

Baltic Cities Bulletin

PUBLISHED BY THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

• AALBORG • AARHUS • ARENDAL • BERGEN • BOTKYRKA • CÉSI • CHOJNICE • ELBŁĄG • ELVA • ESPOO • FALUN • GARGŽDAI • GÄVLE • GDĄŃSK • GDYNIA • GREIFSWALD • GULDBORGUND • HAAPSALU • HALMSTAD • HELSINKI • JĚKABPILS • JĚGAVA • JÖGEVA • JÖHVI • JŮRMALA • JYVÄSKYLÄ • KALININGRAD • KALMAR • KÄRDLA • KARLSKRONA • KARLSTAD • KAUNAS • KEILA • KEMI • KIEL • KLAIPĖDA • KØGE • KOLDING • KOSZALIN • KOTKA • KRISTIANSTAD • KRYNICA M. • KURESSAARE • LAHTI • LIEPĀJA • LINKÖPING • LÜBECK • LULEÄ • ŁĘBA • MAARDU • MALBORK • MALMÖ • MARIEHAMN • MIĘDZYZDRÓJE • NACKA • NARVA • NÆSTVED • NORRTÄLJE • ÖREBRO • OSKARSHAMN • ÖSTHAMMAR • PAIDE • PALANGA • PALDISKI • PANEVĖŽYS • PÄRNU • PORI • PORVOO • PRUSZCZ GD. • RAKVERE • REDA • RIGA • ROBERTSFORS • ROSTOCK • ŠIAULIAI • SILLAMÄE • SLUPSK • SÖDERHAMN • SOPOT • ST. PETERSBURG • SUNDSVALL • SZCZECIN • TALLINN • TAMPERE • TARTU • TIERP • TRELLEBORG • TUKUMS • TURKU • UMEÅ • USTKA • VÄSTERVIK • VÄXJÖ • VILJANDI • VILNIUS • VISBY • VORDINGBORG • VÖRU • WISMAR



Youth prospects and participation



EDITOR IN CHIEF
Paweł Żaboklicki

*

EDITING
Ewa Kurjata
Aleksandra Sasinowska
Paweł Żaboklicki

*

PROOF-READING
Ewa Kurjata

*

PUBLISHER
Union of the Baltic Cities
Secretariat
Wały Jagiellońskie 1
PL-80853 Gdańsk
POLAND
tel. +48 58 3010917
tel. +48 58 3019123
fax +48 58 3017637
e-mail: info@ubc.net
www.ubc.net
ISSN 1506-6266

*

COVER PICTURE
City of Tallinn
Romer Laidsaar

Baltic Cities Bulletin

Dear UBC Friends,

The UBC Strategy sees our member cities as prosperous, sustainable and creative and the whole Baltic Sea Region as dynamic, democratic and stable in a successful economic, political, social, environmental and cultural development process, moving towards closer cooperation and integration. It is impossible to reach this vision without the youth involvement.

We are all aware that the young have a lot to say. The youths are a very important resource for local and regional development. They are not a burdensome responsibility but a part of social potential, which can be easily mobilized to achieve the higher goals. The youths need to be properly equipped to take advantage of opportunities, such as civic and political participation, volunteering, creativity, entrepreneurship, sport and global engagement.

Cooperating with the youth is a great and inspiring lesson for the local authorities, which results in new dimensions, perspectives and expertise in the municipal work. Fresh and creative ideas help to solve the problems faced by the cities.

What shall be borne in mind is that this group is especially vulnerable to social and economic threats. A growing number of young people are facing unemployment, making them feel frustrated, fearful or hopeless.

The current issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin is entitled Youth prospects and participation.

It offers the stories on how the Baltic cities use the youth potential. It also presents best practices, describing youth involvement, participation and youth work at large. Also, you shall find here the stories about new, innovative and creative youth projects, youth influence and the social media, co-operation and networking. The articles on combating youth unemployment and young entrepreneurship can be of particular interest in the times of crisis, too.

Many important questions were raised in the texts sent by the cities. They provide great food for thought and, we hope, may spur you into action and trigger off new energy.

I do hope that this edition of the bulletin will open our eyes to the problems of young people and teach us all how to listen to them and how to cooperate in a creative way.

With the Baltic Sea greetings,

Per Bødker Andersen
President



Kolding, November 2012



I. YOUTH PROSPECTS AND PARTICIPATION

Youth Issues in your city – a must or an unwanted option?	2-3
Expedition Botkyrka	4
Self-governing Youth Centre in Chojnice	4
Youth activity in Elva	5
We help you to change your future	5
Together we can do more!	6
Hey, we've got something to say	6
Gdańsk Youth City Council	7
Yes, they can	7
Busy Jēkabpils	8
Miss and Mister Jūrmala and more	8
Kalmar attracting youngsters into politics	9
Interested in entrepreneurship	9
Active Karlstad	10
Young voice in Kemi	10
On a New Vocational Track	11
Meeting decision makers in Kotka	11
Kristiansand Youth Council	12
Voluntary work in Kuressaare	12
'Inspis' as Inspiration	13
Initiative goes with passion	13
Maardu Work Team	14
Embraced by Malmö	14
Young Influence in Nacka	15
Youth Parliament – an active participant in the city life	15
We simply ask them...	16
Work and fun camp in Paide	16
Thousands flee to Palanga in summer	17
Election of Youth Mayor	17
Rakvere city labour camp	18
In childrens' hands	18
Youth City Council of Słupsk	19
Szczecin's Zone 89	19
Elos: pupils' competences, school standards and a quality network	20
Children and Youth Participation in Tampere	20
Tartu – a city full of life	21
Future Box	21
Social investment in children and youths	22
Youngsters' Voice in Vaasa	22
Vilnius for the European Youth Capital 2015	23
The youth for Sopot	23
BSR InnoShip	24
New campus at Næstved	24

II. UBC TODAY

65 th UBC Executive Board meeting in Koszalin	25
64 th meeting of the UBC Executive Board in Rakvere	25
Commission on Health & Social Affairs seminar in Vaasa, 5-6 June 2012	26
Science Park Meeting 2012	26
CoYI gathered in Gdynia	27
Elbląg City Centre 2040	27
Commission on Local Safety met at the Congress on Active Mobility	27
Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional City Networks (CECICN)	28
Business Day and Youth Conference in Kärldla	28



The youth from western Lithuanian municipalities during the summer academy gaining new useful skills.



The Board in Koszalin, 4 October 2012, decided the main theme of the UBC General Conference in Mariehamn in 2013 would be how to tackle the problem of unemployment among youth.



The Board in Rakvere, 24 May 2012, discussed inter alia how to strengthen the UBC presence in Brussels and enhance its lobbying capacity.

III. NEWS FROM MEMBER CITIES

Sharing borders, growing closer	29
Employment for the Youth?	29
Locomotive Shed in Jyväskylä	30
Maardu Youth Centre	30
Youth Politicians in Kristiansand	30
The Congress on 'Managing Metropolises in the XXI century	31
The Multifunctional Centre 13	31
Magic Malbork	31
Time Capsule in Vilnius	32
Gdynia Business Week 2012	32

Contents

Youth Issues in your city

a must or an
unwanted
option?

Dear Friends in the Baltic Sea Region,

In the autumn bulletin, you will read about the youth and youth work in our region. I wish to encourage you to think it through and act in your cities.

Important questions

There are numerous interesting projects and activities engaging young people, and for them. You can only wonder and be positively surprised. Also, you can also ponder on why work with the young and youth initiated activities are too often project based. Do we not believe in young people and their ability to add extra value to the city management and the community life? Do we prioritize other activities, investments and age groups – more demanding and visible perhaps? Or are the ideas presented by the youth so innovative and need to be reacted on quickly? Are projects and project funding a convenient and easy way to make them happen?

Are we scared of the young?

It can be a little bit of everything mentioned above. Just recently one of my friends, standing far from youth work and public services, asked: "Why are you again talking about how to involve young people into the city life? How to talk to politicians and why are you having another project about it?" I stopped thinking – yes, we have worked on this issue for years now and yes, we still do. During 2012-2013, for example, we are having another project 'Life, Media, Participation...' in the Commission on Youth Issues. Also, since 2005 we have organized a parallel Youth Conference during the UBC General Conference with the same aim of promoting participation issues, giving possibilities and teaching how to hold a dialogue between the decision makers and the young, enriching our cities' lives through that.

As participation of young people in the community life and decision making is rather an exception, sometimes a good example, but this has not become a solid tradition yet. Just this week I had a talk with my Swedish colleague, who said that in their small city politicians booked their calendars to consult every possible matters with youth council, and that the calendar of the youth council was full. Amazing! There are some very good examples from here and there, but in general, our decision makers, and civic servants and of course, the youths themselves, still need encouragement to engage more in the community life and debates. On the other hand, participation and involvement of citizens or the role of civic society in wider aspects are problematic almost everywhere. We are more and more "bowling alone", as Robert D. Putnam described the example of the American community¹. Are we moving forward in the same direction? Should we be aware of it and do some-

thing about it? So, what better solution than teaching our new generation skills of participation and giving them possibilities to practice it on every day basis, can we come up with? What is it like in your city? Are you open to the youths or are you scared of them?

What are our values?

How do you prioritize the youth issues in your city? Are they part of your city strategy or the development plan or perhaps even part of special children and youth strategy? At least 1/3 of the UBC cities prioritize the youth issues, as we found out in the 2010 questionnaire carried out by the UBC Commission on Youth Issues. But then again, 2/3 of the cities have never answered. Have only the most progressive and 'youth-minded' cities answered?



I have travelled a lot and held numerous discussions on youth work and its 'identity' in my every day job and in the UBC work, too. Wherever you go in Europe, the problems are pretty much the same – youth workers, youth leaders and civil servants responsible for youth work say that their work is undervalued. If youth work or youth issues are not valued properly, it is easily visible in low budget numbers and low salaries of youth workers (compared to other similar occupations' salaries); in weak or lacking structure for youth work in cities; in the lack of support for youth associations or youth initiatives; in the lack of acknowledgment or even disregard for youth activities, events, etc.

What is there to value then? Work done with the youths and for them is diverse, developing, creative, future-oriented (N.B. You do not see immediate results), and yes, hard and demanding. You do not work only from Monday until Friday, from 8-17. You work in the evenings, on weekends. You travel with them and you know their worries. And yes, you often

face behavioural, social or other problems and help them deal with them. You 'only' support their growing and positive development. Is it really 'only' or is it 'a lot'? At the same time, of course, you are on a very creative and inspiring 'trip' with young people, who are future entrepreneurs, politicians, leaders, teachers, doctors, musicians, parents and the community members. The positive aspects of this work mainly motivate those, who work with the young, but we should not take this motivation for granted – youth work cannot rely solely on this motivation and dedication.

Let me quote some Tallinn youth workers. "A youth worker is a friend, leader, coach, adviser and for sure he/she is the person with multiple skills and knowledge, also with a lot of patience and time, and therefore sometimes with no family life..." or "A youth worker is like God Shiva with many hands and ready for many new beginnings" or "A youth worker is like a good fairy in the Cinderella story – appearing at most

needed moments and making something new out of nothing and guiding the young person through the difficulties”.

Do we see it as a cost or an investment and possibility?

Once again, here is another example from my own work. We have had a couple of times the Knitting Graffiti project in Tallinn. This means that young people knit something – it does not have to be anything too complicated and yes, before you ask, boys also knit. Later, (mainly during the summer) the parks, bus terminals or even buses are decorated with the knitwear. I have to admit, that there have been very different reactions to this project, but I have always answered: “Why shouldn’t young people help make their city more beautiful, even for some months only and in a way they like it?” This brings us back to the beginning – youth initiatives and ideas are sometimes untraditional, bold and very creative. But do we give them space and have trust in them to realize their ideas?

Do we allow them to give their share in the city life after all? Or do we turn them down, because we do not understand and we do not even take time to understand?

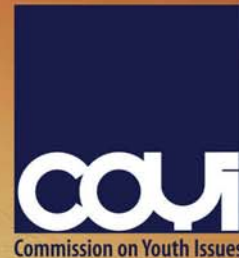
The question of valuing youth and youth issues is connected with funding, as already mentioned above. Does your city support the youth work? Does it have a special budget line or do you solely count on project based activities? Are there well-trained staff working with the youths, and are they supported and acknowledged by your municipality? Do you support youth associations, youth initiatives, new ideas, special youth programmes? Back to the beginning – are you open to meet with youngsters and youth workers to discuss possible perspectives and needs? Are you interested in networking? Do you support, for example, international networking – it can be extra work, can’t it?

The good news is that the UBC is ready to support your city in different issues, including youth matters. If today, you may lack ideas, new activities, partners, good models, motivated people in youth work, participation skills, etc. the Commission on Youth Issues is the right forum for an update and get start. The person responsible for youth work in your city, together with youth representative, is welcome to join our next meeting. For more information, please go to our web-page (www.ubc-youth.org) or contact the lead city, Tallinn.

To conclude, the young constitute almost ¼ of our population. We also have to have a better understanding of the importance of leisure in the contemporary society, and especially the importance of quality leisure time for the youths and with them. Then, things will start happening!

¹ Robert D. Putnam (2000). *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon & Schuster Paperbacks.

Ilona-Evelyn Rannala
Tallinn City Government
Sports and Youth Department
Head of Youth Department
UBC Commission on Youth Issues
Ilona-Evelyn.Rannala@tallinnlv.ee
www.ubc-youth.org



Be Young, Baltic Sea Region!



Approximately ¼ of our population is youth. Youth is the resource in our region and the future – have we really understood that?

UBC Commission on Youth Issues (CoYI) focuses on providing young people and people working with them international contacts, new ideas, platform for exchanging knowledge and best practices... There are many interesting forms of working together – youth conferences, virtual meeting spaces, open meetings, Tolerance Trips, Coffee with Politicians ... you name them and we will learn from you as well! Sure, there are many problems also – together we will find wise solutions!

Come and join CoYI – your city will benefit from that!

Contact us through
www.ubc-youth.org

or through Facebook:
COYI – Commission on Youth Issues



Expedition Botkyrka



Långt ifrån lagom

by Rebecka Hagman

On 21-23 September, 20 curious, brave and creative youth aged 16-25 gathered in a house in Alby in the municipality of Botkyrka with one mission. They had 48 hours to develop the best, most innovative and creative ideas to solve the municipality's greatest sustainability challenges.

The event, which was called 'Expedition Botkyrka', was designed as an idea generating competition. In 48 hours, experienced process leaders and high-positioned representatives from the private, public and civic sectors, guided the participants through their mission.

The competition ended up with a pitch session in which all the teams had max. 5 minutes to present their ideas to the jury, in a persuading, excellent and creative manner. The jury consisted of three representatives from the political and civil servant level, as well as from the private sector.

The first prize was dedicated to the idea of 'Glasklart' (Crystal Clear), which aimed at creating the greenhouse in which ecological fruit and



vegetables were grown, thus decreasing the transport needs from the outside. Also, the greenhouse should be run with renewable electricity generated by the machines in the Botkyrka local gyms. This implies a win-win situation since the citizens visiting the gym will receive subsidized member cards for contributing to local growing tomatoes. Finally, as the greenhouse grows, the young unemployed will get opportunities to gain employment.

The prize of 10 000 SEK to implement the idea, also includes an office space, a personal coach during one year, and a VIP-dialogue with the municipal board to present the idea. Apart from the winning one, a bunch of other brilliant ideas were generated on how the schools in Botkyrka can be developed; how many languages spoken in Botkyrka can be used as a resource; how the citizens living in Botkyrka can develop their recycling skills and how young academics and entrepreneurs can be used as mentors for other youngsters.

