

ACTIVITY REPORT

CULTURAL CITIES COMMISSION (CCC)

2019 11 - 2021 09

1. General description

Chair from April 2018 Rūta Stepanovaitė, Kaunas (LT) (expiry of term of office on 2021-09-17).

Vice Chairman Radosław Krajewicz, Chojnice (PL).

Members of the Commission: 41 representatives from 10 countries.

The Cultural Cities Commission wants to be the voice for culture on the local level in order to have the cultural issues on the local level heard and taken into account in all policies for developing the local level on regional, national and international context.

The commission, building on the expertise of its members and partnerships with other networks, is continuing its work in the following areas, developed during the years 2018-2021:

- Regional identity;
- Professionalization of the cultural and creative field;
- Urban transformation through culture;
- Culture accessibility;
- Audience development.

2. Meetings/seminars/conferences

All meetings during the 2020-2021 were held online.

- 2021 09 01 Baltic Sea Cultural Cities Interreg workshop.
- 2021 08 04 C4C project, 2nd part of exploration-workshop (partner consortium).
- 2021 06 28 C4C project, virtual exploration-workshop.
- 2021 06 17 C4C project workshop, project development.
- 2021 05 28 UBC meeting in order to discuss the preparation for the workshop 'Culture as a platform for involving city residents and regional partners in tackling the challenges and creating the future', as part of preparation for the General Conference.
- 2021 05 26 C4C project partner meeting, discussing and preparing activity plan.
- 2021 05 19 C4C project initial partner meeting.
- 2021 05 07 attending the UBC Sustainability Action meeting.
- 2021 03 23 BSCSR partner meeting, preparing an action plan for the next period (2021-2022).
- 2021 03 05 BSCSR partner meeting and wrapping-up.

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- 2021 01 21 BSCSR partner strategic meeting in order to discuss the final development of the project.
- 2021 01 19 attending the UBC new strategy meeting.
- 2020 12 09 BSCSR project virtual focus group. In order to validate the concept of a Baltic Sea City/Region of Culture, the online meeting with representatives of the cities of a different size (both urban and rural areas) who work in municipalities as general managers, also in cultural, tourism or entrepreneurship fields was held.
- 2020 11 19 Baltic conference UrbCulturalPlanning. Presentation regarding the topic 'Is active citizenship prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive development? A Baltic City Perspective.'
- 2020 11 03 UBC Cultural Cities Commission and Inclusive & Healthy Cities Commission meeting. The meeting is aimed at: communicating clear messages of processes and plans of UBC / Encouraging to participate more in activities now and in the future / Inviting cities to share their projects / Strengthening the connection between UBC structures.
- 2020 10 19 Baltic Sea Cultural Cities Concept Development workshop. Part of seed money project activities together with partners.
- 2020 09 30 BSSSC Annual Conference 2020 Session on culture and BSR Identity. Input from the UBC CCC on the Baltic Sea Cultural Cities Concept.
- 2020 09 16 Riga Urban Lab "Cultural Shift: Social Innovation and Cultural Drivers". Presentation about Hybrid cultural institution concept.
- 2020 07 28 UBC Lithuanian cities meeting in Kaunas. Presentation of the UBC CCC work and active open calls.
- 2020 04 17 UBC Executive Board Meeting. Presentation of the UBC CCC Action and budget plan 2020.

3. Projects

The UBC CCC cities take part in different stages of project development and implementation. The active participants: Kaunas (LT), Palanga (LT), Gargždai (LT), Tauragė (LT), Panevėžys (LT), Gdansk (PL), Jūrmala (LV), Rīga (LV), Malmö (SE), Tartu (EE).

Projects:

1) Project: "ARS BALTICA Creative Dialogue (ABCD)":

UBC CCC objective: Professionalization of the cultural and creative field / audience development.

