



**REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES
October 2011 – September 2013**

Introduction

Since the XI General Conference in Liepāja, 5-6 October 2011, UBC focused its work on the implementation of the UBC Strategy 2010-2015 adopted at the X General Conference Kristiansand.

UBC has been working to face the tasks listed in the Strategy to be a respected and recognized partner in the Baltic Sea Region cooperation, promoting the interests of the cities and the whole region.

The Communication and Marketing strategy was prepared and adopted to help the organization to foster an efficient exchange and to make its voice heard in the BSR, Europe and beyond. The document defines the marketing and communication strategy of the UBC - goals, target groups, main stakeholders, messages to be communicated, channels to be used, etc. Moreover, expert exchange has been being developed as each member city offers a rich wealth of best practices and interesting solutions in all sectors of city work.

UBC's ambition is also to be a spokesman of the BSR cities on the European level to make the voice of the local authorities better heard. This requires greater policy formulation capacity and more effective lobbying. The UBC Board decided to meet the cities/ regions EU representations and use their knowledge and potential to learn how to do the lobby work for the benefit of the UBC members.

In order to energize UBC Commissions and optimize the use of resources, the Executive Board adopted the common criteria for evaluation of the work of various Commissions.

Also, the guidelines for cooperation between UBC and Business Sector were adopted.

Point 7 of the Strategy "Systematic cooperation with partners in BSR, on European level and internationally" calls for more intensive and effective cooperation with the strategic partners in the region. During the reported period, UBC has further developed the cooperation with other Baltic Sea organizations. Especially, the contacts with the Baltic Development Forum (BDF) and the Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet) have intensified and brought results.

The Union has been active in implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In the reported period the UBC President and other UBC representatives were participating in the EUSBSR Annual Forums held on 24-26 October 2011 in Gdańsk and on 17-19 June 2012 in Copenhagen. The UBC representatives and member cities took part in the flagship projects meetings and seminars.

The Union developed existing contacts with other Baltic and European organizations and institutions i.e. European Parliament, European Commission, Committee of the Regions, Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Helsinki Commission, Baltic 21, VASAB 2010, Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and others.

The declaration of common interest between the Committee of the Regions and five Baltic Sea organisations, namely BSSSC, B7 Islands, Euroregion Baltic, Euroregion Pomerania and UBC has been renewed for the years 2012-2015.

UBC together with BSSSC and B7 presented a joint position paper on the European Union budget for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020.

A joint position paper on the EU Strategy for BSR implementation was prepared with B7 Baltic Islands Network, Baltic Development Forum, Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission and Euroregion Baltic.

Last, but not least, the Union has intensified its involvement in the activities of the Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional Cities Network (CECICN) established on 23 April 2010 in Santiago de Compostela to advocate the interests of the cities, border-regions and interregional territories. During the reported period CECICN concentrated its work on the EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020. In March 2012 Per Bødker Andersen, President of UBC, was elected as the President of CECICN.

Examples of policy issues handled by UBC:

1. UBC Strategy 2010-2015

a. Communication & marketing strategy

The UBC Strategy 2010-2015 was adopted at the X General Conference in Kristiansand. The point 8 of the Strategy concerns rising public profile of UBC. It was decided new marketing and communication strategy shall be prepared to define the future actions, goals, target groups, stakeholders, channels for communication, etc.

At the Board meeting in Lahti in March 2011 the Task Force on communication and marketing was set up with Kristiansand and Kiel as coordinators. Tendensor AB, a Sweden-based consultancy, was hired to analyze the collected data and assist to elaborate the professional marketing strategy.

The process of strategy preparation was carried out in eight steps containing planning phase, analysis phase (experts interviews, web-based survey, desk research) and feedback phase. The draft document was sent out on 30 January 2012 to the member cities for comments.

The strategy was presented and adopted at the Board meeting in Brussels on 14 February 2012. The Strategy shall help the organization to foster an efficient exchange and to make its voice heard in the BSR, Europe and beyond. The document defines the marketing and communication strategy of the UBC - goals, target groups, main stakeholders, messages to be communicated, channels to be used etc. It also sets out to define a brand platform for UBC – that is what UBC wants to stand for in eyes of target audiences, which will guide communication, organizational choices and activities.