Expedition Botkyrka was arranged as a part of Botkyrka's Sustainability Week. The theme of this year's week was "youth participation and involvement". The purpose of the event was to try a playful way of creating meeting places where young people in Botkyrka together could find concrete, innovative and entrepreneurial solutions to local sustainability challenges.

MORE

Rebecka Hagman
Rebecka.Hagman@botkyrka.se



Self-governing Youth Centre in Chojnice

by Michał Karpiak

Since March 2012, a group of young volunteers runs Self-Governed Youth Centre in Chojnice, Poland. Among 4 members, there are initiators, young musicians and actors. They all live in Chojnice and its surroundings.

It is a pilot project run as a self-governing place for meetings by the young themselves. The place is to be a space to realise passion and ideas for cultural and artistic projects and extracurricular social activities.

Inspiration for the project came from German and Dutch twin towns: Emsdetten and Hengelo. The overall objective of the project is then to enhance creativity and entrepreneurship among young people. In addition, the initiative group wants to promote self-management, independent social and cultural activities of youngsters. The project promotes volunteerism as a way of implementing citizens' own passions and interests, since each participant becomes a volunteer. It also strengthens the willingness to take responsibility for own ideas. Young participants want to have an influence on the local community by enhancing its tolerance for their initiatives.

The initiative group has found a place for the Centre in a former pub, which they rented and equipped. They promoted the Centre and re-



Photo by: Anna Zajkowska, Project volunteer.

cruited additional participants (musicians and the theatre ensemble). There were several workshops organized in the Centre, both for musicians and the theatre group. The workshops focused not only on musical and acting skills, but also on teamwork. Yet, the most important is a long-term, independent work of the theatre ensemble and musical groups in the form of rehearsals. Performances are planned to be staged. The project will end with the conference aimed at disseminating its results.

One effect of the project is new knowledge, skills and attitudes that will let young people run self-governing youth centre and to pursue their own cultural and social projects. The other effect is creating the facility for the activities of young bands, theatre groups and other initiatives.

The project is co-financed by the Youth in Action Programme and the Municipality of Chojnice.

MORE

Michał Karpiak
karpiakm@miastochojnice.pl



Youth activity in Elva

by Omari Loid & Merike Järv

Electd in 2009, the Elva Youth Council consists of a group of young active people whose aim is to protect and implement the interests of youngsters. Elva has the population of 1517 young people, aged between 7-26.

The young here participate in sports, music, dance lessons, and many of them are also interested in recreational activities. For example, there is quite a significant extreme sports community, who is constantly upgrading their skate park in order to get more extreme fun.

In the beginning of 2009, there were only a handful truly active and enterprising young people in Elva. With some time and a lot of effort, the situation has become much brighter. Thanks to youth worker Veronika Laurson and the chairman of youth council Omari Loid, young people are more willing and interested in participating in the civil society. Young people have been involved in the Development Plan of Elva for 2020.

Like other today's modern young people, the youngsters here mostly communicate on the Internet. Quite a big amount of information flow is channelled through the sites like Facebook or Twitter. Moreover, these seem to be the best way of advertising things to the young. The Elva Youth Council offers opportunities for self-development through

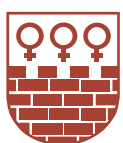
various trainings, workshops and simulations. There is also an opportunity to take part in developing projects or organizing events. So far, the young people of Elva have organized a couple of events such as for example *Human Chain around Arbi Lake* and *Children's Protection Day*.

The youth in Elva wants to be active, take part in the civil society so that Elva could be a better place to live. That is why, since 2012 Elva Town Government gives a youth award for the most active and innovative young person in the town.



MORE

Omari Loid, Merike Järv
omari.loid@gmail.com; merike.jarv@elva.ee



We help you to change your future

by Annika Nyström

Falun, situated near Stockholm, with its 55,000 inhabitants serves as the region's capital. Sweden, like the rest of Europe, is facing the problem of high unemployment among youths. In Falun about 250 youngsters, aged 16-25, remain unemployed and mostly have never had a job. Most of them left school too early, not having graduated from a secondary upper school. Unemployment or the lack of education creates problems for individuals and can cause risks and inconvenience.

AIK in Falun has started several projects in an attempt to provide a better life for this group. Much support from politicians, municipal departments and from the European Social Foundation (ESF) was received.

Young Development project is open to all youngsters aged 18-25 who are unemployed, supported by the social welfare and do not attend school. During the eight-week project, participants are requested to fill in a ques-

tionnaire on their work experience, education and skills in order to form a plan for their future. Preventive health care, work training to gain work experience, social trainings, and learning how the society works are also important components. The participants will be able to choose their own paths towards self-sufficiency through working or studying. This project is a part of the regional project in which Falun is doing very well, i.e., approx. 80% of the participants are reaching the goal.

Older teach younger project, twenty-five older employees are trained in coaching. They meet up with twenty-five unemployed youths who have done work trainings at workplaces for at least four weeks. The youths have recurring sessions with their coaches, together with a student counsellor. They are also given information about how traditional studies on the current occupation can be combined with practical learning at the actual workplaces. This project has been so successful that this method has now become a permanent mode of operation. Everyone wins. The youths get education and a job; the coach gains new experiences; employers reward them; and the community is given the opportunity of attracting young people to its different sectors.

Arenan Academy project financed by ESF, aims at inspiring young people, 16-25, who left school without a diploma, to go back to studying. This is done by offering an environment, far from the "ordinary school", where the youths are met in a new and more enthusiastic way thus encouraging them to choose a path in life that leads to inclusion in the society.



MORE

Annika Nyström
annika.nystrom@falun.se



Together we can do more!



by Adelija Radžienė

Each year western Lithuanian municipalities have a tradition of gathering active, young people in the summer academy 'Together we can do more'. Since 2006, different municipalities in turn have held the youth summer academy. In 2012, Kretinga district municipality held the academy for the eighth time. This event brings together active young people from over 20 municipalities in the whole country. The participants are young people, aged 16-29, representing various youth organizations, school student councils and informal youth groups.

Each year the academy welcomes over 300 young participants, with the main purpose of providing them with knowledge, social capacities and competence required in their daily activities, helping to develop them and strengthen communication between the municipalities. The academy starts with an opening ceremony, which motivates young people to be active and interested in the three-day agenda. Each municipality sends a team of 15 youth members and a prepared presentation of the town.

On the first day, all the teams introduce themselves to others, exchange experiences about their activities and organizations. All participants are asked to join 15 different working groups (theoretical or practical) led by experienced moderators. The most favourite topics are volunteering, youth NGOs activities, project development, time planning, entrepreneurship, or self-expression opportunities. The atmosphere of the academy gives young people a great opportunity to be together, discuss and share their experiences, get more information about young people opportunities, and to promote their initia-



tives. Finally, each working group has to make an interesting and informative presentation about their work results and conclusions. In the first evening, the teams' introductions are followed by singing

around the bonfire, presentation of short films created by youngsters.

On the second day, participants' friendship is strengthened through the sport games, such as basketball, football, rope pulling, darts, chess, orientation game around the lake. In the evening, improvisation activity, talent show and disco take place. The third day is organized around the leading theme – this year it was civic activities. Each team gets an assignment to solve one of youth problems (unemployment, passivity, addiction, emigration and so one). Suggested solutions are then presented to all the participants. The academy closes with a solemn ceremony with teams' awards, passing on the academy's flag to the next year organizing municipality.

The youth summer academy 'Together we can do more' is an important event, allowing young people to generate ideas, implement initiatives, create joint projects, start cooperation and establish friendships. This not only motivates young people to be active and civil, but it also helps develop personalities and readiness to work for common well-being.

MORE

Adelija Radžienė
adelija.radziene@klaipedos-r.lt



Hey, we've got something to say

by Catharina Hegrelius

By the end of September, 40 young people and officials from the UBC member cities met in Tallinn, Estonia, to start a new co-operation project on promoting youth participation. Co-financed by the EU Youth in Action Programme, 'Life, Media and Participation' project is about the youth democracy.

It all started in the beginning of 2011, when young people expressed their interest in a youth democracy project to the UBC Commission on Youth Issues. Young people are keen to foster democracy and to play their part in it. They want to be involved in the community life and want their views on a wide variety of subjects to be heard. What is more, when they can see the results of their personal commitment, active citizenship becomes a reality. By participating in the public on local and regional levels, the young can acquire experiences and confidence needed to go a step further in public life, which also includes the European level.

The *Life, Media and Participation* project focuses on the exchange of experiences among young people in the Baltic Sea Region, on their lifestyles, subcultures, attitudes towards inclusion in the democratic processes. Altogether 40 young people from four countries will take part in the transnational meetings. On local level, the project will involve about 160 young people from Estonia, Latvia, Sweden and Denmark. The UBC member cities behind the project are Tallinn, Kärdla,

Pärnu, Guldborgsund, Kolding, Karlstad, Riga and Gävle.

During this first transnational seminar, youngsters were taught how to organize and hold round table discussions with politicians and decision-makers. Lessons learnt and key messages from these transnational round table discussions will be followed by parallel democracy campaigns in the media in the participating countries. The young themselves will organize these media campaigns. To do this, they will get the relevant training during the seminar. Back home, the young people shall in turn train more young colleagues to get involved and participate in the campaigns and round table discussions. Both this project and this kind of co-operation is very important for us, since it helps foster youth participation in our city, says Lena Modin, project co-ordinator at the department of Culture and Association support, Gävle Municipality.



MORE

Catharina Hegrelius
catharina.hegrelius@gavle.se

Gdańsk Youth City Council

by Michał Orfin

At the beginning of September, after over a year of preparations, the Youth City Council of Gdańsk was established. Thirty four youth councillors from all city districts were elected as representatives of students from both high and junior high schools. Each school delegated two students to the district election, where adequate number of councillors was elected to the youth city council. The number of mandates was the same as in the local elections (For example, in Wrzeszcz district there are five adult councillors, so five youth councillors were elected accordingly).

YCC consists of 34 councillors and each cadence lasts two years. Its first session took place on 20 October 2011. Six selected members form the presidium (chairman, 4 vice-chairmen and a secretary). To make this work more efficient, several committees (audit, education, sport and leisure, culture and promotion) were established. Every session takes place in the New City Hall meeting room at Wały Jagiellońskie, 1. All visitors are welcome to participate in the meetings.



Youth City Council's main task is to represent students before the local authorities (President and the City Council). Secondly, it initiates and develops

activities in the fields of social life, education, culture, sports, recreation, ecology and charity among young citizens. Since the Youth City Council was not initially recognizable among students, we decided to organize an integration meeting for all school councils. Our aim was to introduce to them our ideas and plans for the next two years. We were impressed by the results of this meeting. None of us even imagined that it could have interested so many students, nor that every single chair in the room would be occupied. We strongly believe that this event allowed us to strengthen links between school societies and youth councillors. During the EURO 2012, we organized the football cup for junior high students. The timing of the European Football Championship was perfect to get students involved in sport activities. There were seven teams from Gdańsk's schools. After the entire day of matches and fierce fights, all teams were awarded with statuettes, and the first three places got medals and trophies.

As the Youth City Council, we participate in the international cooperation. Recently, we have visited Kaliningrad and Luneburg. Our representatives attended the Youth Assembly of Kaliningrad Sister and Partner cities, and the Youth Hanza Association meeting.

MORE

Michał Orfin
michal.orfin@gmail.com



Yes, they can!

by Tatiana Żynda

Over the last years, there has been a lot of concerns about the situation of youngsters in Poland. This worry is fuelled by increasing lack of activity and involvement in social life of local community observed among the young. In light of last surveys made by Gallup Institute in February 2011 only 16% of young Poles participate in voluntary service (the EU average is 24%) and only 26% take part in the activities of youth groups or organizations (the EU average is 46%). In terms of youth, activity in voluntary service Poland is placed as the last one in the EU.

Few factors can be pinpointed as reasons of such situation. First, schools underestimate the significance of volunteering as an elementary component of democratic, civic society. Furthermore, adults do not believe that young people are able to conceive and implement an idea, which would make virtual change in the life of community. Often, the initiatives of youngsters have to face an adult's dejection. As a result, they do not believe in themselves. Additionally, very often youngsters have no possibility of learning how to implement their ideas. They do not have basic knowledge on how to make a project, analyze needs of the local community, account for the budget, win an ally, etc.

Considering the circumstances outlined above, Gdynia authorities have decided to activate young people and to provide them with tools essential to carry out their own projects. Since 2009, thanks to the financial support given by the city, the Centre for Youth Co-operation and Mobility in Gdynia has been implementing projects aimed mainly at increasing the activity of Gdynia youngsters, aged 15-25. From December 2009 to November 2010, the Centre was conducting the 'Active Gdynia – Youth Groups' project. In this project, 30 youth groups (305 youngsters) were learning systematically how to conduct small projects successfully. Each of 16 projects, which were eventually



developed, was different, interesting, reflecting the passion of young people. They involved, for instance, making mosaics with children from the Socio-therapeutic Community Centre, sign language workshops, dancing, creative recycling or the youth music groups review. All of them were financed with the amount of approximately 200 euro. As a result, young people could find out that team-work, persistence and well-considered ideas are more important than money.

The project will be continued as 'Active Gdynia 2011-2013'. In the first stage of the project, 'Active Gdynia 2011/2012', 12 groups (160 people) implemented projects, which affected 2 500 citizens of Gdynia. Year



by year the quality of projects rises. It happens that once someone gets involved in "Active Gdynia", next year they come back with another idea. Being an active and aware citizen is addictive. The perspective changes. The district is not enough. Youngsters go out from

their backyards or streets and start looking further. They take part in international youth exchanges, trainings and seminars.

The experience of the 'Active Gdynia' projects shows that if we give youngsters some time and attention or accompany them when creating and conducting a project, provide them with trainings, ensure contacts with other active youth groups, they can really implement their ideas efficiently and show their spirit of entrepreneurship and creativity. They can and they want!

MORE

Tatiana Żynda
cwm@cwm.org.pl



Busy Jēkabpils



by Laura Afanasjeva

Youth Day 2012

This summer was rich in events for youngsters in Jēkabpils, where in June its Youth Council organized for the 3rd time the 'Youth Day 2012'. This year it gathered more than one thousand youngsters from all over Latvia. They engaged themselves in 'Ghetto Basket', 'Ghetto Dance', 'Ghetto Football', street gymnastics, BMX and skating competitions. Not only amateurs, but also sports professionals have admitted that Jēkabpils Skate Park is one of the top 5 in Latvia and Jēkabpils is one of those cities that constantly takes care of it to provide an access for active youngsters to train and entertain.

The main goal behind the event is to promote active lifestyle and spend quality time together with like-minded people. During the Youth Day, a great number of youngsters were also involved as volunteers to help with the planning and organization of the event.

The Youth Day has already become the greatest annual youth event in our city and is highly valued by the municipality. Active youth is considered here as a true value and therefore such initiatives receive municipal support.

Youth activities during the 6th Conference of Latvian-German twin cities

Between 15-18 August Jēkabpils hosted the 6th Conference of twin cities from Latvia and Germany. The year 2012 is the European year for

active ageing and solidarity between generations. While adults from Latvian and German municipalities were participating in the conference and shared experiences on various topics, youngsters were having their own programme with the motto 'Youth perspective on solidarity between generations – opportunities and challenges'.



More than 20 youngsters from Latvia and Germany were engaged in numerous joint activities. For four days youngsters participated in the thematic workshops and interactive games, went on a sight-seeing trip to see a bit more of Jēkabpils and its surroundings, had a creative photo shooting and much more with the ultimate goal of having deeper thinking about tolerance and solidarity between the older and younger generations, their roles, responsibilities and opportunities.

