of operation, **Lifelong learning**, deals partly with providing the children and young people with a good start in life and partly with allowing them to attain a level of education that provides them with the prerequisites for future employment.

The fourth area, **Healthy planning of society**, has its starting point in the physical environment, its design and how it affects the health. It deals with, among other things, proximity to green areas, footpaths, cycle paths and design of the various residential areas.

One new venture is **Healthy Senior**. This is a project that aims at offering senior citizens, 65 years of age and older, the opportunity to try out various forms of exercise and perhaps find a new leisure activity. Healthy Senior is a joint venture between Värmland Sports Association and Karlstad Municipality in which senior citizens are offered two different 'try-out' opportunities per week over a ten-week period, absolutely free. Local leaders and instructors run the activities, e.g. bowling, bowls, weightlifting, zumba gold and lectures about health.



This initiative is more than to simply create opportunities for exercise, it is also about creating meeting places and camaraderie.

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Working with Seniors in Kaunas

by Tomas Vaiciunas

Kaunas Bureau of Public Health is experienced with working with seniors groups, providing physical activity and mental health. In 2009, it implemented the program called „The promotion of Seniors physical activity“. The aim of the program is to promote seniors physical activity as the prevention of heart and blood circulation system and chronic non-infectious diseases.

The Bureau of Public Health has established an informal group of senior volunteers, whose aim is to provide decent-minded people to maintain their health by improving the quality of life. Its vision is to disseminate information to colleagues or peers about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to reach it in an easy way.

The public health professionals, according the field of their competency, consult sen-



"The program pleasantly surprised me. Already after the first session I felt elevated, and now I feel more confidence of my physical form. Now, I wake up in a good mood" (Mrs. Saule, 75 years).

"I am very pleased with everything. I participated in all sessions and did everything that my power allowed me to do. Although I am after the surgery, I feel much better now. This wonderful program also helped me to get rid of emotional stress and depression. This Public Health Bureau program is wonderful. Thank you very much!" (Mrs. Algide, 82 years).

iors on a variety health topics: chronic and non-communicable disease prevention, physical activity, socialization and healthy ageing, mental health promotion and other relevant aspects of a healthy lifestyle. These informal meetings of senior volunteer groups are determined to communicate and collaborate, discuss and find solutions on how to improve the decent quality of life by promoting healthier lifestyles, as well as to gain new knowledge and experiences.

Kaunas Public Health Bureau called all seniors to try new – old physical activities: Nordic walking, Pilates, the pleasure of exercises at the indoor swimming pool, etc.

MORE

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Recreation Trails in Keila



by Valdur Vacht

In the North-West corner of Keila, at the former location of the Soviet Army's tankodrome, there is now a 20-hectare forest park. The park has various recreation trails that offer great opportunities for leisure time activities.

After the army left in 1992, locals started to use the area for walking and skiing in the wintertime. It took a few years to clean the park from military waste.

Using financial aid from Norway, the 3.4 km long roller-skating track and ski stadium were covered with asphalt in 2009. At the ribbon cutting ceremony, wheelchair athletes wheeled through the ribbon which was held by the First Lady Mrs. Ilves, Ambassador of Kingdom of Norway Ingrid Susanne Farner and Keila's Mayor Tanel Mõistus.

The area also hosts a football stadium with two fields. Besides the local football club, other clubs, including Westham United, have used football fields for practice. There is also a baseball field a bit further away, standing on its own. Nearby there is one of Estonia's ten disc golf courses.

The area has an excellent map which orienteers have taken full

advantage of, using the recreation trails for orienteering events. The trails are used for running by joggers and athletes.

There are now also more hills, most of them on the ski tracks. One of the hills has a BMX track. However, bicycle motocrossers are not the only ones enjoying the facility. Mountain bikers have also discovered the forest trails which they use for both training and competitions.

There is even a small playground for children.

People also use the park for Nordic walking, dog training and walking. As many valuable natural sites and protected plant species can be found in the park, an almost 10-kilometre long hiking trail has been established.

This is how, within two decades, a military area was transformed into a public area accessible to all residents of Keila and athletes from all over Estonia and abroad. But that is not the end of it. We dream about and strive for having support and service facilities in the area. Together with a big sports hall and swimming pool situated less than a kilometre away, the recreation trails offer wonderful opportunities for sports and recreational activities. Keila can proudly call itself a Health Town, says Tanel Mõistus, the Mayor of Keila.



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Early Prevention in Kiel

Health Promotion from the Beginning

by Helena Keller

Equal opportunities for every one and right from the start, is one of the aims of Kiel. To achieve this, the program "Frühe Hilfen" (early prevention) was established in 2008. Families with infants and toddlers aged 0 to 3 years who need special support are offered an uncomplicated and low-threshold assistance with this program. A very close network between the health and the child and youth welfare services is crucial to develop well coordinated processes to avoid or eliminate family situations of excessive demand before it gets critical.

The program offers numerous components to support families, but is currently largely limited to districts with special development needs. Home visits to parents of newborns are offered by two health and pediatric nurses. They answer the parents' questions on nutrition or infant care. Besides the nurses are able to arrange additional help, in case it is needed. Also, well accepted is the possibility of psychological counseling to prevent disorders in the parent-child-bond, which can be offered as cooperation between the Department of Health and the Child Protection Center Kiel. The very low-threshold approach allows parents to take the advice freely and at ease. Since its inception in 2008, the use and intensity of the counseling increases steadily. There are also additionally trained family midwives, who enable psycho-social support to families with newborns till the first birthday.

The construction of such a comprehensive approach to prevention and health promotion requires a lot of time and high networking and cooperation. Thus, in the context of the "Frühe Hilfen" various target groups can also be addressed, for example families who are hit by chronic disease or disability or families with migratory background. A special gift is given all newborns in Kiel with the welcome folder, which contains information for the first year of life, important addresses and vouchers.

The program is funded by the community and the state Schleswig-Holstein. The cooperation projects are financed by the initiators of the projects with grants from the community.

Additional health promotion is planned with the establishment of life-skills training in early childhood settings (e.g. violence prevention). Kiel is also about to install an integrated social planning to develop holistic approaches (e.g. demographics, urban planning) which improve the population's quality of life. This is also represented in the membership of the National Healthy-Cities-Network since 2002.

MORE

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Public Health in Klaipėda

by Janina Asadauskiene

Klaipėda is the first Lithuanian city to become a member of the Healthy Cities Network of the World Health Organization. The City Council, treating public health as one of the priorities, has decided to include health interests into all local strategies. The main document, implementing the ideals of a Healthy City, is Klaipėda City Strategic Development Plan, which already now is under preparation for 2013-2020. The Community Health Council under the City Council initiates and coordinates the activities, and Public Health Bureau carries out coordinator's function and is the main institution executing the primary public health care in the city. This institution implements functions of public health observation, consolidation and education. Its specialists teach school-children skills of healthy life-styles. The municipality is among of the most active in implementation of health programs allowing for the set priorities and succession need.

In the field of infectious diseases prevention, the Program of Drug Reduction has been under implementation since 1996 – it has determined that HIV/AIDS problem is controlled and not so outspread as in neighbouring countries. Klaipėda is also a member of European Cities against Drugs organization.



For promotion of a greater physical activity the program „Robust Health“ is carried out. It gives possibilities for elderly people to take free-of charge exercises at body-building gyms, swimming pools, to go in for yoga and dancing lessons. Annually, over 500 people participate in the program.

Carrying out the prophylaxies of sexually transmitted diseases services are provided to social risk persons (to those engaged in commercial sex), social and medical consultations are arranged, protection devices distributed.

For the improvement of children's health, competitions for children of pre-school and school age, called "I Grow Healthy" and "The Healthiest Class", are organized on a regular basis. A cycle of seminars "Computer Technologies and Children's Emotional Health", dedicated to 5-8 formers, their parents, teachers and specialists of public health, was very successful.

With the aim of suicide prevention, for many years the programs of Hope Line and Mobile Teams have been under execution - urgent, free-of-charge anonymous psychological consultations by phone and internet are provided. Every year about 12000 calls and 300 letters are answered.

Health issues are a regular topic in daily newspapers. Information on prophylactic tests within the state program on breast, cervical and prostate cancer are distributed. The video film "Klaipėda – a Healthy City" has been created.

A healthy city is a process. It means a city is taking constant special care of its citizens' healthiness and is making efforts to improve it.

On 18 October this autumn, Klaipėda organizes an international conference "A Health City – the Reality and Future Prospects". Interested professionals of the Union of the Baltic Cities are kindly invited to take part, share their experiences and learn more about the achievements of Klaipėda as a Healthy City.



MORE

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Healthy Kolding



by Lone Hede Bisgaard Kristensen
& Helle Vibeke Nyborg Rasmussen

In the fall of 2011 the City Council of Kolding approved the new Health Policy and Health Plan for 2011 - 2014. In this period the focus areas will be: physical activity, smoking, alcohol, mental health and healthy food.

The Health Plan has thirty-one different initiatives and there has been made an effort to include both intern and extern partners.

One of the initiatives is regarding alcohol prevention in corporation with the department for children and education, the department for senior citizens and the department for communication. The aim is to ensure early tracing of citizens with alcohol problems and to make sure they have been offered help by the employees of the municipality and the citizens with the proper knowledge and tools.

Health prevention and health promotion have to start as early as possible to maintain and promote a healthy lifestyle. One initiative is therefore aimed at expecting parents and new parents to strengthen their competencies to increase the physical and mental health of the child. This initiative is offered to all new parents in the municipality. Another initiative is prevention of obesity, indoor climate and hygiene promoted in day care institutions, kindergartens and schools. Besides, the health visitors offer at least five home visits to new parents within the first year of the baby's life and if the health visitor estimates the family has special needs they are offered more visits. Young vulnerable pregnant women are offered to participate in the group sessions held to support and guide in being a new and young family. These initiatives ensure that everybody gets a good and healthy start in life and helps to reduce inequality in health.

Also, the municipality focuses on promotion of the healthy ways of transport as cycling and walking and improves the traffic safety in cooperation with Danish Cyclist Federation.

