



XII UBC General Conference, Mariehamn, 1-4 October 2013

INTRODUCTION

The XII General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 1-4 October 2013 in Mariehamn, Åland islands, Finland, at the invitation of Petri Carlsson, Chairman of Mariehamn Executive Board and Edgar Vickström, Mayor of Mariehamn.

The first day of the conference was titled “Investing in young people. Combating youth unemployment and marginalization - from words into action”. The conference discussed measures how to promote employment, education and well-being among youth.

The second conference day started with the meetings of the commissions followed by four parallel workshops devoted to youth employment, youth empowerment, green growth, Interreg programmes. The second day was also devoted to the internal UBC matters such as reports, elections, finances, etc.

The conference was attended by 200 participants including representatives of 65 Member Cities, over 50 young people, as well as invited guests from governments, international organisations, business, trade unions, NGOs. List of participants is enclosed.

WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2013

OPENING

Per Boedker Andersen, the President of the Union of the Baltic Cities, opened the XII UBC General Conference.

Camilla Gunell, Head of the Government of Åland and Petri Carlsson, Chairman of Mariehamn Executive Board warmly welcomed the participants.

PLENARY SESSIONS

The first day of the conference was moderated by Anna Sorainen, Ground Communications, an entrepreneur, who has worked for over twenty years in the fields of media, communications and marketing.

The following speakers delivered presentations during the plenary sessions:

- Promoting smart development and well-being in the Baltic Sea Region

Paweł Orłowski, Vice-Minister of Regional Development, Republic of Poland

Ambassador Satu Mattila, Chairperson of CSO of the Council of the Baltic Sea States



Pauliina Haijanen, 2nd Vice Chair of the Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy of the Committee of the Regions, rapporteur on "Evaluation of macro-regional strategies"

Michael Ralph, Adviser to the Director-General Walter Deffaa, DG Regional Policy, European Commission

Nina Oding, Head of the Research Department of the Leontief Centre, St.Petersburg

- UBC Programme to promote youth employment and well-being

Matti Mäkelä, Head of the Project Management Office, Turku, Action Plan of Cities for Youth Employment and Well-Being

Johan Andersson, Falun, UBC Commission on Youth Issues

- Private sector and trade unions' actions in combating youth unemployment and marginalisation

Christian Weinberger, Senior Adviser SMEs & Entrepreneurship, DG Enterprise and Industry, European Commission

Uwe Polkaehn, President, Confederation of German Trade Unions DGB-Nord

Pirjo Väänänen, Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions – SAK

Mikael Backman, CEO of Viking Line

- Examples of cities initiatives and projects directed to youth

Gunnar Bakke, Commissioner, City of Bergen

Susanne Gaschke, Mayor of Kiel

Vytautas Grubliauskas, Mayor of Klaipėda

Gunars Ansins, Vice-Mayor of Liepāja

Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor of Umeå

Roland Methling, Mayor of Rostock

Viktorii Shuvalova, leading specialist of the Department of social programmes and cooperation with NGOs, St. Petersburg

Taavi Aas, Vice-Mayor of Tallinn

Presentation and speeches are enclosed.

THURSDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2013

COMMISSIONS' MEETINGS

The Commissions held working meetings in order to discuss action plans for the next two-year period. The question of Commissions' consolidation was also discussed.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

The following four conference workshops were held in parallel:



I. How to prevent & fight unemployment among youth

Coordination: Commission on Business

Support: Commission on Education

II. Youth empowerment and non-formal education with gender perspective

Coordination: Åland Peace Institute

III. Green Growth for UBC Cities

Coordination: Commission on Environment

IV. Regional INTERREG IV Programmes for the Baltic Sea Region

Coordination: Central Baltic & South Baltic Technical Secretariats

The workshops' summaries are enclosed.

YOUTH CONFERENCE

In parallel with the General Conference the UBC Youth Conference in the framework of a youth exchange "The Baltic Youth", was held at the same time in Mariehamn. The exchange was funded by the EU programme "Youth in Action". The conference was attended by over 50 young people from 14 UBC member cities. The youngsters took part in the plenary session contributing with speech, theatre play, flash mobs, posters. Young people also participated in the conference workshops.

More information about the youth conference at www.ubc-youth.org

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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

REPORT ON UBC ACTIVITIES

President Per Bødker Andersen submitted the report on UBC activities during the period October 2011 - September 2013. The UBC activity report is enclosed. The General Conference approved the report.

REPORT ON UBC STRATEGY

Mikko Lohikoski, UBC Strategy Coordinator, informed about the progress on the implementation of the UBC Strategy 2010-2015.