All results of these activities were presented to the representatives of participating municipalities. Their applause and smiles proved that youngsters have made a great job and a great step in the right direction.

MORE

Laura Afanasjeva
laura.afanasjeva@jekabpils.lv



Miss and Mister Jūrmala and more

by Pavels Dunajs

Jūrmala is a city where young people can find ways that bring communities together. Through increased participation in team sports and musical expression, and building social and economic skills, the city offers to improve the lives of young people and the communities they live in.

In the summertime, Jūrmala invites to its summer camps. They are creative, recreational and educational. Children have the opportunity to work in different workshops like woodworking, where they can prepare decorative magnets from the flotsam trees, decorative boxes and



photo frames. Children can also take part in sporting activities like football, skateboard, volleyball and chess.

Jūrmala City Council offers young people, aged 13-25, who are residents of the town, ways to improve lives of the young. They can participate in the youth policy development by giving their opinions, suggestions and comments to questions prepared by the Jūrmala City Council working group on youth policy (www.jurmala.lv). Also, young people who are studying at the universities have the chance to get an apprenticeship in their field of study. This resulted not only in improving their practical skills, but also it is an occasion to share their ideas how to improve the city life.

Jūrmala also takes care of young people's health. For example, from 3 September until 5 October, the 'Belarus' Sanatorium in cooperation with the Jūrmala City Council, organizes the health promotion and health care accessibility raising campaign, named 'Children Our Future'. The campaign aims at encouraging children to join the system of disease prevention and early detection measures.

Jūrmala has the youth centre where variety of exhibitions, research, conferences, environmental cognitive games, trails, environmental erudite competitions and summer camps are held.

Here, the young can find plenty of opportunities to develop their skills. They participate in various competitions and activities like Miss and Mister Jūrmala or in sporting games.

MORE

Pavels Dunajs
pavels.dunajs@jpd.gov.lv



Kalmar attracting youngsters into politics

by Sophia Sundlin



Kalmar municipality has joined the pilot project 'Citizen' which is targeted at young people. Its aim is to strengthen youngsters' participation in the local decision-making process and to establish links with the politicians and civil servants in the municipality.

The three year project will be implemented jointly by the *Sveriges Ungdomsråd* (NGO) and twelve municipalities in Sweden. Kalmar's task within the project is to develop and test new methods of helping citizens find easy and quick communication ways with their local politicians and civil servants. With a long term perspective, the project aims at attracting young people into politics and engaging them in the local matters through showing them that the municipality listens to them attentively and is dependent upon their opinions.

Kalmar's youth council does function as a reference group in the project and works side by side with the youth counselor to make sure that the methods are spread and attract young people in Kalmar.

Another important goal of this project is spreading good examples and offering support to other municipalities and organizations who wish to improve youth and citizens participation.

MORE

Sophia Sundlin
sophia.sundlin@kalmar.se



Interested in entrepreneurship

by Hergo Tasuja

Youngsters are interested in entrepreneurship but we found out through the Internet-based research they were not too eager to start with it. The UBC Commission on Education initiated research and the city of Kärldla and NGO Hiiuamaa Anchor put it through. Respondents came from Lithuania, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Germany, Finland, Sweden and Norway.

Anneli Veevo, Head of UBC Commission on Education Secretariat said that the aim was to map young entrepreneurship activities in target locations and gather information about potential youngsters who wanted to start with entrepreneurship.

About 90% of 304 respondents have been an employee. It means that youngsters from the UBC countries start their working career at early age. 14% of youngsters are already entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, they are not too eager to become entrepreneurs. On the scale from one to five, the average was 2.8, if we asked 'Do youngsters dare become entrepreneurs'?

It appeared that the main reason to start up business was an opportunity to do something somebody really liked. 219 out of 304 thought so. Another reason was a change to make lot of money, which was about as much as popular. The third one was independence. Every second person brought it out.

Half of the youngsters have taken part of schooling, studied entrepreneurship at school, or at least have thought about becoming an entrepreneur.



Would they prefer to be an entrepreneur or an employee, all the same they gave similar answers.

At the same time, they do not feel confident. Nearly 80% of respondents thought that their current knowledge was not enough to start up. But 90% of them told that they would like to improve themselves. We must offer a change

to do that. A high school is the proper school level where knowledge about entrepreneurship should be taught. 80% said so. 50% of respondents brought out the University. A high school is also the place where participants had learned something about entrepreneurship. 125 of them at least. Other school levels do not seem to deal with this theme.

67% of youngsters would prefer to work in their home place, if possible. Being an entrepreneur is certainly one option. Money and the lack of skills and knowledge are problematic. But these problems can be solved. More about the survey is available at: <http://hiiuankur.blog.com/2012/09/01/youngsters-are-interested-about-entrepreneurship-but-they-are-not-too-eager-to-start-with-it/>

MORE

Hergo Tasuja
Tasuja86@hotmail.com



Active Karlstad



by Fanny Fernlöf

Twelve years ago, the city of Karlstad established its Youth Council in order to increase the youths' influence. The Youth Council has 40 member commissioners and is directly subordinate to the local government board. This has been a success factor since the youth have the opportunity to affect the whole area of municipal issues, instead of only one sector.



Photo by: Karlstad Kommun

The Youth Council holds their meetings once a month. Representatives from different administrations and their board attend the meetings to present their operations. They also bring questions for the youths to discuss. For instance, the Youth Council works on different areas through focus groups, a method which

has proved to work well in the city of Karlstad. The focus groups give the young the opportunity to be involved in the fields they care much. It has led to an increased engagement and has resulted in some actual solutions. Just to mention, a well-visited open house for young people to visit in their spare time, a legal graffiti wall and SMS bus tickets.

Examples of international projects of the Youth Council

Cultracy is the municipal partnership project financed by SIDA, in which the young in Karlstad and Gaziantep in Turkey meet and exchange experiences, for example, through Facebook. Different subjects, such as education, spare time, culture and democracy, are discussed.

Life, Media and Participation is the Youth in Action-project run by the UBC Youth Commission. The youths get to learn how they can influence politics through media. Nine different partners in four countries participate in the project. These are: Sweden, Denmark, Estonia and Latvia.

Local youth political follow-up

Karlstad has taken part of a national survey to follow-up the youths' opportunities to influence. Students aged 14 – 17, took part in the survey. There were questions about the youth activity offers in Karlstad, their school situation and their physical and mental health.

The results will help politicians and the municipal employees to secure the quality of work done in Karlstad.

The Youth Council analysed the results and produced a brochure with some tips to solve the specific problem areas. The brochure was sent to the participating group of pupils, and they gave the Youth Council their response and proposals about how to make Karlstad even better a city for youths to live in. This also formed basis for the Youth Council's upcoming action plan.

MORE

Fanny Fernlöf
fanny.fernlof@karlstad.se



Young voice in Kemi

by Alessiina Juuso & Kai Puro

The voice of Kemi youngsters is heard during the decision-making process. The Kemi Youth Council works as a consultant on decisions that affect young people. The non-political organization is named by the Kemi City Government Board every two years. The membership consists of mainly young people starting at age 14 coming from different organizations, such as schools, education centers, sport and other youth-involved organizations. There are also a few persons from the city council.

The Kemi Youth Council has worked since 2002 and during that time it has made many proposals and position papers to make youngsters' pace better in Kemi. The most spectacular ones were related to employing a school psychologist and a youth drug-worker a few years ago.

The Youth Council has also made statements on municipal merger and government's plans to cut down student places at the University of Applied Sciences in the Kemi region. The youth council has also made several initiatives on adding more hobby-like activities like skateboarding park and band rehearsal places. One of the youth council's achievements is developing the child and youth political program. The program is made for the politicians to follow while improving children's and youngsters' situation in Kemi.

In the autumn Finland will be very active because of the local council elections. The Kemi Youth Council provides an election board to all young people in the home town council. The election board has been organized twice before: four years ago during the last election and last year during the parliamentary election.

The event gathers together young candidates and local youth. The audience is usually school classes and other young people interested in the election. Although the board is dedicated to young people, it is open to all the citizens, and there has always been audience from every age group.

The youth council also takes part in the educational events aimed at improving youngsters' participation in the society. The members of the Kemi Youth Council have taken part in e.g. Lapland's youth forum where participants from all over Lapland speak about their experiences to other young people.

MORE

Alessiina Juuso and Kai Puro
alessiina@gmail.com; kai.puro@hotmail.com



On a New Vocational Track

by Lidia Ratuszniak

The labour market changes during the crisis era and economic turmoil worldwide hits strongest the young, who more and more frequently become unemployed. Wishing to meet the needs of the young unemployed, as well as the requests reported by local employers, in May 2012 the District Jobs Office (DJO) in Koszalin started a new initiative named 'Young People on a New Vocational Track' supported financially by the Labour Fund from the Minister of Labour and Social Policy's reserve. The programme is aimed at 75 unemployed people, aged up to 30, registered at the DJO. It assumes accomplishing three supporting modules. Under the first module, 50 participants will get funds in a single go for taking up their own business activities. Once such businesses are open, they will be eligible to apply for reimbursement of Social Insurance contributions during the first three months of doing business (specific element of the programme). The next two modules will comprise

individual and group training courses. A specific element of those modules is the opportunity to apply for a single-paid motivation bonus for those, who will take on jobs within 30 days after completing the training and present a contract of employment for at least a 3-month period.

All programme participants will get support from a vocational guidance counsellor. The programme will be carried on until 31.03.2013. At least 60 young unemployed people will get jobs. Until the end of August, 49 people participated in the programme, whereof 15 were referred to individual training courses, 10 to group training courses and 24 persons got funds to start their own business activities.

DJO Koszalin has acquired, through a competition, funds for accomplishment of the 'No Barriers – We're Active' and 'Way to Employment' programmes co-financed from resources of the European Union under the European Social Fund and for accomplishment of programmes covering people aged until 30 financed from extra resources of the Labour Fund (ministerial reserve). The projects are also aimed at young, unemployed people who experience hardships at the labour market.

More information about the accomplished projects is available at www.pup.koszalin.pl.

We expect to use the experience gained in implementation of the new elements of vocational activity support in the future to help young people at the labour market as effectively as possible.



Mr Kamil Lipiec – His participation in the Special Programme allowed him to establish his own photo studio.

MORE

Lidia Ratuszniak
tel. +48 94 3455743



Meeting decision makers in Kotka

by Anssi Avelin & Riitta Heikkilä

A cultural group in the city of Kotka, the so called Pekkas-ryhmä, arranged the meeting between young people and decision-makers in the town hall on 7 September. The theme of the meeting was to get the ideas of young people about their home town Kotka and possible cultural activities for the young. There were representatives of the youth council, student bodies and the children's parliament. Young people met with the President of the City Council, the City Council and the Cultural Board members, and with other officials.

The chairman of the youth council said in his speech that Kotka had organized cultural events for adults and children, but less for young people. One such possibility could be Sea Days for the young. They also wanted cultural events where they could meet each other. There were also hopes for free concerts under the age of 18 and sporting events.

The city of Kotka has shared cultural passport with ninth graders to get discounts on various events. A similar cultural passport is also expected to secondary school students.

In Kotka, the young have themselves organized an event targeted at youngsters together with the neighbours: Hamina, Pyhtää, Virolahti, Miehikkälä. 'Seukkarit' will be held again next year. Similarly, there is

a need for a flea market organized by the young people themselves.

As Kotka offers a range of leisure facilities and activities, it was also discussed how young people receive the best possible information about different opportunities.

MORE

Anssi Avelin, Riitta Heikkilä
anssi.avelin@gmail.com; riitta.heikkila@kotka.fi





Kristiansand Youth Council



by Åse Paulsen

Kristiansand Youth Council (KUU) consists of 19 members grouping from secondary and upper secondary schools in the city.

KUU's mandate is to be an advisory and consultative body in political issues. The council has given advice on, and been involved in, several issues.

The council acts independently of the local politicians. Its members have participated in meetings of the Executive Committee, the City Council and the Committee for Schools and Kindergartens in order to present their work. KUU also writes letters to the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor.

KUU is concerned with issues regarding youngsters' daily matters. The council has been an active participant at the School Council Conference 2012, where bullying and physical activity were the two issues that created the biggest debate. The young have strong opinions about these issues.

The fact that KUU decides which issues it will get involved in is a strong point for the council. When the young people themselves choose which issues to work on, engagement and involvement is created. They know best what is important to them, and they are an important voice that should be heard more often.

It is the KUU's ambition to be visible, available and well-known among young people in Kristiansand. The council is constantly working to raise youngsters' awareness of the KUU, what it does, and how to join it. The school conference, which has been arranged for two consecutive years, is an important factor in raising awareness of the council. Pupils from all the secondary schools in the municipality are represented at the conference, which offers a great opportunity for the KUU to introduce itself in a positive way.

Over the years, the KUU has become the council to count on. It receives enquiries from different public services. It is invited to numerous meetings and conferences.

The first five years have shown that many of the pupils who have been members of the KUU continue to be actively engaged in the community matters as members of youth organisations or political parties. This proves that by involving the young at an early age and giving them opportunities to have influence, the foundation for further involvement is made.

MORE

Åse Paulsen
ase.paulsen@kristiansand.kommune.no



Voluntary work in Kuressaare

by Linda Lallo

The youngsters of our city are included in different actions and projects that support the development of the community and value stronger citizenship. For example, there was a project for cleaning up the area where a future park could be located and the cleaning of the seaside from garbage and leaves. Our volunteers are active and help in carrying out the projects in schools, in the youth centre or in doing the cinema survey or organizing the maritime days' festival. Youngsters are motivated to act, to get new contacts, experiences and to take responsibility, which proves the importance and appreciation of the voluntary input. 'The Sun of Saaremaa' is a competition of business ideas, whose purpose is to encourage youngsters' creativity and entrepreneurship, to create their interest in economic development of the island and to promote becoming an entrepreneur.

The youth councils are active in schools and in the youth centre. The youth city council is the oldest in Estonia. Its members participate in the meetings of the City Council's education and culture commissions which offers them a good opportunity to participate in the decision making process. The students' council is the 'bridge' between the administration and pupils, which stands for the students rights in school. The youth activity group started their work in the youth centre and has already improved the positive impact on the institutions' work. It is important to ask for their opinions and include them. As the civil



servants are not the extreme sport fanciers, the youths' opinions have been taken into account while planning the reconstruction of the skate park. The participation options are meant for everybody, who is ready to jump on board. Seminars, youth democracy projects, youth exchanges and initiative projects, meetings, trainings, workshops, camps are quite often provided. Youngsters are eager to take some action. The flash mob Snowman has become traditional youth initiative bringing hundreds of youngsters in the streets in order to build various snow figures in the city centre. It happens late in the evening to surprise the citizens next morning.

The summertime is quite busy in the city as a lot of tourists visit Kuressaare, and many outstanding cultural events take place here. It provides seasonal jobs for youngsters besides the Youth Working Camp to acquire work experience.

Youth entrepreneurship and creativity are important keywords for being competitive at the labour market. Experiences gained through non-formal learning are an important investment that promotes to discover your potential and skills.

MORE

Linda Lallo
linda.lallo@kuressaare.ee



'Inspis' as Inspiration

by Carita Salmiranta

How many times do people stop to think about the environment around us? How do they treat it? Funded by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the Inspis-project, was awarded with the Environmental Activist of the Year by Lahti Region Environmental Services on 20 September 2012.

Inspis originates from a Finnish word "inspiraatio", (inspiration in English). The project tries to find new, creative ways of employing the young, so that they may receive successful work experiences for future employment relationships. The project concentrates on different issues of significance to the society at large. With this method, the young learn socially important values and their own responsibilities.