VISION <i>health and wellbeing for all citizens in the Municipality of Kolding</i>
MISSION <i>the Municipality of Kolding supports the citizens' healthy choices</i>
OVERALL AIMS <i>the general public health increases all citizens are given the possibility for health prevention and promotion the social inequalities in health are reduced</i>
PRINCIPLES <i>early efforts, actions based on knowledge</i>
TARGET GROUPS <i>all citizens, with a particular attention of children, young adults and vulnerable groups</i>
AREAS OF FOCUS <i>physical activity, smoking, alcohol, mental health, healthy food</i>

The vision and mission of the Kolding Health Policy 2011-2014

Promotion of healthy food includes implementing healthy concepts in cafeterias and food stands so the healthy food becomes more visible and easier accessible than the junk food.

To promote the health of the senior citizens, the knowledge about health prevention and health promotion is spread out. Preventive home visits, supporting their social activities complement the actions addressed at the seniors.

MORE

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Coming out from Homelessness

by Katarzyna Wilczak

Homelessness is one of the most complex social problems. A lack of clear homelessness origins makes difficult to define the phenomenon scale and its direct causes.

The "CHANGE VECTOR – Koszalin Programme Supporting the Coming out of Homelessness" project is co-financed from European Union funds under the European Social Fund. The project is being performed by the Municipal Social Aid Centre in Koszalin, in partnership with the Municipal Social Aid Centre in Gdańsk.

The project objective is to extend the offer of the Koszalin area institutions and organisations by creation and promotion of a complex system of aid to the homeless people. The Programme has been run in 2011 - 2013. After the implementation, in Koszalin:

- a systematic monitoring of homelessness scope is performed,
- actions correspond with the origin of the homelessness,

Actions in 2011:

- socio-demographic surveys of the homeless persons (psycho-social portrait of the homeless people living in the city),
- survey of deficiency areas and problem phenomena in work in favour of the homeless people,
- intra-sector cooperation analysis,
- study visits,
- meetings and seminars on homelessness, work with the homeless people and presentation of model solutions.

Actions in 2012:

- training and employment of 8 streetworkers and 12 assistants to the homeless people,
- publishing the guidebooks for the homeless people and institutions,
- information campaign in media - preparation of a manual.

Actions in 2013:

- conferences and meetings to promote the results achieved,
- inclusion of the support tools,
- the manual publication.

- an efficient system of information exchange, as well as cooperation of various entities involved is operating,
- innovative support methods based on street-working and assistants to the homeless people are used,
- the conditions for implementation of support hierarchization are known in detail.

The target group is composed of the homeless, and homelessness endangered people in accordance with the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion ETHOS .

The System Supporting the Coming out from the Homelessness will make the aid provided more responsive to the real needs. Also, it will use not only the tools rooted in the statutory duties but also the extra-statutory actions.

MORE

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Raising Health Awareness in Kuressaare

by Anu Vares



Being the first city in Estonia, which joined the WHO Healthy Cities Network in 1998, and a founding member of the Estonian Healthy Cities Network, Kuressaare is committed to health development and promotion. It includes investments in infrastructure, support to events and dissemination of health information.

In 2012 Kuressaare City Government implements a project aimed at promoting healthy lifestyle and physical exercise among working-age people. Its main objective is to increase the number of people who make healthy choices and are physically active in order to prevent people dropping out of labour market because of health reasons.

The project is financed by the European Social Fund and co-financed by the City of Kuressaare. The total cost of the project is 14224 EUR and City Government's cooperation partners are Saare County Government, Foundation Kuressaare Sports Facilities, the Association of Entrepreneurs of Saaremaa and Saaremaa Sports Association.

The activities of the project include health promotion days in 10 organisations in Kuressaare. The lecturers introduce possibilities for physical exercise in Kuressaare and give suggestions how to make healthy choices at home and at work. Blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol level of the employees are measured at the health promotion day and a masseuse teaches the basic massage techniques.

Since 2008 Kuressaare has its own annual recreational sports series "Healthier by Moving" that is comprised of many events for all age groups all year round. In 2012 there are 32 events and four of them (skiing in February, walking in April, rollerblading in June and swim-

A popular place for pole-walking, running and skiing in Kuressaare is the Health Park with its various tracks. New information boards are installed in the park with the map of the tracks and guidelines for physical exercise in order to make information about warming up and stretching after walking or running available for all visitors.



Photo: Anneli Kikkas

ming in October) are included in the City Government's project. In addition to practising different sports people can get information from experts about the main principles of physical exercise, how to choose the right equipment, how to warm up before exercising, how to prevent injuries, etc.

To raise health awareness among the working-age people of Kuressaare, the project also includes production and distribution of information materials. In order to remind constantly the importance of making healthy choices in the office as well as at home, mousepads and tablepads that include simple recommendations (for example exercises for office workers, main principles of healthy eating etc.) for a healthy lifestyle are designed and distributed to employees of public and private sector organisations in Kuressaare.

MORE

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Wooly World in Liepāja

by Madara More / Wooly World

In Liepāja, a new hand made teddy bears manufacturing company - Wooly World was set up. The company is special not only with their products but also with philanthropic objectives.

Wooly World toys combine original hand-work with natural wool features. For Teddy's fur fine merino sheep wool from New Zealand is used but the Teddy's belly is filled with domestic Latvian wool.

The aim of this business is to provide employment for people who have very limited opportunities to find a job. The company employs several completely or partly blind people who are involved in production process. The company employs only six people and four of them are with visual disability, which are coordinated by one assistant. All employees are transported to and from work by the company's arranged transport and also offered tea, coffee and snacks during the daybreak. In the summer 2012 company will launch a new product line - Wooly



Organic that will be made from organic cotton and filled with antibacterial corn fibre. This product line will give additional working place for people in wheel chairs. The working schedule will also increase from 1 time per week to 3 times per week.

The company has gained popularity not only locally. Also, it is recognized abroad - in the autumn 2011 Wooly World was a winner of prestige Swedish Business Awards ceremony in nomination - Corporate social initiative of the year.

Being a profitable business which produces an export oriented high quality

product and employs people who are otherwise excluded from a job market, the Wooly World has called attention to society as an excellent example of social business in Latvia.

MORE

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Health - a Key Issue



by Dorthe Berg Rasmussen

In the years to come, Danish municipalities will face increasing challenges in ensuring public access to welfare benefits, partly on account of the economy but also due to the ageing population.

30 years from now every four Danes will be over 65 years old and the number of people with chronic diseases already account for approx. 39% of the adult population. Many of these chronic diseases are caused by our lifestyle.

The challenges are massive, and many municipalities have developed their own health programmes, which intensify the effort to include health promotion into every municipal area.

To help the citizens maintain a good health is a broad task that will require sound frameworks such as environmental sustainability, bike paths, green spaces, good housing and good conditions of health recreation and exercise activities. Health promotion must also be incorporated in e.g. schools. Increasing physical activity at school also affects children's learning abilities positively.

What will the future cost be for municipalities in Denmark to provide older people with the same care and practical help as they are today? This is not possible. The calculations show that spending will dramatically increase, and the traditional view of older people as frail, powerless and dependent must be reformed. The elderly persons functionality is crucial to how much support and care a person needs. The municipalities will be early action on preven-

tion, rehabilitation, welfare, technology and social networks, and this will lead to a decline in the elderly's need for services.

Instead of automatically offered assistance, help and care, training is provided to the individual so that the citizen is able to withstand more daily chores themselves. Danish studies show that older people remain active for longer, and the time at which the citizen really needs a help, is to be postponed.

Municipalities have also increasingly new welfare technology in use, such as: electronic pill boxes, which reacts with an alarm if they are not lifted and opened once a day - or robotic Hoover or a toilet that washes and dries the user after the visit.

These years the Danish municipalities focus on the health, employment and economic opportunities by thinking social services and health closer together.

Specific projects implement various models of health programmes. A "health package" is for the citizen to deal with e.g. stress, anxiety and depression in order to maintain the sick persons in a labor market rather than let them just go on sickleave, or to enable them to return quickly back to work.

MORE

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Social Network Achievements and Challenges

by Aleksander Ljudvig

A smoothly running social network with precise interaction and the least possible bureaucracy is one of the bases for social well-being. In the last decade the system of social service in Narva has been considerably developed and consolidated: the principles for rendering the service have been reviewed, new social services have been introduced, NGOs have been extensively supported, the population has been informed and the resources of ESF have been actively used for long-term projects.

Social aid is not a gift and the requirements for the applicants are strictly defined by the law. However, minimizing the necessity for the people in need to collect papers proving their right for receiving the dole turned out to be a manageable task. Now, with the centralized info-system, the social worker has access not only to the client's history but also to the bulk of information crucial for making the final decision.

Unlike 10 years ago, when passive social aid prevailed in Narva, the present day Narva is proud of the long list of active social services meant to assist the clients in achieving changes in life to be able to provide for themselves. Such services include social counseling, leadership and custodial care, sustainable living and work, day-care services, support persons, etc.

NGOs are an invaluable resource for the local government. Not only because of their great possibilities to carry out projects, compete in offering high-quality services, and attract volunteers but also for the reason that a needing person somehow tends to have more

trust in ordinary people, not in public officials, regardless of the degree of competence the latter might have.

Narva has a practice of informing the population constantly about the

possibilities for receiving social aid through articles in the local press, dissemination of information materials, quick response to the signals from the inhabitants, and holding open information seminars.

Support and retraining of the unemployed and debt-settling counseling only have been made possible due to active and timely participation of the city in the projects of the EU structural funds.

Although the unemployment rate is still quite high and many people are unable to afford their own accommodation, the developed and well functioning social network did soften the blow of the world economic crisis. The inflow of specialists to social work as well as more loyal social policy leaves should soon make Narva an example of social well-being on an international scale.



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Health Inspirers in Oskarshamn



by Annette Tonelid

Oskarshamn is advocating welfare and health promotion both internally towards municipal staff and externally towards the public. A cooperation agreement with the police authority to prevent violence, crime and drug use has been established. Cooperation between the social service center and the emergency service aiming at reducing the amount of case accidents in homes is another example. The municipality is also actively working towards smoke free work hours.

Oskarshamn aims at being an attractive employer that offers a safe and secure work environment with good conditions for health and wellbeing for all employees. The municipality has health inspirers at all departments and offices as a resource in the health promoting work. From 2010 the climate perspective is an important issue in the role of the health inspirer. The health inspirers:



Photo: Annette Tonelid

- contribute to creating an attractive workplace that the employees enjoy,
- inform, inspire and motivate employees to health and wellbeing,
- organize the daily 15 minutes of healthcare,
- are positive role models who take responsibility for their own health and lifestyle.