The Board decided to form the task force on implementing the strategy to make concrete recommendations for strategy implementation. 14 participants from member cities, commissions, board of audit, secretariat took part in the first meeting of the task force held in Gdańsk in April 2012 and discussed the ways of strategy implementation. In August 2012, digital media professional from Turku, chosen as a consultant on the matter, visited UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk and afterwards prepared the proposal on strategy implementation plan. Following the recommendation of the communication strategy the secretariat and IT experts from Gdańsk made an interactive digital version of the calendar at the UBC homepage. Now the member cities are able themselves to edit and add new events to the calendar, including photos. The calendar can be seen at <http://www.ubc.net/calendar>

b. Task force on expert exchange

During the Board meeting in Lahti the task force convened to discuss the funding opportunities and expert exchange on the basis of the UBC cities experience. City of Jyväskylä prepared a feasibility study presenting EU funding possibilities to cover the costs of exchange of professionals.

At the Board meeting in Rakvere the cities of Turku and Jyväskylä jointly decided to prepare a project proposal within the Citizenship programme that had some suitable funding to start a pilot project on expert exchange, where 5-10 municipalities could attend. Within the proposed project it would be possible to organize for example one week study visits for experts as well as expert seminars. The project could be also used for trainings within new communication and marketing strategy and during the urban forums.

c. UBC in Brussels, meeting with cities offices how to do the lobby work for benefit of cities from the BSR .

Another goal set by the UBC Strategy 2010-2015 is to strengthen the UBC's presence in Brussels and enhance its lobbying capacity. There are many BSR cities/ regions offices in Brussels and it was agreed UBC should use their knowledge and potential. The Board decided to meet the cities/ regions EU representations to discuss how to do the lobby work for the benefit of the UBC members.

The meeting was held in Brussels at Norway House on 15 February 2012. Sixteen EU representations took part. As a follow-up, the working group consisting of Brussels offices was established to coordinate UBC activities in Brussels.

At the Board meeting in Rakvere, Ms Krista Taipale-Salminen, Head of Turku -Southwest Finland European Office, presented ideas of the Brussels offices working group how to do the lobby work for the benefit of cities.

The working group proposed to focus on the following policy areas: EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the role of cities, Urban policy and the role of cities, Smart Specialisation Strategies (3S), the Covenant of Mayors, the Arctic dimension.

d. Task force on UBC development

At the meeting held on 17 June 2011 in Karlstad, the Executive Board decided to create the Task Force to go through UBC key documents i.e. Statute, Strategy, Internal Regulations, having in mind further development of the organization. The objective of the Task Force was to strengthen the organization by evaluating all relevant dimensions of the work and proposing changes when needed.

The Task Force was invited to find the ways and means to ensure that the UBC serves also in the future interests of its members in the best possible way.

The Task Force consisted of one city representative from each member state, namely: Annely Veevo (Kärdla), Stefan Windh (Oskarshamn), Jørgen H. Kristiansen (Kristiansand), Søren Revsbæk (Næstved), Audrone Jaugelaviciene (Šiauliai), Marketta Mäkinen (Jyväskylä), Piotr Grzelak (Gdańsk), Vilnis Vitkovskis (Liepāja), Karin Wohlgemuth (Rostock), Igor Lonskij (St. Petersburg).

The Board nominated Mikko Lohikoski (Strategy Coordinator) as the chair of the Task Force. The Task Force invited Helinä Yli-Knuutila (Turku) to serve as an expert and secretary. The Task Force met four times during 2012: 14.2.2012 in Brussels, 20.4.2012 in Turku, 4.9.2012 in Rostock and 18.12.2013 in Copenhagen.

At the Board meeting in Umeå on 8 March 2013 the report of the TF was presented. Its first part concentrated on the improvements needed in practical working methods. The second part gave recommendations for changes in UBC Statute and UBC Internal Regulations. The report was sent out to all UBC member cities for comments.