Green Grass

With Green Grass concept, we want everyone to start taking care of the nature and suggest new places that could serve as Green Grass – areas. Pikku-Vesijärvi, the park near the lake, is the first Green Grass-area. Last summer the young took care of the park and also worked at the park's summer cafe. There were also different vegetables and herbs in garden boxes, which people could take free of charge.

Cart Activity

In the streets we may have been recognized and remembered for the cleaning carts, which are made from the recycled materials. We clean

during various events and also aim at getting people to know how littering is affecting our everyday lives. Some money that is spent on cleaning could be also used for example on youth employment.

School Tour

The first school tour was organized in spring 2012. With different playful workshops we aim at challenging children to take responsibility for the clean surroundings. School can also have its own Green Grass-area.

Tunnel Vision Graffiti Group

Graffiti- project started in June 2012 and consisted in painting some stunning pieces of graffiti art in three underpass tunnels.



MORE

<http://www.inspishanke.fi/>
<http://tv-blogi.blogspot.fi/>



Initiative goes with passion

by Kalvis Kalniņš

Development of 'Kolonija' ('Colony') began in May, 2011, led by two Liepāja State 1st Gymnasium 11th grade students Kalvis and Jurgis, who left after a year. The purpose of the project was to develop an intensive educational game and make it accessible to students. 'Kolonija' is real world business simulation game designed for up to 40 participants. It teaches to cooperate, to communicate, and to think holistically. It also gives understanding how the capitalism works.

I cannot remember why we thought that something valuable will ever be made. But now it is obvious – even youngsters are capable of making a difference. To be honest, the first game was a disaster. There were many misunderstandings, due to which half of the players left. Despite all, the other half stayed, enjoyed the game and gave us a crucial feedback. After that, 6 failures in organizing 'Kolonija' came. There were no participants, which forced us to redesign the game. After half a year and hard work at last enough participants applied to the event and it took place. Everyone liked the new version a lot more. So far, the new "Kolonija" has been played 3 times. The next event is scheduled for 20-21 October, and it will involve Latvian businessmen for the first time.



I appreciate the experience that I have learned, but I should have asked for more help from successful people at the beginning. I thought that they would not listen to me and I was not worth their time, but that was very false. In fact, they were friendly and more than willing to give an advice just because I do good things. Although doing things alone seems brave, I found out that asking for help is the real bravery. Nowadays, networking is the key word, because one can never know to do everything, but one can always have friends and ask them for help. It took me a year to learn that the team culture matters; that failure is a common thing, and that being busy is neither productive nor successful. Things that keep me going now are my new team and the feeling that more and more participants approach me to thank for teaching them something important. I believe that the key to success follows one's passion. At

least, it has always showed me the right path. Here is a suggestion. Read smart books. Enjoy the day and make sure that I read about you here next year!

MORE

Kalvis Kalniņš
kalvis.kalnins@sseriga.edu



Maardu Work Team



by Erika Tiganik

Maardu pupils have been working on improving the town for already 11 years. The work team has been a popular way of spending the summertime over the past few years offering young people their first work experiences and useful skills. In the work team they are exposed to challenges on their own. Many also realize that money is not that easy to earn – in fact it's harder than asking parents for it.

In the beginning of June youngsters wear the Maardu Õpilasmalev uniforms appear in the town and work for its improvement. This year 350 pupils were working in 3 shifts, and a separate brigade worked in the Muuga area.

During the summer months Maardu team members eradicate weed plants from the planted areas, clean pavements, remove rubbish, sweep pedestrian precincts, take care of children's playgrounds, and the green belt and the territory of the town cemetery.

The town considers activities of the work team as very important ones due to a number of reasons. Pupils get involved in useful activities, and through earning "pocket" money or helping their families they can appreciate the hardships of earning money. The town becomes more beautiful, and more importantly having worked for its improvement hardly anyone would feel like devastating it. Pupils can spend their leisure time in the Maardu Study and Development Centre (MTÜ Õppe- ja Arengukeskus) and participate in entertainment events, excursions or trips.

This year the SDC took part in the youth project called AfroReggae,

which included creating the drum band named Trumm-lt. So why not join it and arrange such a drum orchestra in Maardu? The more so, because participation is free for children. Playing the drums help getting recognition and feeling the sense of luck.

Work in the work teams is fully supported and assisted by the Town Government. During three shifts young people, together with their supervisors, visit the zoo and the bowling and the adventure park. In August the best of them were awarded a trip to the AHHA recreational centre in Tartu.

The effort of pupils Maardu schools made the town look younger and nicer. It became even more comfortable and cleaner. Work brings pleasure for both, children and residents. It is no coincidence that the motto of the Maardu work team is such: "IN ORDER TO BELIEVE IN THE GOOD, ONE HAS TO LEARN TO DO IT". Useful work together with organised leisure time is exactly what is needed so that the young people become a worthy new generation of the town residents.



MORE

Erika Tiganik
erika.tiganik@mail.ee



Embraced by Malmö

by Mia Norberg

Malmö is a young and vibrant city where almost half of the inhabitants are under the age of 35 and 30% of its population is born in another country. These two factors are major assets for Malmö. The city has to identify these assets and maximise its potential, the process that is not always obvious.



In March 2012 the Malmö City Council took a major step towards improving the opportunities for youth influence and to develop ways in which Malmö can utilise the skills, views and experiences of young people. The result is the adoption of a new policy on youth influence.

The policy was developed through an extensive process over three years, including consultations of politicians, civil servants, several organisations and about 600 young people, all discussing prerequisites for youth influence and ways of encouraging an active citizenship. The process was called *Jag bor i Malmö, 'I live in Malmö'*. The message is that everyone who lives in Malmö is an important part of the city itself and for its development.

The policy has six basic principles:

- *the rights of children and young people*
- *information and methods of working, appropriate of the target group*

- *dialogue with young people*
- *support youth organisation*
- *influence the decision-making*
- *the city of Malmö as an attractive employer for young people*

Through the realization of these principles in the different departments of the city a vast number of innovative projects have been started. One example is *Ungbo 12* – a housing competition and exhibition by and for young people, showing creative ideas to solve the housing shortage. Another project is a new network of NGOs that together with the city of Malmö want to highlight the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* by offering free workshops to schools. The policy aims at moving the city towards becoming more youth friendly in terms of service, information and methods of working.

For Malmö to remain and develop as a vibrant young city, that attracts young people, we need to better integrate and improve the ways we use young people's opinions, their competences and experiences. We have to unleash the power of the young generation for Malmö to reach its full potential. One young person expressed the atmosphere in Malmö by saying: "... there is a heck of a fire in this city that embraces you, and you want to be embraced by it".

MORE

Mia Norberg
mia.norberg@malmo.se



Young Influence in Nacka

by Annika Londono

That young people should have a say in all matters affecting them is stated in Article 12 of the UN CRC. Too often, the influence of young people on municipal decisions is limited and young people are not even consulted regarding matters of their direct concern. The project *Young Influence* in Nacka grew out of this dilemma in 2008.

Also, in the summer of 2008, the first 12 influence pilots were employed to work out ten suggestions to the municipality on how Nacka municipality can improve the influence and rights of young people. The 2008 report was named *'We are not the future – we are now!'* The first advice was to realize the project *Young Influence* on a regular basis, and to let young people work with real needs-oriented cases. In that way the project could function as a resource in the municipal development and planning. Today *Young Influence* is a yearly project in Nacka municipality.

In 2012, the cases for the so called influence pilots were ICT in Schools and Citizens Dialogue. The idea of the *Young Influence* project is simple, instead of an ordinary holiday job, the influence pilots go through a three week advocacy programme while working on the case given by the municipality. Besides influencing the development of the mu-



nicipality, the pilots also gain new knowledge, inspiration and self-esteem.

MORE

Annika Londono
<http://blogg.nacka.se/ungtinflytande/>



Youth Parliament – an active participant in the city life

by Tatiana Klimenko

A wide bunch of activities, taken by the Narva Youth Parliament, range from participating in the commissions of the local Council to organizing major-scale events for the city. But the process of law-making usually takes a fair amount of time. Yet, we have always wanted to organize something for other young people: an event that would be more tangible, with almost immediate realization.

On June 2 we held a special 'Miss Bowknot' contest. It all started in spring with an initiative by four Youth Parliament members who had written a project, which later received financial support from the Narva Youth Centre. That is when the hard work began. Eleven little girls-contestants, aged 8 to 10, registered as participants. They had a month to prepare 4 numbers, which the contest jury would evaluate: Personal business card; Aerobics dance; a costume contest and a talent show. "The dance was a piece of cake to stage", the choreographer would later claim, "as all the contestants appeared to be skillful and active dancers". The talents that the girls possessed were different: someone was good at singing. Someone else knew how to play a musical instrument nicely. The judges were stunned by the diversity and



the mastery of the girls' abilities. For the costume contest each girl had drawn a name of the country whose national dress she would present.

The time it took the little beauties to sew the dresses was not spent in vain – how shiny, glamorous, graceful and original they all looked! This was the most difficult event for the judges. But in the contest like this, it is not the award that is important, it is the participation, positive attitudes, smiles that were shining non-stop from the stage onto the audience of happy and proud moms, dads, grannies, and other relatives of the contestants. Although we did have an overall winner, who received the title of 'Miss Bowknot' and the main prize, we could not afford to spoil the other ten little princesses' mood and came up with 10 additional nominations so

that each girl would be best in something: originality, style, or inspiration.

The contest is over but the project is already in its second stage. In November we are staging a similar contest 'Mister Tie', where boys aged 8 to 10 will be competing for the title.

MORE

Tatiana Klimenko
tanyklimenko@gmail.com



We simply ask them...



by Lisa Björk

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs have developed a questionnaire study called LUPP, which allows municipalities to evaluate their efforts within the youth area. LUPP maps out how young people today value their situation and growth conditions.

The questionnaire consists of 70 questions about school, spare time, politics, society and influence, security, health, work and future. It takes approx. 40 minutes to fill out the questionnaire and most municipalities allow students to do the survey in class.

The results are analyzed and put together in a report, which includes action proposals. It constitutes the basis for decision taking by the municipal council. For us, the LUPP report has become an important tool in deciding what needs to be done and how to do it.

Kalmar County is facing significant demographic challenges – low birth rate, an increasingly older population and young people, who often decide to leave the region. Our only option, if we want to reverse this ongoing trend, is to look upon the young as a resource for sustainable development, and feed from their creative thoughts and ideas.

LUPP puts these issues on top of the agenda. That vouches for rewarding discussions about Oskarshamn and ways of attracting young people.

MORE

Lisa Björk
lisa.bjork@oskarshamn.se



Work and fun camp in Paide

by Piret Virkoja

Paide town is located in the centre of Järva County, Estonia, being also the only administrative centre of the county. That is why, it is our mission to promote culture, education, sport and youth leisure in our region. Years ago, there used to be a nice tradition to organize work-and-fun camps for students so they could earn some pocket money and gain working habits. During the recession it was not possible to continue such actions, however, the need for this kind of events remained remarkably high.

This summer, in collaboration with the Estonian Youth Work Centre, Paide decided to revive the tradition and organized the work-and-fun camp named 'Paide Work-and-Fun Camp 2012'. Due to this many a year postponement we decided to compensate and take on big.

In one-week shifts, 80 youngsters were offered the possibility to experience working habits and earn their first payments. Youngsters from age 10 to 18 participated in different shifts. They were all employed by the municipality and divided between the subsidiary units like schools, youth centre, library, etc. Their main tasks were connected with the maintenance work, sanitary repair or mapping. Each working day finished with social activities like volleyball, basketball, table tennis, ceramics or painting. Each shift also participated in the first aid, fire safety and career planning trainings.

What is the best practice to share? On one hand, some of the youngsters experienced their first working habit process. Moreover, they



understood the difficulty of earning money and learned to appreciate its value. On the other hand, Paide offered youngsters the possibility to spend usefully and effectively their holidays.

The biggest use for the municipality was to prevent youngsters from crime, and social exclusion by widening their views on life and supporting their initiatives. To some extent the work done was necessary and thanks to the town, but the main objective behind the project was to train the youngsters for their future. Owing to this pleasant experience, Paide will organize another work-and-fun camp already next summer.

MORE

Piret Virkoja
piret.virkoja@paide.ee



Thousands flee to Palanga in summer

by Justinas Gecevičius

Palanga, called the summer capital by the Lithuanians, with its almost 17 thousand inhabitants, is a small seaside resort in western Lithuania. During the hot months of summer thousands of Lithu-



anians traditionally flee to Palanga and spend a couple of days there. The town grows then to accommodate as many as one million.

During the summer, Palanga opens up to many new activities which attract holidaymakers and tourists. Some people arrive here for cultural events, others just to relax, have a swim in the Baltic Sea or to enjoy the breathtaking sunsets. The youth come to Palanga to find seasonal jobs or to volunteer and participate

in the events. For a young person to be able to get a job here during the summer months is not only an opportunity to gain some work experience, it is also a chance to make extra money. That is why many

students at the end of a school year will try to find a job as soon as possible.

Every year when most tourists and holidaymakers leave at the end of the summer, so do most of the performers. Then, the town becomes calm, empty and sort of asleep until the next summer. There is around 3.7 thousand young people living in Palanga and the fact that the town is not big brings an opportunity to spread ideas and find like-minded people easily. Moreover, in our town we have non-governmental youth organizations which encourage the young to volunteer, get involved in projects and be active Lithuanians.

One of the biggest youth projects in Palanga was 'Volunteering Capital' in 2011. With the help of Lithuanian school student union's subdivision of Palanga, the town won the opportunity to be the Volunteering capital for the month of September. The town youth affairs council helped organize project activities in which the young and the elderly could participate. Competitions, sport tournaments, charities were organised with an overall attendance of around 1 thousand young participants and spectators.

Enthusiastic young people, with their ideas and wishes, are changing the present days of Palanga. The local council also supports the youth, and as a result Palanga is becoming more youthful and lively with new activities which attract more people to the town.

MORE

Justinas Gecevičius
justasg555@gmail.com



Election of Youth Mayor

by Audrius Rudys

Every year Panevėžys, together with the whole of Europe, celebrates the Day of Self-Government. The events dedicated to this day are held all the week. The main aim is to present to the community the most important issues, activities taken by the self-government, or the possibilities of participating in the political life.

Panevėžys used to commemorate the Week of Self-Governance by the Open Days for the public. Educational institutions were special guests, and excursions were organised for them in the municipality. In 2011, the youths were given the possibility to learn more about self-governing through participating in and electing Youth Mayor of Panevėžys.

According to the Mayor of Panevėžys Vitalijus Satkevičius, the election of Youth Mayor proved to be efficient. This year it will be organized again. It is of a great importance that the youth do not remain indifferent to the processes happening in the city and take an active part in the public life.

Gymnasium pupils and support teams from the gymnasiums of Juozas Balčikonis, Vytautas Žemkalnis, Gymnasium Nr. 5, Juozas Miltinis Gymnasium, 'Minties' and Kazimieras Paltarokas Gymnasiums will be



present. The winner is the one whose ideas, perspectives and the vision of the city are the most appreciated by the members of the jury.

MORE

Audrius Rudys
a.rudys@panevezys.lt



Rakvere city labour camp



by Reeli Rump

Rakvere city labour camp has been an integral part of the summer for over ten years. What was once a few dozen youths has now grown to an almost one hundred worker bees circle.

The goal of the labour camp is to have salubrious and educative holidays, during which the youth lead independent lives, get communicative and living experiences while working for a fee.

