

B7 - THE BALTIC SEA SEVEN ISLANDS

Since 1989 the largest islands in the Baltic Sea have formed a common interest group, "The Islands of the Baltic Sea" or B7.

The islands are Bornholm, Gotland, Hiiumaa, Rügen, Saaremaa, Åland and Öland. The collaboration deals mainly with issues of common interest to the islands, with finding solutions to common problems, and cooperating to develop ideas for the future.

The islands meet regularly and once a year the Annual Conference takes place. This year Rügen hosted the conference. In the little town of Sellin politicians,



civil servants and chairmen of the working groups met and decided how to continue the common work. A lot of ongoing and planned projects were presented and acknowledged to continue, for instance projects concerning oilspill in the Baltic Sea, Agenda 21, eco-tourism, marketing of common historical events and culinary heritage.

During the meeting it was decided that a full-time secretariat should be established on Gotland to be responsible for the information and co-ordination. Furthermore, the B7 association is represented in its own office in Brussels.

BALTIC HEALTHY CITIES CENTRE TO BE IN BUSINESS SOON

The Baltic Healthy Cities Centre will be starting from the beginning of 1998.

The Finnish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs have agreed to finance its basic functions together with the City of Turku for three years. The Ministry has also financed the planning for the Centre, and the Planning Office has been working busily since May 1997. What is needed now is the formal agreement with the Ministry, the WHO/Euro Healthy Cities Project Office and the City of Turku, and there will be an established Baltic Centre in Turku.

The planning phase has produced a lot of ideas on how the wishes of the January Turku meeting participants could be fulfilled. The participants agreed on the following high priority areas:

- * Links between health and the environment
- * Partners in Health Promotion
- * Healthy Alliances & Networking
- * Evaluation
- * Health Care

* Training and Capacity Building.

The WHO Healthy Cities Project Office has defined initiating projects, supporting and facilitating, promoting and strengthening cooperation as the principal functions of the Centre. The overall aim is all the time to support and establish Healthy Cities program implementations in cities around the Baltic Sea.

Fields of activities

In this capacity, the office would be interested to know what kind of projects or project proposals there could be in the Baltic region cities. Some ideas have already been introduced.

The cities who feel called to work with

- information management (primarily information on health and factors influencing health, technical possibilities, building up health profiles),
- developing indicators on health and its determinants, particularly on the link between environment and health,
- using Geographical Information System to present data on health and



environment, also accidents,

- "Twenty Steps toward a Healthy City" project establishment and management
- transfer of know-how on specific skills
- an example of oral health and breast- cancer screening, evaluation and Health Profile, building healthy alliances with business sector to promote overall wellbeing in cities
- supporting and linking with Health Promoting Schools and Healthy Universities
- research on different models of welfare - is the Nordic model transferable?

are heartily welcome to contact the:

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