At the meeting in Kiel, 20 June 2013, the Board discussed in detail the Task Force report. Based on TF findings the Board worked out proposals of amendments in the Statute to be presented to the General Conference in Mariehamn.

Also, the consolidation of the UBC Commissions was discussed to improve the efficiency of the UBC work. Currently UBC has 13 Commissions. The Board members and Commissions were requested to send their proposals of new models of cooperation.

e. Evaluation criteria of the Commissions' work

The UBC Strategy 2010-2015 states: "In order to energize UBC Commission work and optimize the use of resources, the Executive Board shall formulate common criteria for evaluation of the work of various Commissions. The amount of financial support to Commissions will be based on this evaluation."

To achieve this goal, the common criteria for evaluation of the Commissions' work have been formulated and presented at the Board meeting in Brussels 14 February 2012.

After Brussels Board meeting the proposal of the evaluation criteria was sent out to the Commissions and members cities for comments. In Rakvere, 24 May 2012, the Executive Board decided to adopt Commissions' evaluation criteria.

In Koszalin, 4 October 2012, the Board decided to approve the mechanism and timetable of the evaluation. Accordingly the UBC Commissions have been invited to submit the requested information to the secretariat. The amount of financial support to commissions in 2013 is based on this evaluation.

In addition, a survey had been made among the Member Cities about how they evaluate the importance and performance of various Commissions.

f. Guidelines for cooperation between UBC and Business Sector

At the Board meeting in Brussels, the guidelines for cooperation between UBC and Business Sector were approved.

The Business Sector has become more important as the role of business in generating employment and wealth through development has increasingly been recognized. The purpose of cooperation between the UBC and the Business Sector is to:

- promote the goals of UBC through cooperation with the Business Sector,
- ensure a more coordinated and strategic approach to business and industry,
- define the goals of cooperation with the Business Sector,
- minimize the risks to the UBC relations with the Business Sector,
- establish a transparent framework for relationship between the UBC and the Business Sector.

g. Cooperation with the Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet) and Baltic Development Forum (BDF).

Point 7 of the Strategy “Systematic cooperation with partners in BSR, on European level and internationally” calls for more intensive and effective cooperation with the strategic partners in the region. During the reported period, UBC has been in contact inter alia with the Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet) and Baltic Development Forum (BDF).

Baltic Development Forum is a business oriented Danish organisation with extensive international cooperation. The UBC representatives met with BDF several times to discuss areas of cooperation. UBC and BDF has developed a project application for a “Baltic Urban Forum for Smart Cities”. The aim is to establish a network for medium sized towns and cities to facilitate dialogue, experience sharing, learning and joint action on green technologies and innovations in urban areas. It will bring together public authorities, private companies and citizens organisations in a goal-oriented way – create a new pan-Baltic PPP involving not only EU member countries but also Norway, Russia and potentially other neighbours. The Lead Partner of the BUF project is Tartu Smart City Lab representing the Union of the Baltic Cities. On 26 June 2013 EUSBSR Seed Money Facility Secretariat administered by the Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein informed that the Seed Money Committee made a decision approving the project.

Helle Bechgaard, Vice Chair of BDF, took part in the 67th UBC Board meeting in Kiel on 20 June 2013 where she presented the BDF-UBC areas of cooperation and highlighted the BDF recent activities.

Also, BDF and UBC Commission on Business have been actively cooperating. The Commission was the BDF partner in the so-called Baltic Business Arena, a matchmaking event for SME’s organised as part of the BDF Summit. The next meeting of BDF with the Business Commission is planned in Copenhagen in September 2013.

Baltmet is another organization of a special interest of UBC. Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet) represents a forum for capitals and large metropolitan cities around the Baltic Sea. It brings together the cities of Berlin, Helsinki, Malmö, Oslo, Riga, Stockholm, St.Petersburg, Tallinn, Vilnius and Warsaw. The main goal of the network is to promote innovativeness and competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region by engaging mentioned cities, as well as academic and business partners, into close cooperation.