In 2012 the inspirers have the opportunity to choose from a variety of themes:

SPRING 2012	FALL 2012
Kick off Plan the spring activities Try water gymnastics	Kick off Plan the fall activities Try on activities
Basic course health inspirers Attractive employer Health concepts Factors for health at the workplace Climate- and energy work The role of the inspirer Organized health care during work; pause gymnastics, qi gong, stress release, rubber band, pause massage	Basic course health inspirers Attractive employer Health concepts Factors for health at the work place Climate- and energy work The role of the inspirer Organized health care during work; pause gymnastics, qi gong, stress release, rubber band, pause massage
Climate and energy Food – climate – health The inspirers role in the climate work	Physical activity
Physical activity Theory Practical exercises / try on activities	Diets
Diets: The taste school Practical cooking	Health factors at the workplace
Health factor at the work place	Sleep and recovery
Motivation dialogues	Stress

MORE

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Riga Promotes a Social Integration of the Seniors

by Viesturs Kleinbergs & Inga Dreimane

In Riga 23% out of 699 203 registered inhabitants (as of 31 December 2011) are recipients of retirement pensions or seniors.

To spend their spare time meaningfully, establish social contacts, gain support, engage in various individual, group or communal activities, Riga seniors are offered to attend day care centres. In Riga 9 day care centres are available.

One of the municipality's day care centres has experience in organizing senior volunteer work. Seniors voluntarily share their knowledge with others (healthy cooking, basic painting, gymnastics, Nordic walking, etc.), and help with organizing activities and daily work in the centre. In accordance with the priorities of European Commission's European Year *Active aging and intergenerational solidarity 2012*, Welfare Department of the Riga City Council has improved, reinforced and updated the social support, public health and health promotion system services for the seniors.

Since 2012 the Nordic walking classes have been available at seven day care centres for adults. Similarly, reinforced mental health promotion and dementia prevention support for the seniors are being provided in day care centres, providing the specialists with



The theme of active aging and intergenerational solidarity is highlighted in activities oriented at public health, health promotion and social integration.

appropriate tools. In Riga a 3-day care centre service for persons with dementia is offered. Its aim is to maintain and develop their social skills and provide meaningful ways of spending leisure time. This relieves the relatives of the clients from the care duties making the opportunity to return to the labour market.

Elderly citizens as the main target are selected in such large-scale public health and health promotion events in Riga as: the World Health Day of World Health Organization (WHO), WHO's Cardiac

Health Week, WHO's Mental Health Day.

A significant support of Riga for people with disabilities, including seniors, is in solving environmental accessibility issues. For 9 years Riga City Council has been providing funds for installation of lifts in residential houses where people with wheelchairs are living.

MORE

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Healthy Living Environments in Rostock

A cross-generational concept of health promotion



by Dr. Markus Schwarz

Since 1992 Rostock has been cooperating in a network of more than 70 municipalities and rural administration areas in Germany with a special focus on the development of people's habitats to a healthier living environment.

The strategic framework is set by the Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion adopted in 1986 by the World Health Organization and since then being implemented under various approaches (school, hospital, city), globally and as a process.

The local health promotion requires the cooperation between different partners in order to improve quality of life and life style of people of all ages. Until now, the local conceptions in Rostock were oriented towards children and youth as a target group (healthy alimentation at school 2001 – 2004; the Evershagen quarter as child-friendly area 2001 – 2005, child health goals 2005 - 2010). A health promotion approach for the older generation can be found in the program 'Ageing in Rostock' from 2008.

The results and experiences of the working group on Community Health Promotion as interdepartmental committee led increasingly to a paradigm shift - moving away from individual measures and towards the design of healthy habitats.



Photo: Fotagentur Nordlicht

With this background, in 2011, a cross-generational health promotion concept until 2025 was developed. It takes up existing programs and concepts, explores the health-promoting potential and fills them with specific sustainable measures.

The habitat concept in health promotion refers to much more than the location where the target group can be reached. It is about

the health-enhancing assimilation and designing of habitats and the development of individual life perspectives and responsibility. This is done with the support of multipliers, partners as well as politically, administratively and financially responsible actors, institutions and authorities.

More than 50 partners of habitats cooperate in different working groups and project teams implementing health promotion as a cross-departmental issue. The work is coordinated by a Coordinator for Health Promotion at the Health Department of the city.

MORE

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Health Promotion in Słupsk

by Izabela Sałapa & Joanna Czerwińska

Health Policy Directions of Słupsk were formulated on the ground of the existing and prospective epidemiological situation and they referred to the risks factors of civilisation diseases and promotion of healthy behaviours.

The priority directions, concerning health prevention and health promotion, have been implemented since 2009 within following disciplines: prevention of breast cancer and melanoma of skin; prevention and correction of children's vision defects; improvement of oral cavity health and dental caries prevention; education connected with eutrophy; primary prevention of addictions addressed to children and youth and their parents; HIV and AIDS prevention and prevention of vaccination against cervical cancer. These programs are funded by the city. Moreover, Słupsk co-finances the local health project to support the health of its inhabitants.

In 2009 the project called "Health – Mother and Me" was implemented, co-funded by Norwegian Financial Mechanism and EEA Financial Mechanism. This project has been initiated by Słupsk in response to the absence of the health services covering prevention and promotion of health on the market. During the first stage the medical centre building was adapted and expanded and the clinics were outfitted with suitable equipment. The second stage of project includes implementation of the five preventive programs:

1. "Quality of Childbirth – Quality of Life", prepares pregnant women for an active labour (implemented by the School of Birth),
2. "Prevention of Progressive Hip Dysplasia in Babies", enables an early diagnostics of hip joints in newborns and infants (implemented by the Preluxation Clinic),
3. "Breastfeeding – the Best for Mother and Baby", propagates and support the advantage of natural feed for newborns and infants (implemented by the Lactation Clinic),
4. "Family Planning as Responsible Parenthood", includes information regarding the procreation and responsible family planning (implemented by Family Planning Clinic),
5. "Healthy Life – Good Life", concerning an early detection and reduction of risk factors of civilisation diseases (implemented by Civilisation Diseases Clinic).



MORE

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To Reach the Cared

by Agnieszka Niedałtowska

Welfare aid in its modern sense is more than just benefits for the poorest. It is a great variety of social services which respond to the needs of the local community.

The Municipal Welfare Centre in Sopot (MOPS) has for more than twenty years been the coordinator of welfare activities in the town. It has worked in support of children, families with various problems, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, the homeless, the sick and the jobless. Reach the cared – a family or a person in need – is the precept for MOPS staff. Individual approach to the client, elements of empowerment and seeking new, effective solutions in social work give welfare clients an opportunity to become self-dependent and look after themselves.

In 2002, MOPS was one of the first to embark on a pilot social project of welfare contract entered into with the welfare client. The contract is designed to encourage the client to be more active and cooperative in trying to overcome his/her life problems rather than expect them to be solved by someone else. In addition to financial support, social work has come to include elements of empowerment, like psychological, educational and legal counselling, support groups, psychoeducation support groups, individual and group therapy, community work and training courses for those out of the workforce.

MOPS staff have, since 1992, been following social worker specialisation, to work with, e.g., large families, poorly parenting families, persons with mental disorders, the homeless and the elderly. In



2006, the position of assistant was introduced as a necessary tool in welfare work, within the Family Assistant and the Assistant to Homeless Person projects.

Every fourth resident of Sopot has reached retirement age. Activities targeted at this group have recently become a priority. In Autumn 2010, Sopot Senior Citizen Centre was inaugurated, housing a welfare centre, a day-care facility, and a senior citizen club. Legal advice free of charge, "A Café for the Senior Citizen," an IT corner or the Sopot Senior Citizen Fair are some of the initiatives for this age group.

The most important task for the staff of the Centre is to provide home care services to the disabled or persons with low functional capac-

ity and to raise the standard of the services, among others by introducing alert call systems and elements of self-help.

MOPS initiates various activities to integrate different social groups and make them active. It is now looking for partners and funding to start a social and occupational adaptation centre for the socially excluded or threatened with exclusion – the homeless, the jobless or those out of the workforce. After adequate training, these people are to do various community services for the inhabitants of Sopot. Help as an incentive to work at yourself and change your life; support, but not spoon-feeding – these are the underlying principles of MOPS activities.

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Prevention and Early Detection of Diseases

by Prof. Tomasz Grodzki

Beside Polish national preventive health programs, the Mayor of Szczecin, together with the City Council and its Health Commission launched new programmes dedicated to the szczecinians. These include: early detection of congenital malformations in newborns and small babies, prophylaxis of dental decay for teenagers, early detection of orthopaedic diseases for the same or even younger population and prevention of influenza by vaccination of persons older than 65 years. Also, another program for old generation was based on early detection of breast cancer in women between 65 -70 (The national initiative did not exceed beyond the age of 65).

However, the most innovative program was focused on early detection of lung neoplasm. The problem of lung cancer is extremely important for the Polish population because it kills more men and women in Poland than seven next most frequent neoplasms together. Majority of the patients are detected in symptomatic and advanced stage of the disease.

Therefore, it was necessary to increase efforts to detect this serious disease earlier. The Mayor and the City Council have provided 1.5 million PLN (app. 370 thousand Euro per year – 0.1% of the City annual budget) per year to perform chest computer tomography (CT) for the szczecinians smoking cigarettes more than the so called 20

pack-years (it means one pack a day for 20 years) aged 55-65. This program was the first one in Poland and of very few in the world (the leader in this field is Japan). We were able to perform chest CT in 15000 patients. 140 persons were treated surgically in local thoracic surgery due to early phase of lung cancer. They have 80% chances to be healthy again. Additionally, we detected some metastases to the lungs, other diseases including aortic aneurysm, sarcoidosis, tuberculosis and lymphomas.

This program was very highly evaluated by the citizens and helpful in fighting lung cancer more effectively. Patients after resection of early lung cancer do not require additional therapy and have greater chances of returning to work, while patients treated in the advanced stages of the disease usually require removing the entire lung, and additionally chemotherapy or radiotherapy. This increases the treatment costs but the prognosis still remains poorer than for early stages. Right now the city is working on preparing the new edition of the program with new risk factors added to detect lung tumours even more frequently.