Years active: 2018-2020. Lead partner: ARS Baltica. Cooperation: attending the partner meetings, facilitating the project activities in the UBC CCC partner cities, inviting the culture professionals to attend the workshops. The ABCD intends to gather creative and cultural practitioners, provide space for discussion in an open environment and create synergies for and with the participating partners. The format wants to highlight crosssectorial links and allow policy-makers to follow the debates and share their perspectives on the impact of culture and cultural practice. The underlying understanding is that culture is an essential driver for sustainability. The main ambition is to contribute actively to

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integrating the cultural landscape in the Baltic Sea Region by bringing innovative cultural players together and establish a forum for continuous exchange.

2) Project: “UrbCulturalPlanning”:

UBC CCC objective: Urban transformation through culture.

Years active: 2019-2021. Lead partner: Danish Cultural Institute in Riga.

Cooperation: attending the UrbCulturalPlanning conference in Kiel, Germany, facilitating the project activities in the UBC CCC partner cities, inviting the culture professionals to attend the workshops. Cultural, education, municipal organizations from 9 BSR cities were brought together by the Danish Cultural Institute to develop sustainable cultural planning practices in the region within the Interreg BSR project UrbCulturalPlanning. Among them are UBC members Pori, Riga, Gdansk, Kiel and Guldborgsund. By activating local cultural resources, the project co-creates and launches cultural initiatives in the neighbourhoods in cooperation with the residents and stakeholders.

3) “Baltic Sea Cultural Cities & Regions (BSCCR)” (seed money project development):

UBC CCC objective: Regional identity development.

Years active: 2018-2021. Lead partner: the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). The initial partners include Agency for International Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Kaliningrad; Ars Baltica; Department of Youth and Culture of City of Kiel; City Culture Institute in Gdansk; Cultural Department of the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia; Kaunas Artists' House; Ministry of Justice, European Affairs and Consumer Protection of Schleswig- Holstein; and Union of Baltic Cities.

Predicted outcome: The Baltic Sea Cultural Cities & Regions is a project aimed at connecting cities, people, cultural organisations and professionals by increasing the visibility of the cultural diversity within the Baltic Sea Region. Under the heading "water connects us, but culture unites us" it is aimed to create synergies and cooperation focusing on citizen participation and ownership rather than on competition among participating cities and communities. It is a cross-border initiative to nominate with regular intervals the titles for the "Baltic Sea City/Region of Culture". The format is aimed at smaller cities and regions with less than 100.000 inhabitants, therefore corresponds to the needs of part of member cities of the UBC.

4) “Culture 4 Climate (C4C)” (seed money project development):

UBC CCC objective: Professionalization of the cultural and creative field.

Years active: 2020-2021. Partners: lead partner - ARS BALTICA. Other partners: Nordkolleg (DE), Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) (SE), Ecologic Institute (DE), The Action University (DK), UBC CCC (LT/PL), Kaunas Artists' House (LT).

Predicted outcome: the main project will integrate all BSR countries to co-design and implement long-lasting certification-methods that allow the chosen sectors to not only measure their impact, but also reduce their footprint and at the same time create a large outreach. For this a Pre-Phase is imperative, to (1) map the countries' individual needs by cultural sector, (2) create Piloting Tools (3) find a well

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balanced partner consortium to stem a BSR-wide large-scale project and last but not least (4) prepare a solid funding-framework.

4. Cooperation with other organisations

The cooperation mainly took part on project basis, the UBC CCC actively cooperated with more than 13 organisations from the BSR.

5. Communications

The Commission has proceeded managing the UBC CCC **Facebook platform** during the year (<https://www.facebook.com/ubcccc/>).

6 newsletters of the UBC CCC were distributed between 2019 11 - 2021 09.

UBC CCC webinars:

1. 2020 08 04, Pandemic and border closures - how to sustain cultural exchange?

Available on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvnSwn-aiMo>

2. 2020 06 09, Culture and politics in the COVID-19/post COVID-19 times

Available on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZ9OXnQXNW4&t=3s>