Baltmet is project oriented, especially in the field of marketing and promotion of BSR abroad. At the Koszalin Board meeting it was stressed cooperation would be beneficial for both organisations. BaltMet proposal was that member cities of both organisations could participate in each other's commissions and projects.

2. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region

The Executive Board decided to select the following EUSBSR flagship projects:

- 5.1 "Anticipate regional and local impacts of climate change through research" with Umeå as UBC representative. Within this flagship, the strategic project Baltic Sea Region Climate Change Adaptation Strategy BALADAPT has been carried out. The project was coordinated by the Danish Meteorological Institute
- 8.1 "Promote young entrepreneurs" with the Commissions on Education and Business Cooperation as UBC representatives
- 8.4 "Make the Baltic Sea an Eco-efficient region" with the Commission on Environment as a UBC representative
- 11.1 "Complete the agreed priority transport infrastructures" with Liepāja as a UBC representative
- 5.3 "Create a network of sustainable cities and villages" and the project InnoShip within the flagship "To become a model region for clean shipping" under the priority 4, with the Commission on Environment as a UBC representative.

Representatives of UBC and member cities took part in the number of meetings and seminars within mentioned flagship projects.

In the reported period the UBC President and other UBC representatives participated in the EUSBSR Annual Forums held on 24-26 October 2011 in Gdańsk and on 17-19 June 2012 in Copenhagen.

At the 66th UBC Executive Board meeting in Umeå, 8 March 2013, the Board members were acquainted with the updated Action Plan for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. UBC Commission on Local Safety is active in the new Priority Area Secure – Protection from emergencies and accidents on land, coordinated by Sweden and the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat, and is planning a flagship project.

At the Board meeting in Brussels in February 2012, the joint position paper of Baltic Sea organizations on the EU Strategy for BSR implementation, namely B7 Baltic Islands Network, Baltic Development Forum, Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Euroregion Baltic and Union of the Baltic Cities, was presented and approved.

The document recommends all actors of governance should be considered while facilitating EUSBSR national coordination committees. In order to develop a real multilevel governance system, there should be more focus on involvement of these actors in the overall design and review as well as in each priority areas (where applicable) and in the projects (where relevant).

Moreover, the Baltic Sea organizations agree that the local and regional levels should be encouraged to constructively contribute to the formulation of objectives and the actions needed to realize them in relation to the Strategy. As a result, the feeling of the ownership of the Strategy will be improved. The document focuses also on the funding, joint public-private platforms in support for European growth initiatives, involvement of non-governmental organizations and civil society, cooperation with Russia and communication issues.

3. Cooperation within Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional City Networks

The Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional Cities Network (CECICN) was established in April 2010 in Santiago de Compostela by six organisations: Iberian Network of Cross-border Entities (RIET), Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities, MedCities, Mission Operationelle Transfrontaliere, Union of the Baltic Cities, Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities (C.A.A.C.). One of the main aims of the new network is to provide cities, border-regions and interregional territories with a stronger voice and higher visibility in the context of the cohesion policies at the European scale.

During the reported period CECICN concentrated its work on the EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020.

CECICN-AEBR strategic paper was presented to the UBC Board members in Brussels, on 14 February 2012. The report on “Cities and Regions cooperating across borders: an opportunity to overcome the crisis” has been elaborated by networks representing cities and regions involved in Territorial Cooperation (cross-border, transnational and interregional level). The document refers to the EU Cohesion Policy. CECICN and AEBR are of the opinion that the cross-border and transnational areas must be the object of the more integrated territorial approach. Association of European Border Regions, representing 100 border and cross-border regions, is a forum for cross-border cooperation.

On 8 March 2012 CECICN unanimously elected Per Bødker Andersen, President of the UBC, as the President of the CECICN.