MORE

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Safe and Healthy Tallinn



by Ene Tomberg

Tallinn City Council approved the Health Development Plan for the Population of Tallinn for 2008-2015, according to which all citizens of Tallinn must have the opportunity to live in a health promoting environment and make healthy choices. Tallinn Health Coalition is tasked with the coordination of the implementation of this plan for the Population. Tallinn is characterized by a well-developed system of social services. In 2009, with the economic crisis deepening, the City Government approved an aid package for the city, focused on alleviating unemployment, benefits and social security, counseling, reducing heating costs, and promoting business. Primary medical care is provided in Tallinn by 260 general practitioners, yet some 8-9% of the citizens are not covered by state health insurance. To provide them with the primary medical care they need, funds are allocated annually from the city budget to pay for their primary medical care appointments. About 650 veterans, who were involved in the clean-up of the Chernobyl disaster, live in the city. They are provided with free of charge dental care, rehabilitation and, if needed, compensation for the cost of glasses. Health behavior begins at an early age, and 126 kindergartens and further on 82 schools focus on this. Obesity is a serious problem among students, with 12% of boys and 9% of girls being overweight.



The main topics for both children and their parents are healthy diet, adequate physical activity, and the ability to avoid accidents caused by external factors.

Alcohol is a global risk factor that causes social damage, as well as harms the health of citizens. The Alcohol/Drug Consumption and HIV/AIDS Prevention Committee set up under the City Government selects prevention programs which are carried out by NGOs and financed from the city budget.

The city districts have seen the activation of health teams in which people participate voluntarily in order to make their neighborhood safer. A good example would be the clean-up campaign Let's Do It (Teeme ära).

Are we satisfied? Absolutely not, but we have mapped our courses of action up to 2015. This long list covers creating opportunities to cope in crisis situations for both families with children and socially vulnerable population groups, parental counseling and psychological aid in issues regarding children's behavior, restricting the availability of alcohol, expanding green and recreational zones in the city environment and shaping safe sexual behavior.

MORE

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Care workers in Tartu Drive Electric Vehicles

by Helle Tolmoff

The social workers of Tartu have already got 24 electric cars, another six will be added soon. 17 small electric cars are used by the home care staff at the Day Centre Kalda, others are used by the regional centres of the City's Department of Social Welfare.

At the end of 2011, Estonia obtained 500 Mitsubishi i-MiEV electric cars in exchange for selling the emission quotas. The government announced that the cars would be given free of charge to the social workers for performing their duties. Tartu submitted an application to the Ministry of Social Affairs for getting 30 electric cars.

We had really been looking forward to getting the cars and we couldn't quite believe this would happen before we got them, says Annika Sõna, Head of the Day Centre Kalda. Today, 17 care workers have been using the electric vehicles for four months already. *This has helped our social workers - they used to carry the heavy shopping bags, but now they can use the cars for delivering food and other necessities. It also takes much less time now to do the shopping or buy medicines in the pharmacy on behalf of the service users - the things that every care worker has to do a couple of times a week.*

45 care workers look after approximately 300 elderly and disabled people, whom they help in coping with their everyday activities. The in-home care provider buys and delivers the food and medicines, prepares food, does the chores, brings in the firewood and heats the oven. Most individuals receiving the care are visited 2-3

These small and economical electric vehicles are very suitable for our kind of work - the distances we need to cover are rather short. Tartu is a compact city and we have divided it into four service areas. Thus one car covers approximately 35 km a day, says the Head of the Day Centre.



Photo: Mikkel Lentak

times a week, some need daily assistance. Before the electric cars were obtained, the care workers either had walked or used public transport when providing in-home care services.

The electric cars help social workers to provide the service faster and more efficiently, which benefits both the service users and providers. In addition to being environmentally friendly, the electric cars are also cheaper to maintain than regular vehicles, says Jüri Kõre, the Deputy Mayor of Tartu.

The electric cars will remain in Tartu until 2015.

MORE

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Commendation to the Vaasa Elderly People's Activation Unit

by Hannele Laaksonen

The Round Table of Productivity has granted a commendation for productivity and cooperation to the Elderly People's Activation Unit of Vaasa on 26 March 2012. The Round Table is a high-level body consisting of the representatives of labour market organizations and the productivity operators working closely with them. The body's aim was to commend organizations or workplaces that have developed both productivity and working welfare.

The Activation Unit organizes all the activation and cultural activities for all elderly people in the city. The clients are persons over 65-years old and living at home, in a service apartment or being taken care of at the Vaasa Central Hospital. Vaasa is the only city in Finland that applies this kind of a concentrated activation model. The Activation Unit employs nine instructors and a manager. It provides different kinds of cultural activities to 13 units of the Central Hospital and to service homes, which together have over 600 patients or customers.

The Activation Unit has made its services into products during 2010 and 2011 alongside the VIIRA project. The staff participated in and committed to the project. 15 new products were developed and a clear annual schedule was made. Also, the customers were



The staff of the Activation Unit (from the left): Saara Vaaramo, Mira Sparf, Maj-Lis Pedersen, Laura Pasma, Leila Peura, Heli Hokkanen, Marjo Karvonen and Heli Kalajainen.

grouped according to their physical, mental and cognitive ability to function.

During the project, it was calculated how much time is spent on advance and subsequent arrangements for the products. Each worker calculates their own working hours so that they contain a sufficient amount of working time with direct customers.

After the end of the project in the autumn of 2011, each employee's working-hours were

calculated, according to which the percentage of working time with direct customers had increased from about 40% (results for autumn 2010) to an average of 67%. This process has engaged all staff and helped to see the quality factors involved in services in a new way. The project has allowed to record the tacit knowledge of the staff brought on by decades of working experience and to make it visible for all.

MORE

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Even a Cup of Fragrant Coffee Creates the Joy of Life

by Sandra Trinkūnaitė-Rimkienė

Each year an increasing number of cafes, bars, and restaurants join Let's Meet over a Cup of Coffee campaign of the Vilnius Mayor Artūras Zuokas and treat senior citizen card bearers to coffee and tea free of charge on Sundays.



Photo: Vilnius City Municipality

The campaign held its ninth event this year, and it has been joined by cafes in Kaunas, Klaipėda, Joniškis, Kretinga, Marijampolė, Pakruojis, and Palanga: in total, nearly 50 cafes in Lithuania.

I have tried since the very beginning of this campaign to help instill an understanding in society that old age may be as beautiful as the youth that seniors recall over a cup of coffee. I see that we would like to see elderly people chatting in a café over a cup of coffee, but not everybody can afford that. Let this be a small acknowledgement to our seniors, and an encouragement to leave the house and go for a walk around the city. Although these are little things, that's exactly what the joy of life consists of, said Artūras Zuokas, a campaign initiator.

Starting in 2001, when the campaign was first launched during the holiday season in December, tens of thousands of elderly people have used the possibility to return to an active city life on weekends, to meet friends in city cafés and restaurants. For some seniors, this campaign has become a pleasant Sunday ritual.

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UBC today

UBC Executive Board met in Brussels

Raising the UBC visibility

The UBC Executive Board adopted the UBC Communication and Marketing Strategy at its meeting in Brussels held on 14 February 2012 at Turku-Southwest Finland European Office. Also, the implementation of the UBC Strategy, financial matters and relations with other organization were on the agenda.

The UBC Communication and Marketing Strategy shall help the organization to foster an efficient exchange and to make its voice heard in the BSR, Europe and beyond. The document defines the marketing and communication strategy of the UBC - goals, target groups, main stakeholders, messages to be communicated, channels to be used etc. It also sets out to define a brand platform for UBC – that is what UBC wants to stand for in eyes of target audiences, which will guide communication, organizational choices and activities.



The Board decided the task force on implementing the Strategy would be formed. The task force will consist of member cities' communication experts. The TF shall make concrete recommendations for implementing the strategy.

The Board approved the guidelines for cooperation between UBC and business sector presented by Mikko Lohikoski, Strategy Coordinator. Also, in reference to the goals set in the UBC Strategy 2010-2015, the Board discussed the common criteria for evaluation of the Commissions' work.

The Board took note of financial report for 2011 presented by Paweł Żaboklicki, Secretary General, and approved the budget for 2012. It decided unused commissions' resources may not be transferred to another year unless there is a justification for that.

The Board was informed about the meeting of representatives of UBC and Baltic Development Forum held in Copenhagen on 17-18 January 2012. Both organizations expressed an interest to deepen the cooperation and carry out joint activities.

Cooperation within Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional city Networks was also discussed. In February 2012 the President of the UBC was asked by the CECICN Board to become the new President of CECICN.

The Board decided Paweł Żaboklicki will continue as Secretary General in the next four year period.

On 15 February 2012 at Norway House the Executive Board met the representatives of the Baltic Sea cities/regions offices in Brussels. The aim was to discuss how to do the lobby work in more effective and visible way.



UBC wants to be more active and more recognized in Brussels.

As a follow-up, a working group consisting of some Brussels offices, coordinated by Krista Taipale, would be established to work out ideas for the UBC Executive Board on UBC visibility and lobbying in Brussels.

The next UBC Board meeting will be held in Rakvere on 24 May 2012.



UBC President becomes a new President of CECICN

The Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional City Networks - CECICN elected on 8 March 2012 Mr Per Bødker Andersen, Deputy Mayor of Kolding and President of the Union of the Baltic Cities unanimously to be the new President of the CECICN. The 65-year old politician will lead the network initially for two years.

In a brief address immediately after the vote in Paris, Mr Andersen thanked the Founding President of the CECICN, Xosé Antonio Sanchez Bugallo for his work since the founding of this network of networks in 2010. Mr Andersen said: "Thanks to the former President and the dedication of the involved networks, we have established the CECICN as a heard voice of European cities and regions."

CECICN was born 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 six cooperating networks that represent more than 500 cities in border regions and 37% of European population. President Andersen sees great potential in a North-South cooperation as he says: "Europe is at a crucial moment for future territorial coop-



15th meeting of the UBC Business Commission on 18-19 April 2012 in Kolding

The Smart City: Science Parks, Creativity and Business Support

The meeting of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation was based on ideas and input from the last meeting in Liepāja in October 2011. The goal was to find out, how Science Parks, Creativity and Business Support can bring economic success to the cities. The 20 participants came from Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Poland, Norway, Germany and Denmark.