The minimal age allowed for the labour camp is 13, because from that age the Estonian law allows the youth to do easier and age-appropriate jobs. Working length is 4 hours a day, followed by collective lunch.



The day continues with interesting sport events or visiting different institutions or watching movies.

Main tasks are sidewalk cleaning from weeds, artificial lawn stadium maintenance work, moving light weighted furniture in city schools, stone clearing from the city health paths.

Employers range from the Rakvere City Government's land-

scaping specialist, sports centre, the city forester, the city days organizers, to Rakveres culture centre and Estonian skydiving centre.

This year we set up a goal to send one group out of city. The Estonian Skydiving centre was selected, where youngsters from age 15 were

able to do a job, enjoy their first flights with military aircraft. With the inner city group sleeping at home, the outer city group slept in the skydiving centre. Together they were in cooking fatigue party, arranged morning gymnastics and cleaning actions.

A project manager, together with a group leader, takes responsibility for labour work camps, job and recreational events. To becoming a group leader, one has to be at least 18 years old and must take Estonian Youth Work Centre trainings, and then pass a qualification exam.

The labour camp summer begins when the school year is over and then the Estonian longest holiday starts. First group is tied up with the city day organization team for years. Labour camp youths are very welcome during city days. In the mornings in the Pikk Street the fair needs to place recycle bins, performance tents and benches. During the day, garbage bags need to be emptied, and in the evening, the fair area needs to be cleaned up. The city day group differs from other groups, working on one weekend. Other groups just work on weekdays. Thanks to this excellent job, on their last day the city day group youngsters always have a cake and lemonade party prepared by the city days organizing team, which certainly adds to the fee and motivates them.

Rakvere labour camp is a rewarding enterprise. It brings the young closer to the world of work and gives necessary knowledge and skills for future life.

MORE

Reeli Rump
linnamalev@gmail.com



In childrens' hands

by Frank Lüttkerding

At the *Rostocker Freizeit-Zentrum* children rule on their own. As part of the International Children's Day, on 20 September the Festivity Week in Rostock was held under the title of 'Our Town into Children's Hands'.

At the Rostocker Freizeit-Zentrum (Recreation Centre Rostock – RFZ) this has been the motto already for years. The Children's Town is thought to make children experience what democracy is and how they can exert influence.

This project began in 2009. Here, life runs like in a real town. Every week on a Wednesday youngest citizens can choose a profession for one day. They get their jobs at the Job Centre. Baker, bank teller, electrician – are the most wanted jobs. Children even earn their own money. For half an hour of their work, they receive a payment of five Schwanis – the name derived from the nearby Swan Pond (Schwanenteich in German). The earned money could be spent in the Children's Town's own Shop. There they can buy 266 articles produced in the Children's Town, like bread or jewellery. But there also children who prefer to save their money. Some of them have around 200 Schwanis on their bank accounts.

The Children's Town has also own Citizenry – the Children's Town Parliament. Elections are celebrated every year in November. Claudia Le-



wandowski (11) is a member from the very beginning: "I take care of the finances but I am also an arbiter", she reveals, "It gives a lot of fun".

MORE

Frank Lüttkerding
frank.luettkerding@rfz-online.de



Youth City Council of Słupsk



by Alicja Szymkiewicz

Youth City Council of Słupsk is rather young when compared with other youth councils in Poland. It consists of twenty three youngsters, aged 16-19, from high schools in Słupsk. We were chosen from among our schools in a democratic voting. The council is very much engaged in its projects and seriously carries out all the duties. We do everything for our friends in the city as best as we can. One of the projects we developed, called 'Słupsk's neighbourhood league', started in July 2012 and consisted in football games for Słupsk's youth.

Thanks to the project everyone could spend enjoyable time and summer vacation. We hope to continue with the second edition.

Competitions and events is only one part of our activity. We also help youth cultural centres in Słupsk, with whom we work jointly. They help us organize happenings, borrow special equipment or share halls and the Youth City Council has taken over some of their duties. Together we have incredible ideas for next actions.



Presently, two projects prepared by the council will be implemented. 'Do it!' project is a competition for our contemporaries. The main goal is to improve the city and show how youngsters see the city after changes. The project can show that young people want to do something for our city to live better living, and have something to say about it. Another project is called 'Słupsk's Educational Bears', which is targeted at pupils, high school students and their teachers. Pupils can choose the best teacher in their schools and become part of the competition. Teachers will feel appreciated after this event.

Working for the Youth City Council of Słupsk is rewarding and offers great opportunities for gaining new experiences that can be used in the future. We are hard working people who want to show everybody that we and all the youths can do great things.

MORE

Alicja Szymkiewicz
szymkiewicz.alicja@gmail.com



Szczecin's Zone 89

by Ewa Kurjata

Szczecin has its first in Poland, free of charge Zone 89. The 'Zone 89' is a co-working space for young, vibrant, creative and active minds, coming from the scientific and business circles. The space has been created to link and support all creative spheres of city life. The 'Zone 89' has been designed in such a way as it is not only comfortable and work-friendly environment, but it is also to inspire, and encourage new ideas which shall result in new start-ups or other business projects generated by students. It is ideal for all freelancers, representatives of free professions and all those who want to run their own businesses.

One of the inspirations behind the 'Zone 89' project is famous Berlin-Kreuzberg's co-working Betahaus space, where all free professions' representatives meet. They work together, inspire one another, create new quality of city life, and start their new businesses. Yet, hiring some work space is not free.

However, the Szczecin Zone 89 took a step further. Its co-working space is not only publicly available for all, but first of all free of charge. The team offers numerous workshops, trainings and contacts. The participants are offered self-development tips and opportunities of acquiring new skills. The 'Zone 89' works at flexible duty hours to meet the project teams' needs. The team prepares cyclic thematic sessions, organizes meetings with experts, practitioners and successful men-

tors who are ready to share with their knowledge, experiences and practical hints. The Zone has been equipped with quick, broadband Internet connection, a xerox, a printer, desks and chairs, a multimedia projector and hectolitres of stimulating coffee...

The Zone 89 idea is co-financed under the Social Fund and is part of the 'Innovation through communication' project promoting the idea of co-working zones and support of creative, young people. In this way, we want to support transfer of knowledge and innovation between West Pomeranian higher educations schools and enterprises. What is important, the project is also targeted at females. About 40% of all activities will be directed at them. And the reason behind it is that as little as 20% women study at technical colleges and universities. The project wants to show them that after graduation they can continue their technical passions and earn decent living.

Szczecin City Development Strategy 2025 supports all activities targeted at young people and their well-being. It is believed that through their participation in the project, young people will gain new expertise and will be happy to use new skills to contribute to their city's development.

MORE

Ewa Kurjata
ekurjata@um.szczecin.pl



Elos: pupils' competences, school standards and a quality network



by Meelis Kond

The international school concept – Elos – provides pupils and students with an extra advantage when it comes to preparing students to study, work and live in an international environment. Elos is a high quality international educational concept that seeks to promote European and international orientation in secondary education. It does this by making European and international dimension as a matter of school policy and by embedding it into the DNA of the school. There are **8 Elos schools in Tallinn** and more than



Photo by: Students from one of the Elos schools in Tallinn.

140 Elos schools all over Europe. National agencies, universities and national educational bodies are also part of the Network.

Elos is about schools' integrating the international approach and implementing European educational instruments, such as Europass, European language portfolio, etc. The Elos concept defines the learning outcomes for students, describing the various dimensions for students participating in the European and international contexts. These outcomes are stated in the Common Framework for Europe Competence in their curriculum and school policies, and collaborating with partner schools and organisations abroad to develop a truly European learning environment.

The Tallinn City Education Department, together with other 22 European partners from 14 countries, takes part in the project 'Elos – Quality Review & Recognition Policy'. The goal is to produce a quality review procedure, which will assure that Elos will become a quality label for schools and students and that it will be recognised at policy level and by higher (professional) educational institutes. The aim is also to create transition points between all systems and levels of education in order to allow students to reach the same competences at their own level and possibly to switch or move on to another type of education.

Next Elos management team meeting will be held on September 20-21, 2012 in Tallinn where the progress of the process and the latest developments will be discussed.

MORE

Meelis Kond
meelis.kond@tallinnlv.ee



Children and Youth Participation in Tampere

by Miia Nivala

The city of Tampere considers involvement of children and youth in a wide range of activities very important, and has made plans to increase their participation further. An action plan, drawn up according to specified goals, is believed to provide chances for children and youngsters to exercise their inspirations.

Student decision-making bodies have been founded in schools, consisting of boards in which students themselves review topics that are relevant to their schools. The boards comprise the representatives from different classes. One of the most important tasks of these student decision-making bodies is to make schools a more enjoyable place to study. The students deal with daily topics, such as organizing school events, parties or plans for schoolyard use.

On the municipal level, the voice of the youth can be heard through the Children's Parliament and the Youth Forum. Both have their own boards and subcommittees that concentrate on different themes such as town planning, schooling, and free time. And, both the Children's Parliament and the Youth Forum have their general meetings twice a year, to which representatives of schools are invited.

The Children's Parliament represents grades 1-6 and the Youth Forum represents grades 7-10, as well as upper secondary schools and vocational schools. The Children's Parliament and the Youth Forum, for example, grant scholarships, organize events, and represent the young in different working groups.

The Children's Parliament has also eight smaller parliaments around Tampere. Meeting four times a year, their function is to amplify the voices of children so that their views and opinions are well heard. Everything that comes out of these smaller parliaments is from children themselves and different municipal officials.

Since August 2011, the city of Tampere has taken the youth along in their own committee and board work. They are permitted to take part in and speak on issues concerning young people at the meetings of the committees on Day Care and Education, Business and Knowledge, Culture and Leisure, the boards of Day Care and Education, and of Upper Secondary Education.

MORE

Miia Nivala
miia.nivala@tampere.fi



Tartu – a city full of life!



by Kristel Altosaar

Tartu, a city of love and young people, is filled with youthful energy. Almost 50% of its residents are less than 35. Youngsters have many opportunities here to be active, use their full potential and create their own environment. They can be active in youth organisations and youth centres, organise events, develop their skills and talents in sports and hobby groups, etc.



The Tartu City Government supports the own-initiative youth projects, which focus on teaching young people to notice problems around them, and providing solutions. To provide best learning experiences, young people have the opportunity to get counselling and feedback to their ideas. One of their initiatives have been developed into a web-based N-portal (nportaalee), where the young compile and disseminate current topical web news with the aim of making youth and their lives more visible. The 'N-Portal' project has been awarded several times.

The Lille Maja Youth Centre organises events at Vilde's Health Cafe once a month, where medical students carry out their workshops. In the summertime, the centres run common activities in the city parks, but in December, these activities move to the 3rd floor of the Tartu mall. Youth workers and young people teach pupils how to come to terms with exam stress at school or discuss the best formula for happiness. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund Töötukassa also organises their workshops in the youth centres. The young unem-

ployed are increasingly involved in the activities of youth centres. They assist youth workers, enable the director of the centre to settle everyday matters and are engaged as personal helpers of young people with special needs. In this way, the participants gain new knowledge and skills. They retain the belief in themselves and motivation to change their own lives.

The youth are represented in various organisations and bodies, which directly influence local community. Tartu Youth Council, as an important partner to the city, was established 7 years ago. It managed to bring together and foster cooperation between young people who are either not affiliated to any parties or those who are members of political youth organisations. It has also raised young people's political awareness and involved them into steering various societal processes. Since 2012, the pupils' representations of Tartu schools also belong to the team of Tartu Youth Council. The shadow elections, organised in cooperation with the Estonian National Youth Council (in 2009 and 2011), is a good and successful example of how young people, aged 14 – 17, have the opportunity to determine and declare their political preferences before reaching the voting age and before the 'real' parliamentary or local elections. Another popular project is 'Politicians to Schools!' where politicians visit school classes and talk about myths in politics and explain their career choices. The youth council has also organised political simulations.

MORE

Kristel Altosaar
Kristel.Altosaar@raad.tartu.ee



Future Box

by Camilla Melinder Odier

During summer, 15 young people from Trelleborg had an unusual summer job. For three weeks, they were working on behalf of the municipality to develop methods of reducing youth unemployment in the town.

The 'Future Box' project promotes positive changes. Young citizens act in the project as Change Agents who develop their ideas into proposals for municipal challenges. As team mates, they have Enablers – officials and politicians who formulate the mission and who are interested in young people's perspective.

With the task of finding the problems and barriers for young people to enter the labour market, the Change Agents would present various suggestions for solutions that included private, municipal and non-profit activities.

At school, students feel that they get too little information about future studies and career possibilities or the information comes too late. The business sector is perceived as invisible and indistinct. Then, some young people do not take the responsibility for searching the information about future studies or possible jobs.

The Change Agents came up with several suggestions:

- **Preparatory course for work** – a mandatory course in the high school about the labour market, rhetoric exercises for job interviews, practical exercises in writing CVs.
- **Apprentice employment** – an opportunity to learn a trade from an

experienced person. No requirement for secondary education, the training is conducted at the workplace.

- **Internship for all** – training for both academic and vocational programs in the high school. The practice should be useful and instructive for a student and provide a broad picture of how it is to work.
- **Job Fairs** – more study and career fairs with greater variety and range of schools and businesses. This is a good opportunity to meet employers.
- **Employment office informs** – outreach activities at schools with information on the upper secondary school, higher education, and where future jobs are.
- **A livelier square** – the municipality, together with the entrepreneurs and young people, will create job opportunities and a more pleasant environment for both young people and adults by building cafes, restaurants and bars.
- **The new platform** – a new forum on the Internet where the municipality, the media and various companies can collaborate on information addressed to young people.

The result of the Change Agents work are presented in the report. The Trelleborg's overall goal to reach is have the lowest figures of youth unemployment in Sweden by 2020.

MORE

Camilla Melinder Odier
camilla.melinder-odier@trelleborg.se



Social investment in children and youths



by Stefan Nybom, Emmy Sundin

The living conditions of children are strongly influenced by how successful society is in its efforts to give all children equal opportunities, regardless of their family background. In 2011, the city of Umeå decided to invest significant resources (14 million euro) in children and youths. The money is put on a special social investment fund, and spent on preventive activities. The idea of social investment is that society, through early intervention actions for children and youths, will be able to avoid later widespread suffering and costs. "The things we don't do today, we will have to do tomorrow, probably at a much higher cost."



Until today, eight social investment projects have started. One example is 'Back to school' project that will develop methods allowing children, regardless of mental or social problems, to get enough support to have a normal school situation.

Social investment benefits children and youths up to the age of 25. Projects that specifically promote prevention activities for younger

children are prioritized – e.g. children who in early years have difficulties coping with school. If you leave school without a grade, there is a great risk that later in life you will fall into unemployment or various forms of physical and mental illnesses. The connection to the objectives in the EU2020 strategy and the BSR strategy is obvious with common key words, like less drop-outs from school and in the long-term increased labour productivity.

Closely linked to the social investments bid, the city of Umeå runs the *BSR Local Platform on Social Development* project. It aims at strengthening the social dimension in the Baltic Sea Region in the next EU programme period 2014–2020, and at promoting local level participation in the BSR strategy. The project will identify the network of actors interested in social issues, prepare project applications for the next EU programme period, and participate in and arrange thematic conferences. This two-year project, starting in September 2012, is supported by the Swedish Growth Agency and as such is considered as a way to realize the EU2020 objectives and BSR Strategies.

MORE

Stefan Nybom, Emmy Sundin
stefan.nybom@umea.se; emmy.sundin@umea.se



Youngsters' Voice in Vaasa

by Urim Kavaj, Janina Klockars

Vaasa in western Finland has had its youth council since 2008. Every year 23 youngsters are selected from schools and youth services in the city. Every member has also a personal substitute. Members are between 13 and 22.