On 25/26 June 2012 the 1st Congress on Smart Cooperation was held in A Coruña, Spain. Nearly 400 participants took part in the meeting. UBC was not only one of the main organizers, but was also responsible for carrying out a workshop. The topic was “Cooperation contributing to Smart Growth. The workshop chairman was Per Bødker Andersen, President of UBC. The workshop was moderated by Wolfgang Schmidt, Chairman of the Business Commission. Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor of Umeå, Sweden, First Vice-President of the UBC and Andres Jaadla, Mayor of Rakvere, Estonia, Vice-President of the UBC presented how the regional cooperation looked like in the Northern Europe. Ms Tarja Hautamaeki, Cultural Manager Regional Council of Ostrobothnia was one of the speakers. Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki was the rapporteur.

A number of European decision-makers have accepted the invitation and participated very actively in the discussions: Michel Delebarre, President of COTER, Committee of the Regions and President of the MOT, Carlos Negreira, Mayor of A Coruña, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, Regional President of Galicia, Marta Fernández Currás, Spanish Secretary of State for budget and expenditure, Ann-Sofi Backgren, AEBR Vice-President, Ana Miranda, MEP, Representative of the Parliamentary Committee on Regional Development, José Palma Andrés, Director of European Territorial Cooperation, DG REGIO, Henrik Morch, Head of Unit, DG MARKT.

4. Renewal of declaration of common interest between Committee of the Regions and five Baltic Sea organisations 2012-2015

The declaration of common interest sets frames for cooperation between the Committee of the Regions and five Baltic Sea organisations namely BSSSC, B7 Islands, Euroregion Baltic, Euroregion Pomerania, UBC. The previous declaration has been signed four years ago and concerned the years 2008-2011.

The declaration highlights the following issues:

- Involvement of expertise in selected areas of interest of the Committee of the Regions
- Dialogue between the European Commission and the Associations of Regional and Local Authorities
- Participation in conferences and other activities organised respectively
- Joint activities in the field of communication and the mutual publicity of key events
- Joint efforts to strengthen regional participation in the Northern Dimension
- The development and realization of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region towards Europe 2020 Strategy: A common objective
- Regional response to economic crisis

5. Joint position paper on the European Union budget for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 signed by three Baltic Sea organizations namely B7, BSSSC, UBC – Lahti

At the 60th Executive Board meeting in Lahti in 2011 the Joint position paper on the European Union budget for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 was presented.

BSSSC, B7 Baltic Sea Islands Network, Union of Baltic Cities decided to prepare a joint paper emphasizing the fact that the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea needs to be backed up financially. The financial support needs to be substantial in order to ensure a joint and coordinated approach to the development of the Baltic Sea region. The document was a sign for Brussels that those organizations can speak with one voice.

6. Draft position paper on structural funds regulations 2014-2020 – Brussels

The Board adopted the draft position paper on structural funds regulations 2014-2020 at its 63rd meeting in Brussels in 2012.

The document welcomed the fact that the Europe 2020 Strategy put a special emphasis on the cities and urban policies, since the role of cities, as regional engines, is crucial for the achievement of 2020 goals. UBC was of the opinion that the urban policies should include cities of all sizes. Also, the UBC stressed a stronger involvement of competent local and regional authorities in shaping and implementing structural programmes. Competent city authorities should be treated as equal partners with the managing authorities when preparing, delivering, monitoring and evaluating the Structural Funds programmes. According to the Union, it was necessary to ensure a real introduction and implementation of the principle of subsidiarity. UBC found the principle of multilevel governance especially important and stressed that city authorities must be involved directly in the process nationally and regionally to define, develop and implement the partnership contracts. This is of

utmost importance for effective multi-level governance, effective use of resources and ensuring more value for money.