Wednesday, 18 April, was dedicated to the opening ceremony of the Nordic Synergy Park. Business Kolding, the business development agency of Kolding started this new park project called Nordic Synergy Park. The concept is the result of collaboration between the Municipality of Kolding, Scion DTU and Sophia Antipolis in France, as well as the Region of Southern Denmark and Business Kolding. Upon completion is planned to cover a surface of 15 square kilometer and should generate some 25,000 jobs in the coming 25 years. The Science Park shows a strong commitment to business, people and nature – clearly integrating the landscape of the development area and aiming at a place which isn't only a work area but also a place for people to live and enjoy recreational and cultural activities.

At the following workshop Luis Sanz, Director General of International Association of Science Parks (IASP) together with presentations from Inge Schröder from



Workshop on Science Parks. From the left: Luis Sanz, Director General of International Association of Science Parks (IASP) - Standing, Dr. Inge Schröder, Wissenschaftszentrum in Kiel, Anita Orlund, Kunnskapsbyen Lillestrøm, Steen Donner, Scion DTU, Kgs.Lyngby.

Wissenschaftszentrum in Kiel (D), Anita Orlund from Kunnskapsbyen Lillestrøm (N) and Steen Donner from Scion DTU, Kgs.Lyngby (DK) gave starting ideas on the theme of the workshop: "How Science Parks, Creativity and Business Support can bring economic success to your city". In group discussions the participants on the workshop took up questions as: "How do we create values for companies in Sciences Parks? How do we attract international companies? How do we create a global network to benefit the companies?"

On Thursday, 19 April, the meeting continued with presentations of two incubators in Kolding: House of Design and House of Innovation. House of Innovation is a stimulating and innovative environment with energy and synergy through networking and interaction with high class reception, meeting facilities, canteen and flexible renting of open and closed offices. House of Design is Kolding's professional center

of development for design. The house offers office space, studio, meeting and innovation environment in Kolding's cultural center – the Nicolai-complex. New established companies get counseling, mentoring and become a part of a professional network.

Last stop on the agenda was focusing on City Branding and paid a visit to the town of Christiansfeld and the Christiansfeld Centre. The background for the creation of the Christiansfeld Centre is a partnership agreement the Moravian Church in Christiansfeld entered into with the Realdania foundation in 2002, whereby 30 mln DKK was allotted for the implementation of the first phase of an ambitious renovation project for the historic town Center in Christiansfeld.

Christiansfeld is an old Moravian town founded in 1773, and named after King Christian VII, who granted building permission. The town is special in that it is planned and built following the same pattern as the first Moravian town in Herrnhut in Germany, and did not grow up gradually like many other small towns in Denmark. Most of the plan was built from 1773 – 1812.

Today it is easy to see the fine balance between the houses and the green spaces. The entire old town survives as a living reminder of a past culture right in the heart of the town, not as a museum but as an important part of the town's daily life. It is not possible for a town to survive 230 years without some damage from the weather, and the Moravian buildings have, despite their very solid construction, also been affected by the march of time. They were beginning to fall into a state of disrepair – but luckily aid appeared in the form of a major town renovation project.



eration. In a context of crisis Europe is now working on the budget for the next seven years (2014-2020) and new regulations on Cohesion Policy. It is a positive sign that cities and regions from

the South and the North have pooled their forces to work for the benefit of the people".

Per Bødker Andersen has clear goals for the CECICN work: "We are working to foster sustainable, smart and safe cities in a network of experts in our 500 member cities. The main goal is to bring expertise, inspiration and share of experiences to our members. Therefore, it is of major importance to reinforce what the benefits of cooperation are, what opportunities it represents and how, through cooperation, Europe can overcome the challenges it faces in the near future. Cooperation is the key to achieve Europe2020 goals."

Per Bødker Andersen is looking forward to his first official act as new President of CECICN, the **1st Congress on Smart Cooperation**. The Congress, to be hold in A Coruna (Spain) on 25/26 June 2012, will be a European event where all European Institutions and CECICN networks will be strongly represented.

MORE

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Discussing the gender equality in Helsinki

Experts on health and social issues will meet in Vaasa



The Commission on Health and Social Affairs will meet in Vaasa, Finland on 5-6 June 2012. The leading theme will be „Welfare and Health Promotion”.

The participants will discuss the issues related to the social welfare, health promotion and preventive work and how the cities deal with it along with collaboration with external partners on these topics. Also, the future commission activities will be talked out.

Vaasa, the sunniest city in Finland, together with the speakers from other cities and NDPHS will certainly provide excellent contributions.

MORE

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The UBC Commission on Gender Equality met in Helsinki on 19-20 April 2012.

The Commission prepared the campaign to raise awareness of the gender equality.

The campaign posters have been printed in English, Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian and will be sent out to all UBC member cities this autumn.



During the meeting in Helsinki a seminar on gender responsive budgeting and gender budgeting was held at Helsinki City Hall where several interested politicians from the Helsinki Gender Equality Committee took part, as well as representatives from Finland's Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Gender budgeting is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets and incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process. The key objective of gender responsive budgeting is to increase gender equality.

The Commission will continue the work with gender budgeting. A seminar is planned to be held in Brussels in autumn focusing on the importance of working with gender equality as a tool for regional development.

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CoT's projects and plans presented in Vilnius

The annual meeting of the UBC Commission on Tourism took place in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 29 - 31 March 2012. Twelve CoT members, guests and observers were welcomed by Mr Jaroslav Kaminski, Deputy Mayor of Vilnius.

During the first part of the meeting Ryszard Zdrojewski, CoT Chairman, presented the catalogue „Baltic Sea Region – Perfect Tourism Zone” – a new edition of the publication showing the tourist attractions of the cities within BSR.

Joanna Minkiewicz presented projects in which the Commission on Tourism is involved. The first one - project **AGORA 2.0 - Heritage Tourism for Increased Baltic Sea Region Identity** aims at improving the common identity of the BSR, based on its rich natural and cultural heritage. Heritage assets are not only interesting tourist attractions, but also relevant preconditions to enhance the business environment. The project focuses on finding solutions and looking at using them in a sustainable way.

The second one - **Enjoy South Baltic! – Joint actions promoting the South Baltic area as a tourist destination** is a new and innovative cross-border project implemented by partners from Poland, Lithuania and Germany. The aim of the project is to strengthen the



Twelve CoT members, guests and observers took part in the meeting

image and competitiveness of the South Baltic Region defined as the “rising star” among other international tourist destinations and to improve the quality of tourist offer and services throughout direct cooperation to private sector. Ryszard Zdrojewski presented the first results of the ESB Project, which are studies of the dynamics of tourism development of the South Baltic Sea Region based on the research of DWIF. This study aims at identifying important tourism potentials and appropriate marketing activities concerning selected international markets for the partner regions of Germany, Lithuania and Poland.

Also, the new concept - project **Baltic Culinary Route** was presented. It will focus on preparation of the final tourist product, creation and promotion of the concept of “Baltic Cuisine” and promotion of the Baltic Sea Region - its traditions, customs and current tourist offer.

During the workshops the participants of the meeting worked on the *Survey on relevance of heritage potentials for business developments*. The results will be used in the AGORA 2.0 project.

MORE

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Inspiring meeting in Kemi

The Commission on Youth Issues met in February in Kemi. Altogether there were 28 participants from 14 cities. Civil servants, youth workers and youth came from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany.

The main topic of the meeting was a new strategy and development plan until 2015. In the format of brain storms, different kind of group works and tasks, participants came up with goals and activities for next period, also discussing who and how should take more responsibility in what to implement the plan.

At this point, the strategy and communication plan is being revised by participating cities. Some interesting goals and activities can still be highlighted here: virtual youth meetings for youth in Baltic Sea Region, and why not, video conference; workshops with young people and mayors to hear youth proposals; involving youth to UBC lead organ to hear their proposals; Best Practice Fair on youth work for all cities during one of the main events of UBC.

During the meeting the participants had a chance to learn more about



The participants had a chance to see the famous Snow Castle of Kemi and ice-breaker "Sampo".

youth work and education in Kemi and to visit the primary school "Syväkangas".

The joint project "Life, Media, Participation – Youth in Baltic Sea Region" with 8 participating cities was also introduced and discussed during the meeting. Project starts this spring and will be further introduced in future.

Discussions were lively and interesting – young people, youth workers, civil servants seemed to have very creative approaches to youth work, co-operation, communication, etc. It was, after all, a wish of everyone to meet more often (or for

longer), share best practices and ideas, to make youth issues visible, heard and understandable in the region through discussions, meetings, virtual spaces and other creative possibilities.

The next meeting will be held this autumn in Gdynia, Poland.

MORE

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A joint meeting of the Commissions on Urban Planning, Environment, Energy and Transport

Revitalizing the city for sustainability



Photo: Patrik Leonardsson

Halmstad from the Sea. The industrial harbour and workshop area 1 on the right side of picture (right side of the Nissan River).



Photo: Bergslagsbild AB

View over the eastern parts of Halmstad from the motorway. Workshop area 2 on the left side of the picture.

The UBC Commissions on Urban Planning, Environment, Energy and Transport arranged a seminar on 8 – 11 May in Halmstad, Sweden, involving social, economic, environmental and architectural aspects of sustainable city development and raising the questions on how to create synergies, how to overcome physical and mental barriers in sustainable urban planning. All of these aspects are dealt within UBC Commissions, who now organised the joint seminar to enable the member cities to exchange on this highly interdisciplinary topic.

Two areas of Halmstad, Tullkammarkajen and Larsfrid/Vilhelmsfält/Östra stranden, were studied, discussed and elaborated at the workshops and proposals for revitalizing of these two areas were presented. The seminar facilitated discussions and practical work on how to create mixed-use-areas, accessibility, challenges arising from traffic, industry and energy, how to approach climate change effects and how to decrease harmful environmental impacts. At the seminar the Baltic Sea Region Covenant Club was also launched.

Over 60 UBC member city experts met during three days to work together. On the last day the UBC seminar delegates presented the ideas and proposals for politicians in Halmstad.

The Commissions on Urban Planning, Environment, Energy and Transport found the joint seminar a new and interesting way of arranging meetings to meet a concrete needs of a UBC member city.

MORE

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Ageing communities

5th Commission on Local Safety Meeting in Tallinn



Photo: Paapress

The meeting of the Commission is held in Tallinn, Estonia, on 23 – 25 May. Safety problems amongst elderly are the main theme. European society is getting older. As pedestrians, the elderly are crossing streets of the cities every day, also they are the most frequent users of the public transportation. Most of them are doing well on their own, but some may need a helping hand or an advice on their every day routine.