AMENDMENTS IN THE STATUTE

President Per Boedker Andersen reminded that based on findings of the Task Force on UBC Development, the Executive Board worked out proposals of amendments in the Statute to be presented to the General Conference. The General Conference decided to adopt the amendments. The amended Statute is attached.



Resolution on Commissions consolidation process

The UBC has been discussing the issue of consolidation of the Commissions in order to improve the efficiency of the UBC work. The General Conference mandates the new Executive Board of UBC to actively continue dialogue on the structure and content of the UBC Commissions and obliges the Board to reach a decision on the issue during the year 2014, so that starting from 1.1.2015 the UBC shall have between five to seven Commissions which start to be operative from that date. The old Commission structure ceases to be in force on the same date. The resolution is enclosed.

Resolution on task force to promote youth employment

General Conference decided to set up a task force on youth employment and well-being. It shall work until the next UBC General Conference 2015, in which it is invited to submit its final report. Meanwhile the TF is encouraged to present proposals and initiatives to the UBC Board. Participation in the TF is open also to other institutions. The resolution is enclosed.

Resolution on EU Strategy for the BSR

UBC has adopted a resolution on EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in order to actively support it so that it will gain more high-level political commitment. The resolution stresses that the national governments, parliamentarians as well as regional and local decision-makers should be more involved. Much more efforts should be given to informing and mobilizing the public about the goals and practical achievements of the Strategy. The resolution is attached.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

Paweł Żaboklicki, Secretary General, informed the General Conference that the audit of UBC accounts for 2011 and 2012 had been performed by the licensed auditing company Bilans from Gdańsk. The report states that the Union financial transactions and records within the mentioned period have been handled properly. The conference took note of the report. The auditor's report is enclosed.

BOARD OF AUDIT REPORT

Ewa Back, member of UBC Board of Audit, Councillor, Västernorrland, presented the report and recommendations of the Board of Audit. The General Conference took note of the report. The report of the Board of Audit is enclosed.

ABSOLVING THE BOARD, PRESIDIUM, SECRETARY

Following the proposal of the Board of Audit, the General Conference acknowledged the fulfilment of duties by the Executive Board, Presidium, Secretary General in 2011 and 2012.



MEMBERSHIP FEES 2014-2015

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the Executive Board's proposal of the membership fees for 2014 and 2015. The General Conference approved the membership fees for the financial period 2014-2015. The table with fees is enclosed.

ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

After appointment/election amongst the member cities in each country the following cities were confirmed as members of UBC Executive Board in the next two-year period:

Naestved (Denmark), Elva (Estonia), Jyväskylä (Finland), Rostock (Germany), Liepāja (Latvia), Šiauliai (Lithuania), Kristiansand (Norway), Gdańsk (Poland), St. Petersburg (Russia), Växjö (Sweden).

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

The General Conference elected for a two-year period:

Per Boedker Andersen, Deputy Mayor of Kolding, as President of the Union
Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor of Umeå, as first Vice-President of the Union
Jarkko Virtanen, the Deputy Mayor of Turku, as Vice-President of the Union
Taavi Aas, the Deputy Mayor of Tallinn, as Vice-President of the Union

ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF AUDIT

The General Conference re-appointed Ewa Back, Councillor, Västernorrland, Marta Chełkowska, Director of Tourism Department, Pomeranian Region, Jukka Vilen, City Director, Kemi, to the UBC Board of Audit for a two-year period.

AUDITOR FOR 2013-2014

The General Conference appointed the licensed auditing company Bilans from Gdańsk as the UBC auditor for 2013-2014.

VENUE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 2015

Following the proposal of the Mayor of Gdynia, Poland, the General Conference decided to hold its XIII gathering in the City of Gdynia in 2015.

BSR Urban Forum for Smart Cities (BUF)

During the General Conference a promotion event 'Could your city be smarter?' was held presenting the new initiative: Urban Forum for Smart Cities. The goal of this project is to create an open platform for achieving positive changes in the citizen's living and working environment and for enabling companies to bring new smart products into the market. The Urban Forum, now under preparation, will bring creative businesses and cities together to seek innovative solutions. The project is initiated jointly by UBC and BDF. The project is coordinated by the Smart City Lab Tartu on behalf of UBC. It is funded by the Seed Money Facility of the EUSBSR.



CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

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

Per Boedker Andersen
President

Ewa Back
Board of Audit

Paweł Żaboklicki
Secretary

*Note: Documents mentioned as attached are inserted at:
http://www.ubc.net/events_calendar,229,2194.html