The Youth Council is well known to youngsters and other citizens. It has arranged many face to face meetings with the decision makers during which the young were able to express their opinions on matters of their interest. Youth council members have also the right to participate in and speak before the main boards of Vaasa. That is an excellent way to get a young person's opinion in the matters concerning them before any decisions have been taken. The Youth Council also arranges different kinds of events to young people living in Vaasa.

One of the main tasks for Vaasa Youth Council is the local traffic and making it work better in the city. Young people use buses a lot but there are not enough shifts or late night buses available. Also, the prizes are higher than, for example, in many cities in the southern Finland. The situation has slightly improved over the years but there is still a lot of work to do!

This year's biggest event is the Citizen Jury for young people in the Vaasa Region. The jury is to listen to the young people and their thoughts or ideas on how to develop the region. There are youngsters from eight municipalities taking part in the Citizen Jury that will take place in Vaasa by the end of October 2012. Youngsters are there finding ways and solutions to create even better Vaasa region, the region that will be as a vital and good place to live as possible.

The Vaasa Youth Council really tries to make young people's voice heard in the city. The members try to get as many ideas from youngsters as possible and to influence things that are not working or things



that need to be considered. It is important for the members of the youth council to make Vaasa even more comfortable city to live in.

MORE

Urim Kavaj, Janina Klockars
urimkavaja@hotmail.com; janinaklockars@hotmail.com



Vilnius for the European Youth Capital 2015

by Jonas Laniauskas

Vilnius has almost 100,000 students (which constitutes one-fifth of the city's inhabitants) and is seeking to become the European Youth Capital 2015. With the slogan, **Level up** the capital of Lithuania is attempting to become the most open city for youth in Europe. Plans to become the European Youth Capital are the result of purposeful activities involving youth in the city policy. It has always been attempted to create space for young people in Vilnius where they could experiment and gain experience, which would develop every young person's public spirit, creativity and wish to create favourable living conditions for themselves.

Currently, there are 200 youth organizations in the capital, and more than 3 thousand Vilnius residents participate in their activities. The Council of Youth Affairs has already been working in Vilnius for more than 8 years. The leaders of the capital youth organizations, together with the city council members take all important decisions related to strategic youth policy directions. They also discuss financial youth encouragement issues. Such a model of cooperation shows not only the youth's wish to participate in making important decisions in the city, but also successful work in encouraging the city's youth organizations to gather. This is because, when working with the youth they see problems arising or the new challenges.

The Youth Affairs Coordinator, who is directly responsible for mediation between the municipality and youth organizations, works in the

municipality as well. His main activities include consulting youth representatives on the establishment and financial management of the youth organization. He also supervises how the city funds are used by non-government organizations.

Vilnius follows the principle that a city has to be constantly lively and dynamic. The active participation of the youth in the city life brings some of the best ideas for a change. Vilnius is the best space for a young person to gain experiences, to improve and to develop.



MORE

Jonas Laniauskas
jonas.laniauskas@vilnius.lt



The youth for Sopot



by Marcin Rudziński

Last year, the Pomeranian Development Initiative Association, consisting of young, dynamic inhabitants of the Tricity took a successful attempt to create the Sopot Youth City Council.

The Youth City Council is an advisory body to the Mayor. Its task involves representing interests of young people and engaging them in the local activities. It provides a unique opportunity to acquire a greater knowledge and appreciation for the functioning political system.

Not much time passed between the start of the project and the first session of the Youth Council. Drafting of the Council's Constitution, carried out by the Association began in October 2011. The document was quickly completed, and already in November sent to the Sopot City Hall. During the following month, its accordance with the law was checked.

The next stage involved approving the project of the Youth City Council by the 'real' City Council. The resolution was passed unanimously, which should be regarded as a great success, since full unanimity of the Sopot Councillors is very rarely seen during the current term of office.

The last stage of creating the Youth City Council was organising elections in local post-secondary schools and setting up a special competition for those young people who study outside the city. As expected, the elections ran smoothly, without disturbances.

"We were positively surprised that in some schools the elections were treated really seriously — there was a ballot box, the Polish flag, an election commission and photojournalists," says Michał Adamczyk.

In April, six months after the beginning of the project, the elected councillors gathered in the City Council's meeting room and chose the Presidium. Since then, the youths have already managed to express their opinions on some of the draft laws proposed by the City Council and started working on a skate park project. They have also undertaken actions for improving the cycling communication system in Sopot.

The Sopot Youth City Council is a new institution and needs more time to unleash its full potential, but the example of the Pomeranian Development Initiative shows that once there is a willingness to act and to make changes all the obstacles can be easily overcome.

"It's fascinating how those young people, with different personalities, have such a great enthusiasm to work for our city. It will surely pay off in the future," says Michał Adamczyk.

MORE

Marcin Rudziński
marcin.rudzinski@gmail.com



BSR InnoShip



by Mia Hytti

Baltic Sea shipping is going through a major change during a few upcoming years. Restrictions for airborne emissions come into effect from the beginning of the year 2015 and will lead to higher fuel expenses and logistics costs. At the same time, new challenges are rising on the recruitment side – younger generation seems to show less interest in the shipping sector and the series of job opportunities it provides. The sector experiences a bulk of senior crew members on the edge of retirement. New blood is needed urgently to fill in the jobs, as well as to contribute with new ideas and attitudes in the Shipping Sector.

There has been a lot of discussion on why working on board ships is not an attractive option, when young children are planning their careers. One reason could be that seafaring has long traditions and that is why it is seen as an unchanging and old-fashioned business. However, this myth is very far from the current situation of shipping as developing of shipping towards more environmentally friendly



direction has started, which opens the possibility to include the younger generation into the development.

BSR InnoShip project puts a specific emphasis on the youth by promoting seafaring as a career option throughout the whole Baltic Sea Region and also by arranging environmental education events for smaller children. Various local associations are involved in this work. The Finnish Maritime Society and the Maritime Development Centre of Europe in Denmark are bringing in their expertise and wide networks for making the work more efficient. In Poland, the Polish Sea and River League has been involved in the environmental education by arranging an art contest for children, together with the Polish Register of Ships. The work will continue with recruitment fairs, school visits and participation at youth-related events throughout the region.

The significance of shipping for the Baltic Sea Region cannot be diminished. It is extremely important for us, now and in the future. InnoShip's youth initiative intends to catalyze the international business by promoting shipping as a flexible, cost-efficient and environmentally friendly part of the transport chain, with relevant, innovative and good job opportunities.

MORE

Mia Hytti

http://www.baltic.org/projects/bsr_innoship/



New campus at Næstved

by Søren Revsbæk

The Næstved City Council has started planning a new educational campus in the centre of Næstved. It will comprise secondary, adult and higher education. It is planned to launch in 2015 and it will have to develop over the coming years.

Campus Næstved will be located near the present railway station, close to the city centre. The idea to create programmes in the campus in the middle of Næstved has provided an opportunity to create a more attractive and future-oriented learning environment. Our goal is to attract new courses to the municipality, and contribute to the political aim of 95% of young people taking up education.

Campus Næstved must bring Næstved on track. With its educational opportunities the campus is to become an important stop for students, as well as an attractive station to settle on for companies.

With its location in close vicinity to transport links, trade and cultural life, the campus becomes an integral part of Næstved's urban development.

Campus Næstved focuses on professionalism and diversity in the way of learning with close interaction with industry and internship places. Education must cooperate across, develop new forms of learning, creating new programmes and provide more feedback to the city.

The Campus goes out into the world with vision, desire and willingness to cooperate with other university cities both regionally, nation-

ally and internationally – in a world where knowledge is global, and everyone can learn from one another.

The Næstved municipality plans to place parts of its own business on or in the area adjacent to campus. It may be the city's job centre, business centre or cultural facilities.

The city council has initiated planning of the campus. Political planning should be completed by the end of 2012 / spring 2013. In order to develop the project, the Næstved Municipality has linked with many universities and higher education schools in the area. These include Business Academy Zealand, who plans to move 250 training places for construction manager for the city; Roskilde University B.Sc. education and some of Southern University financial and business education and new training in administration and health at University College Zealand or introductory courses in engineering at the Technical University of Denmark.

The process of creating the new campus is a complex process that makes everyone pull efforts together in order for Næstved to reach the next level for education.

MORE

Søren Revsbæk

revsbaek@revsbaek.dk



UBC today

65th UBC Executive Board meeting in Koszalin

The 65th meeting of the UBC Executive Board was held in Koszalin, Poland, at the invitation of the Mayor of Koszalin Piotr Jedliński.

In his introductory presentation about the city, Mayor of Koszalin focused on special economic zone, which attracted many significant companies, both foreign and domestic.

The Board decided that the first day of the General Conference in Mariehamn 2013 would focus on the difficult situation related to the high level of youth unemployment in the Baltic Sea Region. In particular, it will touch upon issues such as how to prevent and combat the youth unemployment and how to develop an effective employment strategy. The Baltic Sea states should strive at offering the young jobs, apprenticeships or additional education after a few months of unemployment. A young person after graduating from school cannot begin his/her life with a longer period of unemployment as this leads to frustration or social exclusion. The second conference day – the General Assembly – will be devoted to internal UBC matters such as reports, elections, finances, etc.

Four UBC Commissions on Energy, Gender Equality, Tourism, Urban Planning, presented annual activity reports, as well as their upcoming plans.

Earlier this year the Board adopted the UBC Communication and Marketing Strategy. A digital media professional from Turku visited the UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk in August 2012, and afterwards prepared the proposal on the strategy implementation plan. The Board decided to examine the proposal.

The UBC strategy recommended making digital versions of some of the UBC publications such as e.g. the Events Calendar in order to reduce the printing and posting costs. The Events Calendar highlights a wide range of events held in our region. It promotes business, cultural, sporting, recreational activities in the UBC member cities. The Secretariat and IT experts from Gdańsk have made an interactive digital version of the Cal-



endar, available at the UBC homepage. Now the member cities themselves can edit and add new events to the Calendar, including photos.

The Board in Rakvere adopted the resolution on the criteria to be applicable while evaluating the work of the Commissions. The Board in Koszalin approved the evaluation mechanism and the timetable. The UBC Commissions are invited to submit the requested information to the Secretariat. The amount of financial support to the Commissions in 2013 will depend on this evaluation.

President Andersen informed that nearly 400 participants discussed the ideas of the Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional City Networks during the 1st Congress on Smart Cooperation, held on 25/26 June in A Coruña. The UBC is a founding member of CECICN, and UBC President serves as the President of this Network of networks. The UBC was clearly visible at this large European conference. We were not only the main organizers, but were also responsible for carrying out a workshop on 'Cooperation contributing to Smart Growth'.

The next Executive Board meeting will be held in Kaliningrad on 7 March 2013.

64th UBC Board meeting in Rakvere

Upon the invitation of Mayor of Rakvere and UBC Vice-President Mr Andres Jaadla, Rakvere hosted the 64th meeting of the UBC Executive Board.

It was discussed, among others, how to strengthen the UBC presence in Brussels and how to enhance its lobbying capacity. The UBC Brussels offices' working group, led by Turku – Southwest Finland office, presented ideas on ways of lobbying for the benefit of member cities. Established earlier this year in Brussels after the meeting of the UBC Board with 16 EU representations, the working group proposed to focus on the following policy areas: the EU Strategy for the BSR and the role of cities, urban policy, smart specialisation strategies, covenant of mayors, and the Arctic dimension.

As a follow-up to adopting the UBC Communication and Marketing Strategy at the previous Executive Board meeting in Brussels, the Task Force on implementing the strategy was formed. The TF met in Gdańsk in April 2012 at the UBC Secretariat and discussed further steps for strategy implementing.

At the previous Board meeting, the common criteria for evaluating the

Commissions' work were presented. Afterwards, the proposal of the evaluation criteria was sent out to the Commissions and member cities for comments. As there was no disagreement on the proposed criteria, the Board in Rakvere decided to adopt the Commissions' evaluation criteria.

Established in 2010 by six city networks, including the UBC, the Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional City Networks elected UBC President Per Bødker Andersen for the new CECICN President in March 2012. The President informed the Board about the meetings with various EU institutions in Brussels on 2-3 May 2012. He also encouraged the member cities to participate in the 1st CECICN Congress on Smart Cooperation, in A Coruña, on 25-26 June 2012.

The UBC Commissions on Local Safety, Transportation, and Youth Issues presented their activity reports for the period of October 2011 – May 2012 and plans for the second half of 2012.

The Board decided to accept the city of Arendal, Norway, as a new UBC member.

The city of Chojnice introduced the project "Culture in harmony with nature – centre for cultural initiatives in Chojnice."



Commission on Health & Social Affairs seminar in Vaasa, 5-6 June 2012

The leading theme of the meeting was „Welfare and Health Promotion”. Similarly, like last year in the Polish city of Elbląg, the invitation was submitted to all the UBC member cities. A lot of cities responded positively to our proposal to discuss such important topics as: increasing and maintaining the social welfare, security and participation in society, reducing poverty and social exclusion, health promotion in supporting health and functional capacity, encouraging healthy lifestyles, reducing substance use, prevention of diseases and reducing health gaps, prevention work - promotion of preventive initiatives, identifying diseases and social problems as early as possible, preventing harm from substance use, possible supportive measures in response, and how the cities deal with these issues in collaboration with external partners.

Apart from the representatives of the host city of Vaasa, 15 UBC cities participated. Among them were: Jyväskylä and Turku from Finland, Tallinn, Pärnu and Tartu from Estonia, Klaipėda from Lithuania, Riga from Latvia, Gävle, Örebro, Visby and Umeå from Sweden, Næstved from Denmark, Gdańsk, Szczecin and Elbląg from Poland. The Commission also hosted representatives of NDPHS Expert Group on HIV/AIDS and Associated Infections.

The two day meeting perfectly conducted by Mr Jukka Kentala, Director of Social and Health Services in Vaasa, was opened by Mayor Tomas Häyry. Several excellent contributions by speakers from Vaasa, Tartu, Elbląg, Gävle, Umeå, Tallinn, Gdańsk, Klaipėda and NDPHS were delivered. All the presentations are now available on UBC website.

Also, local journalists have shown interest in the event and the interview with some participants has been published in two Vaasa newspapers: Pohjalainen and issued in Swedish Vasabladet. The articles were about the Commission's meeting, its concerns and generally about the Union of the Baltic Cities.



In foreground from left: Mr Jukka Kentala, Mr Tomas Häyry, Mayor of Vaasa, Mr Wojciech Drozd, Chairman, UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs.

The Commission is pleased that its initiatives meet with the member cities' and external partners' interest. The participants of the Commission's meetings are high rank local politicians and municipality officials, which provides the possibility of listening to very interesting lessons from their experiences. In the future, this may also lead to closer international cooperation between our cities in the field of health and socially important issues.

MORE

Wojciech Drozd
w.drozd@wp.pl

UBC Business Commission

Science Park Meeting 2012

Nearly thirty managers from Science and Technology Parks, companies and business development agencies met in Kiel during the 3rd UBC Business Commission's meeting in October. The participants came from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden.

8 October started with welcome speeches by representatives of the host city, Kiel Science Park, the International Association of Science Parks (IASP) and the Commission Chairman. After their presentations, an intensive discussion has led to important clues for the successful management of Science Parks and was rated as very helpful for day-to-day business. Also, the business development agencies of Land Schleswig-Holstein and Kiel Region informed about their activities and business opportunities in northern Germany.