During the first day of the meeting city representatives share experience, discuss possible ways of cooperation and redefine the role of municipalities as a main providers of safety for elderly citizens. Gdańsk Municipal Guard presents the Safe Senior Programme dedicated to the safety improvements amongst the elderly. The second day of the meeting is devoted to the internal matters and evaluation session of the "Safe and Cool" project. Also, Mr Sebastian Sperber from European Forum for Urban Security gives a speech about street violence which may be future topic for UBC Local Safety Commission.

MORE

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Safe & Cool Competition

Safety is one of the important needs of a human being, in particular of children at any age. Pupils at school are exposed to a wide range of hazards. For the past few years UBC municipalities have helped their citizens to promote and provide a safe environment. When providing safety for the citizens one should not forget about the younger generation which needs to feel safe on a daily basis. The UBC Commission on Local Safety believes that this young generation may have good ideas on how to improve safety and security.

Therefore, the Commission on Local Safety has decided to announce a **Safe & Cool grant competition** for UBC members school and award initiatives aimed at promoting safety. The Commission will select and reward the best project which should comply with youth ideas and must address safety problems occurring at their school or its surrounding areas with proposals on how to deal with it.

The competition is aimed at promoting responsible behavior, building up a sense of responsibility for a public property, and improving safety at schools and their surrounding areas.

Secondary and high schools (pupils at 12 – 18 years of age) from the UBC municipalities are eligible to enter this competition. Each UBC member school may submit only one application. The best project will receive a grant of €2,000.

The deadline for submitting projects is **15 September 2012**. The completed application should be sent to the UBC Commission on Local Safety Secretary by e-mail (ubc@strazmiejska.gda.pl) or by fax: +48 58 3462811.

MORE

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Culture matters

The Board of the UBC Commission on Culture met in Kolding on 19 – 20 April. Lone Leth Larsen, Head of the Culture Department of Kolding, was elected a chair and Janna Simula, Pori, as a vice - chair.

The Board discussed the vision and action plan of the Commission. The Commission wants to liven up the cooperation between the UBC cities, and to enhance the development of knowledge and exchange of experience. The action plan for 2011-2012 tries to put this into action, by promoting a new initiative in the UBC, namely an **exchange program**.

Knowledge and new competences are crucial in the cultural sector. It is necessary to develop new ways of exchanging views and knowledge, both to meet the increasing demands on quality and professionalism and the decreasing funds for education.

The Commission has developed an exchange program to meet this demand and decided to refund a part of the travel expenses. The theme of the first year of exchange should be *Libraries*. All interested people who have some connection to libraries may apply for travel funding by **15 August 2012**.

The Commission would like to encourage the cities to develop their culture by working with sister organizations in other UBC cities.

The Commission assigned a small fund to support the **cooperation project**. It shall be run by at least two UBC cities and its results shall be seen at the end of this year or the beginning of the next year. The applications can be sent by **15 August 2012**.

The annual **Cultural Prize** will this year be given to two cities who have been working together on a joint project. Please send your suggestion and recommendation with a justification of your choice by **15 August 2012**.

This year the annual meeting is planned to be held in Vilnius, in the end of September 2012.

MORE

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Youth Week of Entrepreneurship

How an active youngster becomes a young entrepreneur

The UBC Commission on Education was one of the organizers of the Youth Week of Entrepreneurship held on 26 - 30 March 2012 in Kärdla, Estonia. This event was organized together with NGO Hiiumaa Ankur, Kärdla Town Government, Information and Counselling Centre „HUPS“, B7 Baltic Islands Network and Hiiumaa Cooperation Network.

The topic of the week was „How an active youngster becomes a young entrepreneur“. The youngsters visited schools to inspire young people how to be active. Also, the information fair „I Have an Idea! Meeting point of youth and entrepreneur“, thematic workshops e.g. on handicraft, woodwork, organisation of events, etc., as well as the Youth Forum „Youth and entrepreneurship“ were held in connection with the Youth Week.

The main question of the forum was: *how to become an entrepreneur*. Rainer Nõlvak was a headliner. He has a lot of experience on how to create enterprises. Nõlvak is a well-known leader of the world cleaning campaign „Let’s Do It!“ After Nõlvak two young entrepreneurs presented their success stories.

Liisi Kummer-Leman has created a fashion enterprise. She uses little-used clothes, designs the clothes and sells them. The second enterpriser was Karin Juhe, who participated with a team in Ajujaht (Brainhunt). It is a start-up competition for young entrepreneurs creating innovative businesses. The competition was open for teams of 1-7 members aged between 17 - 35. They submitted their business ideas online at www.ajujaht.ee, describ-



Photo: Jaana Lepamaa

Is it difficult to become an entrepreneur? Many experienced businessmen and young entrepreneurs shared their experience during the Youth Week.

ing the idea, value, client, market, team and finances. The ideas were evaluated by renowned businessmen creating a feedback value for the participants. Karin Juhe was in the final with other seven participants. She created KORSID - stockings with specially divided pressure and elasticity components, which keep muscles and joints in a right position.

All discussions concerned supporting young entrepreneurs and how easy/difficult is it to start up a new enterprise. The youngsters were actively asking questions and showed a great interest in entrepreneurship.

MORE

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Research: Youngsters – Young Entrepreneurs?



Photo: Jaana Lepamaa

In April – May 2012 the UBC Commission on Education organized a research „Youngsters – Young Entrepreneurs“ in association with the Kärdla Town Government, NGO Hiiumaa Ankur, Information and Counselling Centre „HUPS“, B7 Baltic Islands Network.

The Internet-based research was ran online at:
<http://ubc-youngentrepreneurs.blogspot.com>

It mapped young entrepreneurship activities in the target locations and gathered information about the potential youngsters who want to start up their businesses. The research searched for an answer to the question: What will hinder young people to start with entrepreneurship: Are they not ready? Is it due the lack of knowledge, experience, skills? Weak economic environment? Insufficient support or information?

Research took part until 9 May 2012 in English, Estonian and Russian. A target group were youngsters aged 14 - 30. It was not important, whether they are active in entrepreneurship or not.

Results of the research will be presented soon on UBC webpage.

MORE

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Road Safety Measures in Aalborg

by René Lund Hansen, Engineer

86% of all accidents in the City of Aalborg occur within the municipal road network, leaving the municipality with a large responsibility regarding the road safety. Among other initiatives this has resulted in a Road Safety Plan that describes road safety measures in Aalborg.



Special Initiatives

The Road Safety Plan for Aalborg has among other things meant that in all larger road projects a traffic safety revision must be conducted. This is done from the principle that it is better to be safe than

sorry. Additionally, the city cooperates with the Police through the Aalborg Road Safety Committee. An example of the results of this cooperation is the campaign "Wear helmet – because we love you", which was carried out in 2009. The campaign was honoured with an IAA Award by the International Advertising Association Denmark.

A second special measure taken in Aalborg is road safety courses for driving school students. The aim with these courses is to raise awareness of the fact that young drivers are not immortal, and that hazardous driving harm others, too. Delegates from the Police, the Emergency Management, as well as a doctor, a road accident victim and a priest participate in the courses, so that the full course of events in a road accident is included. Focus is put on driving school students, since road accidents are the most frequent cause of death among young people under the age of 25.

The City of Aalborg given Honorary Award

One of the most important focus areas for the road safety work in the City of Aalborg has been schools and school roads. Among other initiatives this has been manifested with school road publications for each school which is meant to inform pupils, parents and teachers about their specific school. Besides the school road

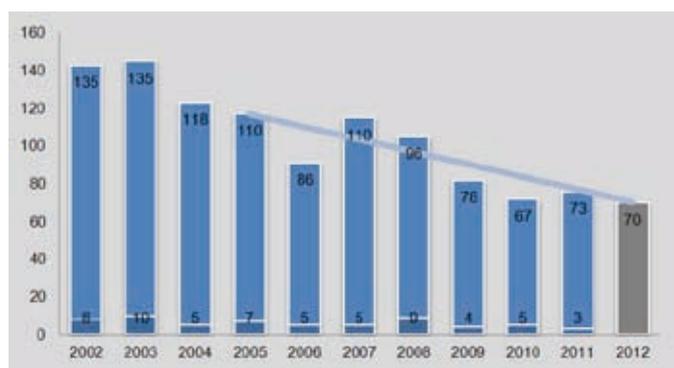
Aalborg feels responsible for its inhabitants. To ensure the safe school roads, the city has worked out the traffic policies. In 2010 Aalborg received the honorary award from The Danish Committee for Safe Traffic for working with school traffic policies.



publication Aalborg has started cooperation with every municipal primary and lower secondary school with the aim to prepare a traffic policy for these schools. In these policies the schools are forced to actively set up goals for road safety education, as well as their school road safety. In 2010 Aalborg received the honorary award from The Danish Committee for Safe Traffic for working with school traffic policies.

Noticeable Effects

By signing the European Road Safety Charter in 2005, Aalborg committed itself to work towards a reduction in the number of fatalities and severe injuries by 40% within 2012 compared to 1998. In 2006 this objective had been fulfilled, since the number had been brought down by 60% compared to 1998. Therefore, the objective was revised in the renewed agreement of 2008, aiming for a 40% reduction within 2012 compared to 2005. In 2011 a reduction of 35% had been accomplished.



Road Safety Objectives in Aalborg

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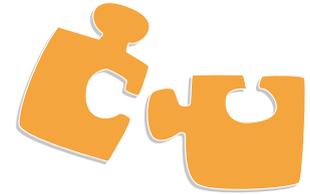
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NEWS

from the Baltic Sea Region

NDPHS urges for more health on the regional agenda



Northern Dimension
Partnership in Public Health
and Social Well-being

Health is important both as a human right and as a precondition for economic growth. It is also widely recognized that regional cooperation in health helps to address common challenges by joining forces and avoiding duplication of efforts and resources. Yet, only a few European funding programmes currently operating in the Northern Dimension area have explicitly included health among their priorities. As a result, health-related projects receive considerably less funding compared to other, more visible sectors.