UBC Executives during two-year period

Per Bødker Andersen, President
Marie-Louise Rönnmark, First Vice-President
Jarkko Virtanen, Vice-President
Andres Jaadla, Vice-President
Paweł Żaboklicki, Secretary General

Executive Board during two-year period

Næstved	Denmark
Keila	Estonia
Jyväskylä	Finland
Rostock	Germany
Liepāja	Latvia
Šiauliai	Lithuania
Kristiansand	Norway
Gdańsk	Poland
St. Petersburg	Russia
Växjö	Sweden

Executive Board Meetings

Six Executive Board meetings took place during the reporting period between Liepāja and Mariehamn General Conferences:

63rd Executive Board meeting, Brussels, 14-15 February 2012
64th Executive Board meeting, Rakvere, 24 May 2012
65th Executive Board meeting, Koszalin, 4 October 2012
66th Executive Board meeting, Umeå, 7-9 March 2013
67th Executive Board meeting, Kiel, 20 June 2013
68th Executive Board meeting, Mariehamn, 3 October 2013

The Executive Board played meaningful role in the development of UBC activities. The Board considered and endorsed a number of actions, initiatives and projects submitted by the Presidium, Commissions and Member Cities. The projects, initiatives, activities, events and other actions carried out by UBC during the described period are outlined in this report.

Board of Audit during two-year period

Ewa Back, Councillor, Västernorrland
Marta Chełkowska, Director of Tourism Department, Pomorskie Voivodship
Jukka Vilen, City Director, Kemi

UBC Secretariat

Union of the Baltic Cities Secretariat is located in the City of Gdańsk at the residence of the City Council. The Secretariat provides daily service to the UBC and its members. The Union has been satisfied with the work performed by the Secretariat. The financial matters have been handled properly as confirmed by the auditor. The Union would like to express its thanks to the City of Gdańsk for its contribution to the UBC.

UBC Commissions

In the reported period the UBC Commissions have been led by the following Cities:

Commission:	Lead City(ies):
Commission on Business	Kiel
Commission on Culture	Kolding
Commission on Education	Kärdla
Commission on Energy	Oskarshamn
Commission on Environment	Turku
Commission on Gender Equality	Umeå
Commission on Health & Social Affairs	Elbląg
Commission on Local Safety	Gdańsk
Commission on Sport	Gdynia, Karlskrona
Commission on Tourism	Koszalin
Commission on Transportation	Gdynia
Commission on Urban Planning	Aarhus
Commission on Youth Issues	Tallinn

Commissions oversee Union activities in each of the respective areas. Examples of projects, activities and events carried out by the Commissions within the reporting period are concisely described below.

Commission on Business

Meetings

Meeting in Kolding, April 2012

The first meeting of the Commission in 2012 concentrated on Science Parks, Creativity and Business Support. The goal was to find out how Science Parks, Creativity and Business Support can bring economic success to the cities. 20 participants came from Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Poland, Norway, Germany and Denmark.

Meeting in Copenhagen, June 2012

The second meeting of the Commission in 2012 concentrated on Business Promotion, City Branding and Matchmaking of companies. The 11 participants came from Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Norway and Sweden. For the first time, the Commission meeting was held in cooperation with the Baltic Development Forum (BDF) and back to back with the 14th Baltic Development Forum Summit.

This large-scale event, brought together more than 800 stakeholders from government, political parties, business, academia and civil society.

Meeting in Kiel, June 2012

On 8-9 October 2012 the Science Park Meeting brought together nearly thirty managers from Science and Technology Parks, companies and business development agencies in the City of Kiel. The participants came from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden.

Meeting in Berlin, May 2013

The first meeting of the Commission in 2013 in Berlin concentrated on Science Parks, Creative Industries and City Branding.

Cooperation projects

Baltic Development Forum

The Baltic Development Forum (BDF) is an independent non-profit networking organization with members from large companies, major cities, institutional investors and business associations in the Baltic Sea Region. Already in 2012 the Commission has organized a meeting in connection with the annual BDF Summit and was partner to the Baltic Business Arena. BDF has expressed the interest in long term cooperation with the UBC Business Commission.

International Association of Science Parks

The International Association of Science Parks (IASP) is the worldwide network of science parks and areas of innovation. In 2012 the IASP was partner to a meeting of the Business Commission on Science Parks. Together with the IASP the Commission is supporting a project on the development and refinement of science parks.

Sophia Antipolis Science Parks

One of the topical issues of the Commission is the implementation and management of Science Parks. Sophia Antipolis has served as a model for Science Parks worldwide. A meeting of the Business Commission was held there in 2011.