One of the goals of the meeting was to lay foundations for EU-funded cooperation projects between the Science Parks. Project ideas were presented and discussed in the context of the information on the EU fund-

ing period 2014 – 2020 prepared by representatives of Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein as managing authority for the BSR Programme and the Enterprise Europe Network.

In the afternoon, the attendees visited two companies in Kiel Science Park. One was a start up software company, dealing with appropriate communications solutions. The second one was Caterpillar Power Generation Systems, a centre for research and development for large diesel and gas engines manufactured under the Cat trademark.

On 9 October, the Commission visited the Kiel Centre of Innovation and Technology (KITZ), which offers suitable premises, a wide range of services and a competent team, providing support with consultation and experiences. A meeting with the management of the media company Raytrix followed, which aims at developing and introducing innovative visual media technologies to the industry-, scientific-, and entertainment-market.

The last stop on the agenda was focusing on design and the creative industries. The Commission met with President of the Muthesius Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Kiel, which is the Germany's northernmost school of higher education, educating in the study of art and design.

MORE

Wolfgang Schmidt
wolfgang.schmidt@kiel.de



Here is Councillor Wolfgang Röttgers while addressing the audience.



CoYI gathered in Gdynia

From 29 October to 1 November 2012, the UBC Commission on Youth Issues (CoYI) gathered on its second open meeting in Poland. The Commission spent three working days in Gdynia and visited the UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk. Apart from the discussions on issues relevant to the young living in the BSR, new leading Cities of the Commission were elected. Beata Łęgowska, Vice Chair of Gdynia City Council, opened the meeting.

Maja Wagner, Gdynia City Councillor, following the long held tradition, started the first day with her presentation on the local youth work and shared with the host city's ideas and best practices. The Fair of Good Ideas and Practices followed. Its first part was devoted to *Youth work structure of the city*, while the second concentrated on the *Tolerance and intergenerational dialogue*. The day concluded with a traditional field trip to the Gdynia youth centre.

The second day started with the discussions on the CoYI leadership. There are more and more new active cities, which are willing to participate in the work of the Commission and contribute with their expertise. It is important not only to get something out of the UBC membership, but also give something in return. The visit to the UBC Secretariat showed the members the whereabouts of the organisation that supports extensively our work.

The scheduled youth conference in Marienhamn 2013 was discussed during the 'Fantasy Morning' on the third day. The themes and organisational issues related to the conference were discussed in a creative atmosphere. Both the 2013 General and Youth conferences will focus on the youth matters.

The Secretariat of CoYI expresses its thanks to all the participants for coming, to the City of Gdynia for hosting the meeting and to the Sports Commission for helping organize it.

MORE

Robert Lang
ubcyouth@tallinlv.ee

Commission on Urban Planning

Elbląg City Centre 2040

On 1-3 October 2012, the UBC Commission on Urban Planning held a seminar in Elbląg, Poland to discuss various models of reconstruction and retroversion of the city centres demolished during World War II. Elbląg is known for retroversion of its Old Town, a new concept of city centre rebuilding, which has covered 40% of the Old Town area. During lectures, guided walking tours and workshops, UBC CUP members studied, discussed and elaborated



on the future of the Old Town and Granary Island. Representatives of Stralsund and Rostock (Germany), and Gdańsk, Poland presented different approaches to rebuilding and developing their historical city centres, in the form of good practices.

Over 30 UBC CUP experts from member cities prepared four presentations with recommendations, ideas and proposals for the Elbląg decision-makers. They suggested how to increase the quality of public spaces in the Old Town and on Granary Island,

as well as how to create a vibrant city centre.

The seminar in Elbląg provided a better understanding of what retroversion is, and how difficult it was to protect the area of Elbląg's Old Town against undesired land use and construction of mismatched buildings, which is of key importance to the identity of the city.

MORE

Katarzyna Wiśniewska
katrzyna.wisniewska@umelblag.pl

Commission on Local Safety met at the Congress on Active Mobility

The VI Local Safety Commission meeting took place on 6-7 September 2012 in Gdańsk, Poland as part of the 3rd Congress of Active Mobility. The event has been organized by city of Gdańsk, Central Europe Programme, Central MeetBike Project, Polish Union of Active Mobility and Union of the Baltic Cities.

During the Congress, thirty eight speakers presented a broad spectrum of ideas on subjects devoted to various aspects of commuting around the cities. The speakers were the government officials, researchers, academics or representatives of non-governmental organizations. Over two hundred participants, among whom sixteen representatives of the UBC member cities, have attended the meeting.

Among many theoretical topics prepared for the congress there was one special. On the sunny morning of the first day of the conference, the UBC delegates had an opportunity to experience travel into the past by taking a historical tram manufactured in the early fifties of XX century to get to the conference venue.

The most anticipated lecture during the first day was the speech of Mr Hep Monatzeder, Vice-mayor of Munich. He talked about advantages of living in Munich, which is known as a safe and bike-friendly city. Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General presented goals and objectives of the UBC to the public. The UBC Local Safety Commission also held a closed session. The first part of the meeting focused on the activities carried out by the Commission's Secretariat for the last six months. All the delegates were informed

about the results of the "Safe and cool" competition. Next, the city members acquainted themselves with a special safety leaflet produced by the UBC and the SafeGames organization for the Euro 2012 Cup. Then, the election followed. With the approval of the delegates, the present chairman Leszek Walczak and two vice chairmen Hans-Ivar Sward and Andrejs Aronovs have been re-elected. The participants also fixed the date and place of the Commission's next meeting. It will take place on 16-17 May 2013 in Jelgava, Latvia.



The second day of the conference started in the Crisis Management Centre in Gdańsk, where the UBC delegates went on the study tour. Mr Tadeusz Bukontt, the host of the place and chief of the Gdańsk Crisis Management Department presented "Tri-Star"- holistic traffic management system servicing the three-city metropolis (Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot). Later, other speakers presented topics related to various aspects of commuting. Mr Piotr Kuropatwiński, Vice President of the European Cyclists' Federation, talked about threats in the car-oriented transport policies.

The 6th Local Safety Commission meeting was a great chance not only to compare knowledge and gain new experiences, but also to discuss issues related to the public safety and mobility.

MORE

Miłosz Jurgielewicz
ubc@strazmiejska.gda.pl



Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional City Networks (CECICN)



What is CECICN?

The Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional City Networks (CECICN) is an EU platform representing almost 37% of the European population and 500 cities involved in the Territorial Cooperation. CECICN is an alliance of cross-border agglomerations' networks and city networks within macro-regions: Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities (CAAC), Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities (FAIC), Mediterranean Cities (MedCities), Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT), Iberian Network of Cross-border Bodies (RIET), Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC).

Based on the Lisbon Treaty and the EU 2020 strategy the policy priorities of CECICN are: Cooperation, Integration, Subsidiarity.

Inspired by the Lisbon Treaty and the EU 2020 strategy, CECICN wants to boost the European integration process. Therefore, the main goal is to put European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) at the core of the debate about 2014 – 2020 financial perspective and the implementation of the EU 2020 Strategy. In March 2012, President of the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) Per Bødker Andersen, was elected unanimously as a new President of CECICN.

Congress on territorial cooperation in A Coruña

Nearly 400 participants met on 25 and 26 June, 2012 at A Coruña in Spain during the 1st Congress on Smart Cooperation organised by the CECICN. A lot of personalities were present: Michel Delebarre, President of COTER, Committee of the Regions and President of the MOT,

Per Bødker Andersen, President of the CECICN and President of the Union of the Baltic Cities, Carlos Negreira, Mayor of A Coruña, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, Regional President of Galicia and Marta Fernández Currás, Spanish Secretary of State for Budget and Expenditure.

The President of the CECICN Per Bødker Andersen summed up the conference by saying: "We know that the current European and international context is troubled by the debt crisis. I have a deep conviction that the response to this crisis is more Europe, more cooperation between cities and regions across borders".

CECICN Strategy 2013 – 2014

Mr Wolfgang Schmidt, the UBC representative in CECICN, was assigned to work out in cooperation with the MOT network the CECICN strategy 2013 – 2014. This document will at least include the following points: Environment, Vision, Mission, Core Values, Main Activities.

It is planned to present the draft to the UBC Board in the first half of 2013.



MORE

Wolfgang Schmidt
wolfgang.schmidt@kiel.de

Business Day and Youth Conference in Kärddla

The UBC Commission on Education works together with many partners to create different educational possibilities for the youth, including entrepreneurship and management. On 3–5 October 2012, Kärddla Town Government, Foundation Tuuru, Counselling Centre „HUPS“, B7 Baltic Islands Network and Hiiumaa Cooperation Network organized together the Business day and youth conference in Kärddla.

On Business Day (3 October) Kaupo Noormaa, Victory Trainings, talked on ways of finding a business idea. Local entrepreneurs presented their practical business experiences. Jaanus Valk, Head of the Association of Municipalities in Hiiumaa, spoke about the preferred business areas in a small community. Tanel Malk, Executive Manager of Union of Entrepreneurs on Hiiumaa talked on running a business in small municipality. Matti Lüsü, the Foundation Tuuru, gave an overview about the possibilities for active youth in 2012, and presented the programmes of ENTRUM and Brainhunt. ENTRUM is a series of entertainment and training events, consisting of sessions, visits to companies, an essay competition and the youth project competition 'I am enterprising'; Brainhunt is an entrepreneurial competition, directed at creating innovative and science-based entrepreneurship among the young. Hergo Tasuja, NGO 'Ankur', talked about the inspirations behind taking up the entrepreneurial activities, and presented youth entrepreneurship survey, dated spring 2012. The students of Tallinn German Gymnasium, who won the second place in the competition of student firms in 2012, shared with their practical experiences. The Business Day concluded with the discussion on what must be done for youngsters to take initiative.

On 4-5 October, the 'Notice Youth Work' conference followed. In cooperation with the UBC Commission on Youth Issues, Ilona-Evelyn Rannala made a presentation about the youth work and new activities taken by the UBC. Both Commissions want to increase co-operation in the fields of youth work and education.

Arne Grau-Amné, Visby & B7 Islands Network, talked about hobbies and lifelong learning as a base for preventive youth work, taking Gotland as an example. Ermo Mäeots from Hiiumaa County Government talked about the past, the present and the future youth work on Hiiumaa. The survey made by the Hiiumaa students on the youths' free time activities was presented, too.

While the first conference day was targeted at youth workers, the second one was directed at youngsters. Liisbet Sarapuu and Anett Rajang talked about youth democracy education in the youth council under the international project 'Youth Democracy project Life, Media and Participation – Youth in Baltic Sea Region!' The UBC Commission on Youth Issues leads the project, and the UBC Commission on Education participates as a partner. Angel Camal, NGO Continuous Action volunteer, talked on how mobility creates new possibilities and help grow awareness in the field of youth work.

The UBC Commission on Education welcomes cooperation with international organisations, the member cities and the Commissions.

MORE

Annelly Veevo
Annelly.Veevo@kardla.ee



NEWS

from member cities

Sharing borders, growing closer

Narva City Government (Estonia), together with the Administration of MF City Ivangorod (Russian Federation) implemented joint activities in the framework of the European Cooperation Day (www.ecday.eu) on 21 September, which has been celebrated all over Europe for the first time. More than 100 public events took place during the week of 17-23 September all over Europe in order to support cooperation and development of friendly relations.

The 'Sharing borders, growing closer' event was to demonstrate the achievements of the European cooperation projects.

There are four Narva-Ivangorod common projects running now. One of them, 'The Unique Estonian-Russian fortresses ensemble development as a single tourist product', is aimed at reconstructing the Narva Castle Park and building the access roads to the Ivangorod fortress. Second project 'Development of historical riverside protection area in Narva/Estonia and Ivangorod/Russia, stage II' (or 'River promenades II') aims at reconstructing the upper level of Dark Garden Park in Narva and building part of the river promenade located to the north of the fortress in Ivangorod. Another project, 'Development of the unique Narva-Ivangorod trans-border fortresses ensemble as a single cultural and tourist object', is a large-scale project whose main activities consist in reconstructing the Victoria bastion in Narva, the Small Powder



Granary in Ivangorod and making them available for tourists. The forth project is led by the Estonian Ministry of the Interior and is about 'Complex reconstruction border crossing points in Ivangorod and in Narva'.

These four projects have been approved by the Estonia-Latvia-Russia cross-border cooperation Programme within the European Neighbourhood and Partnership instrument 2007-2013. The overarching strategic objective of the Programme is to promote joint development activities for the improvement of the region's competitiveness by utilising its potential and beneficial location in the cross roads

between the EU and the Russian Federation (www.estlatrus.eu).

During the European Cooperation Day numerous events took place in the Narva-Ivangorod cross-border area, including events for children and youngsters, such as drawing competition for children, paper ship floating along the Narva river, launch of balloons and soap bubbles and lightening fires on both river banks in the evening. More than 100 young people participated in the European Cooperation Day from both cities. Participants' works and photos are available at: <http://www.forttour.net> in the section II STAGE, Photo Galleries.

MORE

Olga Tcheryomushkina
olga.tserjomushkina@narva.ee

Employment for the Youth?

Economic crisis on international trade markets and in the world of work is the main message that nowadays reaches young generation. It creates the feeling of uncertainty and confusion when one is thinking about career, own abilities and employment. Looking for a job is now something different than it was yesterday and as it will be in the nearest future. Young people are exposed to sudden changes, uncertain careers and a continuous need of adapting to new situations.

Paradoxically, these changes open new opportunities, set challenges against old methods of building competence, finding and creating new jobs. Employment is not any longer a simple process followed from primary schooling through vocational training or university education up to finding a job and retaining it.

Finding a job and carving out a career requires not only entrepreneurial attitude but also many other abilities. Young persons are not always able to find themselves in it. New solutions are needed and cooperation between educational partners, employers and of course, participation of the youth is a crucial aspect. It requires uniting resources, minds and will, but also actions to promote employment among the young generation and to create new chances for the young.

The city of Gdańsk decided to take part in the new European project *My Generation at Work* within the framework of the URBACT II Programme (www.urbact.eu). It is aimed at building the net of the cities, which would learn from one another and share good practices in employing



the youth. The project mainly focuses on abilities and skills, enterprising attitudes of the young generation and creating local partnerships, targeted at increasing chances of the youth at a labour market.

12 European Cities intend to work together for 2.5 year on

employability of the youth in these cities and on changes, which occur in today's unstable labour market.

The first stage of the project was completed on 4 September with the Future Dialogue Workshop. The representatives of the labour office, voluntary labour corps, innovative companies, science park and education representatives together with the youth debated about the future. What must be done until year 2015, so that the influence on employability would become significant? The results of this work will determine the 2.5 year project *My Generation at Work*, which, right now is in its preparatory phase.

MORE

Magdalena Skiba
m.skiba@gdansk.gda.pl



Locomotive Shed in Jyväskylä

Newly opened in the autumn 2012, the Locomotive Shed in Jyväskylä is a meeting place for young people, a showcase for youth culture and a venue for creative expression. The Locomotive Shed is home to the Jyväskylä Youth Services, youth culture activities and other actors in the field of culture.



The Locomotive Shed houses youth information and advice services, the editorial office of online newspaper *Painovirhe* produced by young people, media education activities, youth participation education and Jyväskylä's youth council, band activity for teenagers under 18, community youth work as well as Culture Club Siberia, which is involved in cultural youth work.

Young people have 1450 m² of space at their disposal. The Points Youth Space is an open space targeted at youngsters and young adults, where they can spend time with their friends. The facilities and actors at the Locomotive Shed offer a wide range of recreational activities as well as support and guidance in different life situations.