The ongoing discussions about the EU Financial Framework after 2013 provide an opportunity for a change. The Cohesion policy package proposed by the European Commission lists e-health, health infrastructure, inequalities in health and healthy ageing among many other investment priorities. Whether these will be translated into priorities of the funding programmes depends on the EU Member States and their support to the Commission's proposal and on the design of the funding programmes by the programming committees.

With economic and other, more visible issues on the top of the European political agenda, decision makers may postpone prioritizing health. However, the aging of society, the growing epidemic of diabetes and lack of effective antibiotics cannot be postponed. These are only a few concrete examples of growing problems. If we postpone addressing them now, the consequences will affect every member of the society in the forthcoming decades. For example, it is estimated that the number of Europeans aged 65 and over will increase by 45% in the next 20 years. Age-related expenditure will cost the EU 4.7% more of GDP by 2060 as a result of a higher share of retired people and a higher number of people with chronic non-communicable diseases.

By investing in health promotion and optimization of the delivery of health care, the economic gain would be two-fold: (i) healthy people are more likely to stay at the labour market longer and are more productive and (ii) reduced spending on treatment of ill health. In this context, it is of utmost importance to spend money effectively and focus on the right priorities. Regrettably, this is not always the case. For example, even though it is widely known that non-communicable diseases are preventable, only 3% of the health expenditure in the EU is spent on prevention. Furthermore, the potential of e-health in optimizing health care delivery is far from being fully exploited.

Although organisation and delivery of health care is a national competence, investment in regional cooperation in health is advanta-

geous and essential. The main health-related challenges, that the European countries are currently facing, are the same. Consequently, it is only logical to coordinate the responses to common challenges, in order to bridge gaps and speed up innovation processes, avoid duplication of efforts and limited resources, and allow for well-informed policy and decision making. EU funding programmes are a useful tool in this regard, but it is important that health be visibly exposed among the funding priorities of operational programmes under different objectives of the EU Cohesion Policy.

To that end, on 25 November 2011 the 8th ministerial-level Partnership Annual Conference of the NDPHS adopted the position paper "Post-2013 European Programmes: Raising the Profile of Health and Social Well-being" (available at: <http://ndphs.org/?database=view,paper,67>). The paper contains views of the ten NDPHS Partner Countries and nine Partner Organizations, supported by several other regional stakeholders and it calls for a visible exposure of social well-being and health in the cooperation programmes' priorities. Among the key messages of the paper is that timely investment in health and social well-being is an important precondition for economic growth and containing future health and social care related costs.

Another issue addressed in the position paper is the need to ensure cohesion between European programmes and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), to avoid a fragmented approach by linking funded activities to a common goal rather than funding random activities with limited strategic vision. Furthermore, the NDPHS suggests to engage the EUSBSR Priority Area Coordinators in the development of the respective forthcoming European programmes' priorities to ensure better alignment of funding and coordinated vision in responding to key challenges facing the region.

Surveys indicate that individuals place health among the top priorities in their life and a recent Eurobarometer survey ranks healthcare system among the main concerns of the Europeans. The priorities and concerns of our people should be properly reflected on the regional cooperation agenda. The adopted NDPHS position paper is a basis for our further work, which, we hope, will result in more resources being granted for joint regional activities in the field of health for the benefit of our people and economies.

We are hoping that also the UBC will support the NDPHS in our efforts to make the Baltic Sea Region a better place to live!

MORE www.ndphs.org



Intersectoral governance for health – experience of Healthy Cities

The role of cities and municipalities in health promotion, designing healthy settings and creating conditions for well-being is growing as the urbanisation is speeding up. Today 80% of European population lives in the cities and it is the cities who need to tackle current public health challenges. Most of the European countries have national health programmes, however, in order to ensure their successful implementation, local action is needed. Moreover, the new legislations in all Nordic countries, already followed by others, e.g. Latvia, oblige the municipalities to take more responsibility for health promotion.

Budget limitations, competing priorities and changing political environment in municipalities might create the constraints for development of sustainable societies. On the other hand, as a result of progressing decentralisation and recent law changes, municipalities are growing in power – and this is their time to use it! With the new responsibilities in their hands, local authorities enter new fields of activities previously reserved only for national governments.

Cities seem to be an attractive place to live in, but empirical studies conducted during 1990s revealed that city population suffers more often than others from e.g. tuberculosis, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, poor mental health, or obesity. The environmental, economic and societal conditions in specific urban areas influence – positively or negatively – the health status of individuals. Health care sector has limited capacity to improve the health and wellbeing of populations and close cooperation with other sectors is needed!



Ms Johanna Reiman, Executive Director, was a speaker at the workshop 'How to meet the demographic challenge; the ageing society' held during the UBC General Conference in Liepāja in October 2011.

WHO acknowledges this challenge and since almost 25 years supports health development in the cities with Healthy Cities programme. The overall motto and philosophy of Healthy Cities is "Health is everybody's business", which means that the efforts for health development and health promotion must not be a responsibility of health sector only. Healthy Cities promotes health in all Local Policies, which calls for common actions of various city departments: from sport to cultural, from social to transport. Partnership for health allows for better health governance and better well-being of city inhabitants.

Besides intersectoral cooperation, Healthy Cities calls for strong political commitment on the local level. Local governments are engaged through capacity building programmes, institutional change and partnership-based strategic planning. Thanks to this, Healthy Cities have the potential to provide essential public health leadership, to create preconditions for healthier living and participatory governance.

Over 220 cities from the Baltic Sea Region are Healthy Cities, many of them are also UBC members. Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association, based in Turku, Finland, is WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Health in the Baltic Region since 2002.

MORE

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Institutional support for the elderly in Kaunas



Just as in other EU Member States Lithuanian population consists of an increasing part of elderly people of 60 years old and over. The EU directives and policy encourage the Member States including

Lithuania by financing local initiatives to increase the number of institutions which provide non-stationary social services, day centres, and self-dependent life homes.

There are two budget institutions belonging to Kaunas: Kaunas Panemune Elderly People Home (Kauno Panemunės senelių namai) and Kaunas House of Generations (Kauno kartų namai). The institutions provide stationary and non-stationary social care

services for elderly people. They also integrate elderly people day centres which aim to assure Kaunas citizens with non-stationary social care services creating the conditions for elderly people to keep active consistent social life in their natural environment.

The Day centres serve as a social meeting place to share ones problems, hobbies and ideas. The visitors may join the excursions to theatres, museums and churches. A lot of attention is paid to the health care and promotion of healthy lifestyle through the practice of exercises, yoga, northern walking, group meetings of psychotherapy and psychological help. The day centre is like a small community which receives everyone in need to share hardships and joy and where everyone can expect to receive help and understanding. The visitors communicate with each other warmly, make new friends and keep in touch even beyond the walls of the centres.

MORE

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Riga reduces addictions



One of the aims of Riga is to build a community which is potentially free from drug abuse, gambling, and excessive computer use, and to reduce the number of addicted persons, involving them in recovery programs. For several years the specialists have been working in Riga to provide a fast, free-of-charge assistance for all residents, for whom addiction and co-dependency related issues have become acute. The specialists provide psychological assistance for the addicted persons, who want to give up through both individual consultation and support group sessions in Riga Social Service, day care centres and children and youth centres. The addiction prevention specialists are addressed for help by those families who have appeared not only in the sight of Riga Social Service, but also are under surveillance of the municipality and the administrative commission; as a result the citizens can receive comprehensive support. Since 2012 the addiction prevention specialists are also providing opportunity of receiving assistance in Riga schools, giving individual consultation for students and their parents, and conducting group sessions. In the first quarter of this year several smoking cessation support groups, within which young people are educated and can receive the necessary assistance to stop smoking habits, have already been established.

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Activation-TV ®

to reduce loneliness and insecurity

The city of Vaasa, Vaasa University of Applied Sciences and Novia University of Applied Sciences have started a two-year healthcare technology project on 1 April 2011 to develop TV and computer services to seniors living at home or in service homes who can no longer participate in events and activities outside their home. The European Regional Development Fund (through the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia) funds 70% of the project.

The project's targets include:

- to develop a virtual open source code system, which supports and activates elderly people living at home or in a service home and their relatives;
- to develop employees' and students' know-how in producing and utilising virtual services for elderly people to use in their everyday life;
- to produce services in two languages (Finnish and Swedish) to help elderly people to maintain their ability to function, to provide them with social and physical activities, to prevent their social exclusion, to decrease their feelings of loneliness and insecurity and to develop their technical know-how;
- to support the development and use of new innovations and their teaching in the social and health care sector.

The teachers and student of the universities involved, as well as the employees of the Centre for Elderly People, will be in charge of producing the programmes for the Activation TV. The project started on 1 April 2011 and will continue until 30 March 2013. Its content areas include: health, physical exercises, culture, hobbies and advice. Elderly people can participate themselves, for example, in discussion groups on interesting topics, or they can watch videos or talk with relatives and friends in the Facebook application. One group of ten seniors who are not involved in the project will observe the project and its implementation. The project worker will interview this group periodically to find out their opinions and ideas for development.

Five elderly people living at home (n=5), five living in service homes (n=5) and three groups of seniors from service facilities (n=24) will participate in the test phase of the project. During the project, all the necessary technical tools will be offered to the pilot groups. The pilot groups will be interviewed at the beginning of the project, half-way through it and at the end of it.



Activation-TV will offer a variety of refreshing and stimulating programmes, bulletins and group gatherings. All programmes that are recorded can be watched through the video library whenever it suits the participants. Elderly people can also participate in real-time, interactive virtual meetings from home, even while sitting on the couch. The direct "TV" broadcasts enable real-time participation in various local celebrations and events.

Right now students of information technology and their teachers are developing and testing a variety of technical solutions to make sure that the Activation TV will be easy and simple to use. Activation TV will offer a wide range of opportunities to support elderly people's ability to live independently and to help them maintain their ability to function in their everyday lives.

MORE

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Panevėžys - the Capital of Bicycles



In October, European Cycling Track Championship, the largest event in the history of Lithuanian cycling, will take place in Panevėžys. Over 250 sportsmen, the same number of coaches and service staff from almost 25 countries will gather.

This championship is granted to be the most essential sports event in Lithuania this year. I really boast that for already

the second year in a row Panevėžys will be vivid on European context. Last year we had a basketball fiesta, this year – a cycling one - said Vitalijus Satkevičius, the Mayor of Panevėžys.

All stars of Track Cycling from London Olympic Games, the most perspective sportsmen will come to Panevėžys. The image of the Championship, the pride of Panevėžys City and Lithuania, the Olympic hope is Simona Krupeckaitė and the colleagues of her team.