Enterprise Europe Network

The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) is a key instrument in the EU's strategy to boost growth and jobs. The Business Commission has cooperated with the Enterprise Europe Network in organizing the Baltic Business Arena 2012, the meeting of the Business Commission in June 2012 in Kiel and some cases of business requests of companies from UBC member cities.

Commission on Culture

Meetings

“Cities in transformation”, a joint meeting of the Commission on Culture and on Urban Planning, 16-18 September 2013, Kolding

The aim was to look at old industrial areas and suggest solutions, culturally and urban planning wise as to changes, that can secure a development towards a knowledge based future.

Board meeting and seminar in Tallinn, 20 March 2013

The commission had an open seminar after the meeting where they focused on how to ensure historical centers sustain livable quarters and attractiveness as tourist centers. The meeting was open for employee and other people that could benefit from this seminar.

Annual meeting, 10-11 December 2012, Riga, Cēsis

The meeting was devoted to the culture as a tool for social inclusion.

Strategic partnerships

- Meeting with the EUSBSR PA Culture and ARS Baltica to discuss shared interest and potential cooperation. Output: coordinated annual meeting with EUSBSR PA Culture, ARS Baltica and other Baltic organizations to stimulate the network.
- Meeting with the Nordic Council to discuss shared interest and potential cooperation.
- Participation in Nordic Council strategy conference, UBC was presented as part of the panel discussion.

Professionalization of the cultural field

- Initiating a survey to identify the newsletters target group to optimize the communication.
- Contact with project called FiSH, Rostock, a national event for the young German Film community.

Cultural Prize

The winner cities in 2012 were Tartu / Cēsis.

Winner of the cultural prize 2013: Art Line - an international art project investigating and challenging the concept of public space. 14 partners from 5 countries around the Baltic Sea join to create a co-operative platform for art and academia in Poland, Sweden, Germany, Russia and Lithuania. The platform strengthen the institutions, create opportunities for artists, and interact with people in public space, on the internet, in exhibitions, and on the Stena Line ferries between Gdynia and Karlskrona.

Research and communication

A database for researched done in the cultural field has been developed. The website has been updated and the newsletter has been issued.

Exchange programme

Exchange programme between Kolding Library and Linköping Library was realized. The exchange has led to a further cooperation between these two libraries.

Commission on Education

Activities

Youth Week of Entrepreneurship „How an active youngster becomes a young entrepreneur“

The Commission on Education co-organized the Youth Week of Entrepreneurship on 26-30 March 2012 in Kärddla. This event was organized with NGO Hiiumaa Ankur, Kärddla Town Government, Information and Counselling Centre „HUPS“, B7 Baltic Islands Network and Hiiumaa Cooperation Network. The topic of the week was „How an active youngster becomes a young entrepreneur“.

Research „Youngsters – Young Entrepreneurs?“

The Commission in association with Kärdla Town Government, NGO Hiiumaa Ankur, Information and Counselling Centre „HUPS“, B7 Baltic Islands Network organized research „Youngsters – Young Entrepreneurs.“ It was Internet-based research, which mapped young entrepreneurship activities in target locations and gathers information about potential youngsters who want to start with entrepreneurship.

“Youth Democracy project Life, Media and Participation- Youth in Baltic Sea Region!”

Project is held by UBC Commission on Youth Issues, UBC Commission on Education participates as a partner. It is about Youth democracy education in youth council.

Erken Laboratory Research School 2012

The main objective of the Research School is to let the students work with scientific research. Students from UBC cities, namely Pärnu, Šiauliai, Gdańsk, Norrtälje, Kärdla and Riga participated.

Business Day and Youth Conference in Kärdla

On 3-5 October 2012 Business Day and Youth Conference was held in Kärdla organized in association with Kärdla Town Government, Foundation Tuuru, Counselling Centre „HUPS“, B7 Baltic Islands Network and Hiiumaa Cooperation Network. Participating member cities – Tallinn, Rakvere, Sillamäe, Tartu, Kärdla, Visby, Kuressaare.