Youth bands can take advantage of the nine band rehearsal rooms for rent at the Locomotive Shed, each of which can accommodate at least two bands. The facilities are primarily intended for bands involving under-18s living in Jyväskylä. The Locomotive Shed also features two rehearsal rooms equipped with musical instruments for guided band activities and a recording studio/media workshop intended for recording music, making videos and image processing. One of the rehearsal rooms is dedicated to pop/rock music and the other to hip hop amongst others. The Locomotive Shed's youth leaders arrange guided musical activities for the young.

The facilities of Culture Club Siberia, which engages in cultural youth work, serve as a gathering place for youth theatre groups, circus activity, the youth choir RockAll and dance groups.

This autumn, the activities will be mapped out in partnership with young people. They have been involved in designing and planning of the Locomotive Shed from the very beginning. A key principle of the City of Jyväskylä's Youth Services is youth participation. Activities will begin in stages and by 2013, the Locomotive Shed will be fully operational.

MORE

Esa Linnalta
esa.linna@jkl.fi

Maardu Youth Centre

Maardu Youth Center is currently the main venue for young people to spend their leisure time in the small town of Maardu, situated near Tallinn. The Center has been popularized among young people due to its wide scope of interesting and varied activities.

Local schools and doctors have lately observed that young people move less and less. Their elementary hygiene and eating habits leave much to be desired as well. Regrettably, in the current economic stagnation conditions, many youths lack the financial means to take up sports that interest them or tend to some of their personal needs (in terms of personal hygiene). Youths suffering from malnutrition or wrong eating habits often lack the most basic cooking skills, which very often results in low self-esteem. Also, the young in the area lack sufficient Estonian speaking companionship.

Maardu Youth Centre organizes the 'Healthy Lifestyle for the Young' project for the third academic year in a row. Last year, the project was supported by Harju County. Vopak E.O.S has sponsored the project during the past two years. In the project, sporting competitions, quizzes and board games competitions are held; open boxing and fitness classes are organized, hiking trips take place and participants can go swimming. Young people are regularly instructed in personal hygiene habits. Medics have visited the Centre. Basic cooking courses have been organized and conversation groups have been gathered to talk about how and what to buy for meals.

In cooperation with MTÜ Õppe- ja Arengukeskus ME Estonian lessons are taught in a playful format to preschoolers. Children attend them with their parents. Last year, children could also watch movies in Estonian and make their own puppet movies. Also, young people could also improve their English and Estonian language skills in a playful manner.

Cultural activities play an important role. In cooperation with the Russian drama theatre, twice to three times a year the theatre visits are organized in Tallinn for primarily less affluent children. As there is no movie theatre at Maardu, movie nights are held once a week showing mostly high quality movies, including movies based on literary works.

The youth centre is currently visited on average by 30-40 youths per day. Through regular activities, the number has continued to increase and, hopefully, will increase in the future.

MORE

Jevgeni Golovats
jevgeni.golovats@gmail.com

Youth Politicians in Kristiansand

There is a lot of potential in Kristiansand. Yet, there are challenges that need to be worked on, especially regarding the engagement of the young. If you want important political issues to be dealt with, you need a lot of supporters. This is politics. KUU have been invited to talk to the Presidency (the highest political body in the municipality of Kristiansand), and provide consultative capacity input to political issues that affect children and youth in the municipality. But, it is hard to gain good results, as long as you have been looked upon as a "geek" if you are interested in politics.

The politicians are very interested in listening to our opinions, and if you are young and ambitious, it is not difficult to climb the ladder. Be-

ing one of them, I hold a position in the committee which remains in a continuous contact with our friendship city in Bangladesh, Rajshahi, even though I am only 17. We have bigger responsibility to make more young people interested in their society.

Politicians are interested in what we think of Kristiansand. After all, if you want people to stay in Kristiansand, you have to make sure that we are happy here.

MORE

Sondre Elstad
2202@live.no



The Congress on 'Managing Metropolises in the XXI century'

26-27 November 2012, Amber Expo Gdańsk



The City of Gdańsk, together with Gdańsk International Fair Co., will host the economic congress focusing on the socio-economic aspects of life in a big city. It will be held on 26-27 November at Amber Expo Exhibition Centre.

The Gdańsk congress is thought to serve as an exchange forum for intelligent and innovative solutions in the city management, bettering decision-making processes, and affecting the standards and the quality of life in the Polish cities and metropolises. In the near future, the congress will take the exhibition-conference approach so as numerous solutions for the widely understood SMART idea could be presented there, namely: innovative solutions for residents, tourists, institutions, etc.

One of the themes touched upon during the congress, is the role of maritime tourism in the coastal regions' development. This conference will discuss the impact of tourism, especially maritime tourism, and its effects on the development of coastal regions. The participants will take an attempt to answer the question whether this type of tourism has impact on the economy. Is it significant or irrelevant, and perhaps not worth paying attention to? The conference will also touch upon the question of tourist clusters seen as a way of consolidating the industry. Several examples of already functioning clusters will be presented.

MORE

www.miastoplus.com.pl

The Multifunctional Centre 13

The multifunctional centre 13, a new activity centre for the City of Tampere's youth services, opened in the centre of Tampere at the beginning of August. The number 13 frequently recurs in the building's history and today. The building, designed by the architect Wivi Lönn, and completed in 1913, is located at Satakunnankatu 13. Accordingly, the youth services' most important target group consists of 13-year-olds.



The multifunctional centre 13 boasts five floors of activity premises (2,500 square metres) that are fully accessible by Tampere residents of all ages. The event halls, which are equipped with modern technology, transform into arenas for meetings, and theatre, dance and music shows. There is also a professional-level recording studio at the

multifunctional centre. The studio has brand new technology and basic rock band instruments. The studio technician is on site to instruct the young using the studio.

The centre also offers independent and guided activities, workshops and courses every day. In addition, associations, organisations and individuals can hire the centre's versatile meeting premises for various purposes.

The visitors who are not residents of Tampere can also use the services of the multifunctional centre 13 as the computers with the Internet access at the centre's street level can be used by all visitors free of charge.

The multifunctional centre 13 is a house of many possibilities. Take a closer look at the youth services and the multifunctional centre 13 on the Internet at www.nuortentampere.fi

MORE

Kati Ruotsalainen
kati.ruotsalainen@tampere.fi
Päivi Laukamo
paivi.laukamo@tampere.fi

Magic Malbork

On Saturday 11 August 2012, an inauguration of 4th edition of 'Magic Malbork' took place in Malbork town square. The event gathered more than 3.000 visitors. Everyone could enjoy the music and body painting, and observe the stilt walkers hatter, witch, green elf and faun. All gathered could take part in Flash Mob prepared by Maciek Florek, winner of the 1st edition of "You can dance" in Poland. Everyone could taste dishes prepared by Jean Bos – Belgian Chef of magic kitchen, as well as enjoy the show of the Polish most popular illusionist, Maciej Pol.

The main attraction of the event was the evening "Magic Malbork" show, which started at 10 p.m. at Von Plauen embankments near the castle. It is an artistic tale, a fantasy legend overtone using lasers, acrobatics, pyrotechnics, lighting effects, fireworks, Irish steppe, UV dance, dance in the spherical balls, on the nets and high above the ground, and many other special effects.



The show was prepared by the Acrobatic Dance Theatre "Mira Art" from Gdynia, and in it the finalists of the 4th edition of the Polish Got Talent, dancers of the Gdynia Acrobatic Dance Theatre 'MIRA-ART', soloists of the Polish Theatres Ballet, Fire dancers,

dancers of the Flex Dance Sopot, soloists of the Musical Theatre in Gdynia and ELPHIN – Irish Dance Group were starring.

To top it up, the MAGIC CONCERT ON THE WALL OF THE BUILDING at City Square, Kościuszki Street – promenade started at 11.15 p.m.

Musicians, secured with alpine ropes, playing under the direction of Ryszard Bazarnik, performed extremely dangerous vertical concert on the wall of the building. This unusual band plays the world music – compositions of the members of the band are inspired by the African, Jamaican, Caribbean, Andalusian and Middle East traditions.

The event has already won the Best Tourist Product price granted by the Polish Tourist Organization.

Everybody is welcome back in August 2013! More information about the show is available at

MORE

www.magicmalbork.pl or info@mwcmalbork.pl



Time Capsule in Vilnius

IKEA, the world's leading furniture retailer, has started the construction of its store in Vilnius, which is planned to open in August 2013. It will be the first IKEA store in the Baltics. To celebrate the event, the time capsule was filled with several items of both local and international significance and cemented into one of the store's panels by the Vilnius Mayor Arturas Zuokas and Mr. Sigurdur Palmason, Chairman of the Board, Felit Company, who has developed the project. The time capsule contained the USB Flash Drive with information about Vilnius, the sand clock with the logo of Vilnius on it, a current IKEA catalogue, an IKEA teaspoon, representing IKEA's product range, as well as the architectural plans for the new store.



Mayor Artūras Zuokas, stated that, "Today is a historic day for us. We are laying a cornerstone for the world famous IKEA store and this very clearly shows that there is tremendous potential for other investors to start or expand their businesses in Vilnius. We pay detailed attention to and put a lot of effort into efficiently and effectively helping international businesses successfully realize their plans here. We have added the sand clock to the capsule as a reminder that Vilnius is always aware of the signifi-

cance of time to businesses and that we do everything possible to get things done quickly."

Commenting on the beginning of the construction, Mr. Sigurdur Palmason said, "We have been met with the highest level of competence in Vilnius. The local authorities have shown that they are able to support foreign investors in an investment of such a large scale and the original time schedule remains unchanged. We are happy to have chosen Vilnius – a regionally leading city with millions of inhabitants within its reach. In less than a year we will open our doors to the public and will do what IKEA is doing in 340 other stores around the world, creating a better everyday life for the many people".

After having acquired the land plot last year, the clean-up plan was put into place. Substantial progress has been made in transforming the land from a brownfield site into a prime commercial area that will house the IKEA store along with an additional retail centre.

The YIT Kausta firm was chosen as the main contractor for the construction of the IKEA project in Vilnius after a tender process last spring. The IKEA store will be over 26,000 sq. meters large and will create almost 200 jobs in the capital. Žirnių Street reaching over 100 million Euros, once completed.

UAB Felit is the owner and operator of IKEA in Vilnius.

MORE

Anton Nikitin
anton.nikitin@vilnius.lt

Gdynia Business Week 2012



Recent media coverage of global economic crisis and increasing unemployment rates, especially among the young, leave nobody indifferent. It may seem though, that the City of Gdynia has found its own way to help youngsters enter their professional life. During the graduation ceremony of the fourth edition of 'Gdynia Business Week' project, which took place on 24 August, one could meet confident seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds with success-oriented attitude and no fears about their future.

'Gdynia Business Week' is an annual event organized by the city of Gdynia in cooperation with its partners from the United States – Foundation for Private Enterprise Education and Seattle-Gdynia Sister City Association. The project, based on the American model, is currently developed in 22 States, and consists of week-long workshops and lectures led by professional businessmen. Its main aim is to instil the spirit of entrepreneurship among high school students and to acquaint them with basic rules that govern economy – both on micro- and macro-scale. Transferred on the local ground and adjusted to the Polish educational system, the project has instantly become popular among Gdynia students and teachers. Until now, approximately 400 students and 50 teachers from local schools have participated in the project.

What contributes to the success of the programme is certainly its innovative approach to teaching based on guidance and collaboration, as well as focus on practical rather than theoretical classes. Students get a unique opportunity to immerse in the world of business while running their own imaginary companies and preparing innovative



products. As in the real world, participants need to have their fingers on the pulse of the market to achieve success during stockholder presentations and a fair, which summarize the programme. The programme not only allows students to broaden their knowledge and gain new skills but also allows them to discover the abilities of which they have not been aware before. At the same time, American Company Advisors

pay special attention to the understanding of the importance of interpersonal relations and communication in business. Moreover, as volunteers, they show the youngsters that the successful entrepreneur should support and contribute to the local community.

Although participants are not always the best students at schools, all of them leave the programme more motivated and confident. They truly believe that they can do anything they

want to with their lives. The programme's results speak for themselves. Thanks to numerous contacts that students gain during the week, some of them are later invited to participate in sponsored internships in the US, others start their own businesses. But the most impressive outcome of the programme is the creation of the Alumni Association. The students' involvement in its works proves that being active and engaged easily becomes a habit. The Association organizes workshops, lectures and meetings with interesting people on a regular basis. They take active part in the preparations for subsequent editions of Business Week.

MORE

Joanna Leman, Anna Głowacka
j.lemam@gdynia.pl



64th UBC Executive Board meeting in Rakvere, 24 May 2012



65th UBC Executive Board meeting in Koszalin, 4 October 2012

Gdańsk

City Hall
Nowe Ogrody 8/12
PL-80803 Gdańsk, Poland
Contact: Piotr Grzelak
Tel. +48 695890295
piotr.grzelak@radny.gdansk.pl

Jyväskylä

City Hall
P.O. Box 193
FIN-40101 Jyväskylä, Finland
Contact: Marketta Mäkinen
Tel. +358 14 624390
marketta.makinen@jkl.fi

Keila

City Hall
Keskväljak 11
EE-76608 Keila, Estonia
Contact: Tanel Möistus
Tel. +372 6 790 700
tanel.moistus@keila.ee

Kristiansand

City Hall
Radhusgata 20
N-4604 Kristiansand, Norway
Contact: Øyvind Lyngen Laderud
Tel. +47 92 838529
oyvind.l.laderud@kristiansand.kommune.no

Liepāja

City Hall
Rožu iela 6
LV-3400 Liepāja, Latvia
Contact: Natalja Vecvagare
Tel. + 371 63404789
natalja.vecvagare@dome.liepaja.lv

Næstved

City Hall
Teatergade 8
DK-4700 Næstved, Denmark
Contact: Søren Revsbæk
Tel. +45 55 445076
revsbaek@revsbaek.dk

Šiauliai

City Hall
Vasario 16-osios 62
LT-76295 Šiauliai, Lithuania
Contact: Audrone Jaugelaviciene
Tel. + 370 41 596303
a.jaugelaviciene@siauliai.lt

Rostock

City Hall
Neuer Markt 1
D-180 50 Rostock, Germany
Contact: Karin Wohlgemuth
Tel. +49 381 3811452
karin.wohlgemuth@rostock.de

St. Petersburg

Government of St. Petersburg
Smolny
RU-193060 St. Petersburg, Russia
Contact: Igor Lonsky
Tel. +7 812 5767688
lon@kvs.gov.spb.ru

Växjö

City Hall
Box 1222
S-351 12 Växjö, Sweden
Contact: Per Schöldberg
Tel. +46 470 41352
per.scholdberg@vaxjo.se

PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Per Bødker Andersen
City Hall, Aksestov 1
DK-6000 Kolding, Denmark
Tel. + 45 40 191500
peba@kolding.dk

VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Marie-Louise Rönmark
City Hall
S-901 84 Umeå, Sweden
Tel. + 46 90 161000
marie-louise.ronmark@umea.se

Jarkko Virtanen
City Hall, Yliopistonkatu 27a
FIN-20100 Turku, Finland
Tel. +358 50 5590222
jarkko.virtanen@turku.fi

Andres Jaadla
City Hall, Tallinna 5
EE-44306 Rakvere, Estonia
Tel. +372 322 5870
andres.jaadla@rakvere.ee

SECRETARIAT OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Wały Jagiellońskie 1
PL-80853 Gdańsk, Poland
Tel. +48 58 3010917
+48 58 3019123
Fax +48 58 3017637
info@ubc.net
www.ubc.net
www.facebook.com/unionofthebalticcities



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.