Though European Cycling Track Championship will be held only in autumn, the spirit of cycling is alive all the year in Panevėžys. The city and the flowerbeds will be decorated on the theme of bicycles. Public cycling events, different competitions, actions and contests are planned. Cycling will be reflected in the celebrations of the 509th Birthday of the city. The infrastructure of cycling paths



will be improved. The municipality has provided the application for the tender of the Best Sample Cycling Path. The preparation of the 1st stage project of Modernisation of Bicycle Infrastructure for the support of EU Structural Funds is continued.

MORE

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The reconstructed ancient amber trade village already open!

A unique tourist attraction reaching back to the historical role of Pruszcz Gdański as one of the main branches of Amber Route was opened in summer 2011 in Pruszcz Gdański. It is a reconstructed ancient amber trade village (Faktoria) from the Roman influence period. The aim of the project was to reconstruct a Roman village using old techniques. Faktoria consists of: The Chief Hut – museum exhibition, the Market Hall – place of meetings with live archeology and reconstructions of The Blacksmith Hut and The Amber Craftsman Hut. The huts connect new technologies with the richness of archaeological monuments and the beauty of amber exhibits.

The Chief Hut is the main wooden building which combines the past and the present. On the outside it resembles the huts of the Roman period, but inside guests are being transferred to different, modern world. This is provided by latest solutions and multimedia exhibitions. Thus, exhibits from the collections of the Archaeological Museum in Gdańsk are presented in a very modern way.

The Market Hall serves as a place of “meetings with archeology” where the youth can participate in living history lessons. Thanks to the latest multimedia solutions, and classes conducted in an unconventional way, science can be enjoyable and inspirational for young people.

The Blacksmith Hut is a faithful reconstruction of a house from the Roman influence era and a forge containing tools for processing iron. All the items of material, wood and wicker were made in traditional techniques.

The Amber Craftsman Hut is a reconstruction of his workshop. It presents tools he used and items that came out his hand. During ar-



Photo: J. Swis – Silistra Studio

chaeological excavations conducted in the area of Pruszcz Gdański a lot of beautiful amber jewellery, reflecting the extraordinary capacity of local amber craftsmen was found.

Thanks to European Union co financing also the reconstructed Amber Route for pedestrians and cyclists as well as the International Baltic Park of Culture with amphitheatre, playground, multifunctional sports field, skate park and Four Seasons Garden was built next to Faktoria.

In July and August there is Summer Stage of Wybrzeże Thetare in the amphitheatre. Each weekend there are performances for children and adults as well as various concerts within Summer Music Festival.

MORE

<http://www.faktoria-pruszcz.pl/page/english>

Photo: J. Swis – Silistra Studio



Snow Boon has Attracted Famous Filmmakers to Vilnius

Internationally renowned Italian director Gabriele Salvatores has recently completed shooting his latest film *Siberian Education* in the capital of Lithuania. German Spiegel TV has been also filming its documentary drama *The Land of Siberia* in Vilnius.

While other locations try to attract foreign filmmakers with sun and sand, Vilnius has succeeded in gaining their interest with frost and snow. Low temperatures and plentiful snowfall have proven to be a boon for filmmakers who can use what nature has so generously provided and they don't have to use artificial snow machines that are costly, said Juratė Pazikaitė, Vilnius Film Office Director.

She also stresses that there are many places in Vilnius that can recreate extremely realistic locations.

Gabriele Salvatores has been shooting Siberia in our districts where old wooden houses are located. Spiegel TV has set up the first Siberian department store in a manor house near Vilnius and even shot the mountains of Alaska



Photo: BFFL Photo

in a quarry located within the city limits, this was recounted by Juratė Pazikaitė.

Director Salvatores started shooting *Siberian Education* this summer in Vilnius. Famous U.S. actor and producer John Malkovich stars in the film. The story takes place in a remote region of the former Soviet Union and spans the period from 1985 to 1995. The film is about a group of boys passing from childhood to adolescence and the community in which they live. Almost the entire movie has been filmed in Vilnius.

The German television company Spiegel TV is currently completing filming two episodes of the documentary drama *The Land of Siberia*. The story tells of the courageous people and their lives in Kamchatka, Russia in the 18th and 19th centuries. Both films are being shot in cooperation with Lithuanian film production companies – Nordic Productions and Baltic Film Services.

MORE

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Festival *Bridge of Friendship*

The traditional Days of Narva this year are going to be a spectacular result of the long-standing twinning relations of Narva with the UBC partner, the city of St. Petersburg.

Although the twinning partner is Kirov district of the city, the cooperation has been expanded and a new partner organization – theatre-festival “Baltic House” was found, whose energetic leadership suggested setting up a festival “Bridge of Friendship” with an international magnitude.

After a number of preparatory and organizational meetings, the programme of the event looks impressive: the theatrical block includes performances of “Tall Sisters” theatre and plastique theatre “Non Stop”, a fiery show from the “Fires of Vasana” theatre and a performance of “Baltic House”. The traditional participants of the event

– the local “Ilmarine” theatre and Kirov district’s “Mimigranty” – are also part of the programme. Kids will be excited to see the circus group the “Theater of Flying Children” and enjoy dances and songs of the local groups. The musical part of the Days offers a variety of shows from a joint concert “Classics meets Jazz” by Narva Symphony Orchestra, “Chizhik Jazz Quartet” and a Mariinsky opera soloist from St. Petersburg to gigs of rock



bands Splin (Russia) and AveNue (Estonia).

There are also events meant for cinema-lovers and artists. The former will spend a “Cinema Night” with RVS Studio and have an after-show discussion, and the latter will discover “The Other Petersburg” through the pictures of D. Konradt. In total an astounding 180 performers, actors and artists are expected to arrive from St. Petersburg to take part in the 4 thrilling Days of Narva in June – a huge change from the fairly modest scale of the event in previous years. This, however, does not mean that the “old favorites” of the Days will suffer – “Soap-box derby” and “Runaway bride” competitions have both secured their solid spots in the programme.



The Festival is enjoying the support from the Ministries of Culture of both countries, as well as representatives of the Estonian Parliament and the Legislative Assembly of St. Petersburg. Hopes are high that the Festival will attract thousands of people of different ages and nationalities not only to become a cultural bridge between the two neighboring states but also establish itself internationally to be marked on the European cultural calendar. Once proved successful this summer, the festival has every chance to turn from a “one-off” affair into a biennial celebration of culture and friendship.

MORE

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ESPON ON TERRITORIAL PROFILES

The Polish-Swedish-German cross-border cooperation area (CBA) has been identified and worked over as a territorial profile under the ULYSSES project developed by ESPON. Structural dimension of cross-border governance in Euroregion Pomerania is challenging and the CBA has a particular situation with land and sea borders that separate three national states with very different institutional settings and traditions.

The territorial analyses under the project focused on the main topics mentioned by Territorial Agenda of the EU, namely cross-border polycentric development, patterns of urban/rural relationship, levels of accessibility and connectivity, effects of demographic change (territorial profile), and level of attainment if Lisbon/Europe 2020 and Gothenburg objectives by the CBA (territorial performance). Additionally, a comprehensive cross-border institutional performance analysis has been included.

Szczecin is the only city participating in the project. Other 17 partners come from various European border and cross-border regions, who are aiming at using the applied research results from ESPON as a yardstick for decentralised cross-border spatial development planning. Technically speaking, the aim of the project was to do a multi-thematic and multi-scale analysis of different cross-border regions. For this, the regions' behaviour regarding two major dimensions was analysed: territorial profile and territorial performance. Apart from improving our understanding of the behaviour of regions in context, as well as of the regional performance, the project also offered possible sce-

narios of development which may be helpful while constructing new development strategies for the CBA.

In the ULYSSES project quantitative statistical analysis were made on Euroregion Pomerania utilizing the NUTS classification established by EUROSTAT. Among the identified set of indicators there were the CBA's total population, population density, natural and total population growth, total fertility rate, old and young dependency ratios and net migration.

The evidence collected by ULYSSES project shows that (1) borders keep playing a major role in explaining the behaviour of the different regions; (2) cross-border commuting levels between different regions still tend to be low; (3) both the multi-thematic and governance analyses show clear differences between the different parts of each border region, between the border regions and their domestic hinterland, and amongst the border regions across Europe; (4) local geographic conditions impact on territorial development within cross-border areas in many ways; (5) reciprocal knowledge of current territorial trends by all euroregional partners is essential in order to boost successful strategies.

Euroregion Pomerania initiated work over updating its development strategy at the end of March.

MORE

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Næstved municipality decides on a new administrative organization

Instead of 3 departments, the City Council has just agreed to create 17 independent units, each with its own independent management and budget responsibility. For example, schools will be the independent organization unit, instead of being a part of a larger department. The new organization also focuses on issues such as planning and architecture, and Næstved municipality will from now on have an independent city architect.

The new structure is to be efficient, fast and a bit cheaper than today.

The amendment was adopted by City Council in March and it comes into force successively in the course of 2012. Simultaneously, the number of directors of the municipality will be reduced from 6 to 5 in the new management.

The new organization is also a challenge for politicians who will now have much more responsibility to manage and prioritize budgets in the new organizational units. The City Council aims to create more independent responsibility within the administration on the one hand and also a clear political profile on the other.



MORE

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63rd UBC Executive Board meeting in Brussels, 14 - 15 February 2012

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Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is a network of over 100 cities from all ten Baltic Sea countries, with an overriding goal of contributing to the democratic, economic, social, cultural and environmentally sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.

The Union has based its operational activities on thirteen working Commissions on: Business Cooperation, Culture, Education, Energy, Environment, Gender Equality, Health and Social Affairs, Local Safety, Sport, Tourism, Transportation, Urban Planning, Youth Issues. The Commissions coordinate and execute specific projects, activities and special events. Each city is capable to have its own creative and fully independent input to the Commissions' work.

The Union has an observer status with the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), the Committee of the Regions, the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM). The Union is also a Special Participant in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). The UBC cooperates with numerous Baltic and European organisations.

The Union is open for new members. Any coastal city of the Baltic Sea or any other city interested in the development of the Baltic Sea Region may become a member of the Union by making a written declaration of its will to enter UBC.

Please contact the UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk for more information about the UBC work and the rules of entering the Union.