“Smart Youth 2013” and electronic handbook for creative industry of young people

The Commission planned a youth entrepreneurship project “Smart Youth 2013”. The aim was to develop product that is usable daily. Project started on 1 February but there was low interest of member cities. The Commission cancelled the competition and replaced it with electronic handbook for creative industry of young people.

Youth project between different schools

The Commission applied for money for a new project between different schools, called Nature Network. The project was approved.

“Youth Democracy project Life, Media and Participation- Youth in Baltic Sea Region!”

This project is held by UBC Commission on Youth Issues. The Commission on Education participates as a partner.

Commission on Energy

Meetings

On 9-11 May 2012 a joint commission meeting of the Commissions on Energy, Environment, Transport and Urban Planning was held in Halmstad. The theme of the meeting was “Re-vitalize the city for sustainability”. It gathered over 80 participants from 30 cities.

On 10-12 April 2013 in Tallinn, Estonia, the next joint commission meeting was arranged. The commissions on Energy, Environment and Transport joined forces. The theme was “Saving energy and the environment through sustainable transport solutions”. Over 80 participants took part.

Cooperation with other organizations

Baltic Development Forum and the Nordic Council

Before the UN Climate Conference, COP15, in Copenhagen 2009, a cooperation was started within Joint Energy and Climate Platform of the BSR Organisations. The cooperation with Baltic Development Forum and the Nordic Council resulted in e.g. a project in the Kaliningrad region. Eva Hjalmered acted both moderator and speaker at the III International Energy Conference in Kaliningrad on 1-2 November 2012. She was invited to be one of the speakers at the "St. Petersburg Gas Forum" on 5-6 June 2012 and at the "BDF Summit 2012" in Copenhagen.

Projects

LED – Light in Public Space

3 year long project (2009-2012) in the South Baltic Region Programme. Cooperation between 15 partners to investigate the possibilities to convert to LED-lighting in public space. Partners from the UBC: Oskarshamn, Kalmar, Wismar, Rostock, Gdynia, Gdańsk and Klaipėda.

ITEST (Increased Total Efficiency in Sewage Treatment)

3 year long project (2010-2012), prolonged to 2014 in Life+. Sewage treatment project looking at the possibilities of remove Nitrogen and Phosphorous from the sewage.

EEMTE (Energy Efficiency in Municipality – Training and Exchange of experience)

A sub-project to the Interreg IVC-project EnercitEE. Cooperation between Oskarshamn and regions in Germany, France and Poland outside the UBC area.

RENSOL (Renewable Energy Solutions)

A triple-helix project in the EU-programme Non State Actors and Local Authorities Programme for the Baltic Sea Region (within the framework of priorities of the Northern Dimension) during 2011-2014.

Bulletins

The Energy Commission buys a spread in each issue of the UBC Environmental Bulletin.

Other

The Commission was the administrator for UBC account at Adobe Connect. Several meetings were held, for example between commissions and among cities for a specific subject.

The Energy Commission was invited to write an article in the Baltic review of the Pan European Institute the fall of 2012.

In the project RENSOL a study visit was made to Sweden and Denmark. Oskarshamn was responsible for the Swedish part of the trip and chose to highlight the work in three of the Swedish UBC cities: Kalmar, Oskarshamn and Växjö.

Commission on Environment

The secretariat has been implementing the work with the cross-sectoral UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 approved in the General Conference in Kristiansand September 2009. The UBC EnvCom has been co-chaired by Ms Dace Liepnice from City of Liepāja and Mr Mikko Jokinen from City of Turku. The secretariat is located in the Baltic Sea House in the old centre of Turku. The basic resources provided by the host city and the UBC combined with the successful project funding have enabled the secretariat to carry on a strong coordination role with a staff of between 16 - 20 full-time professionals (Finnish-Swedish-Polish-Russian-German-Ukrainian-Danish).

Meetings

A joint UBC Commission meeting was held in Halmstad in May 2012, including UBC Commissions on Energy, Environment, Urban Planning and Transport with appr. 85 participants. In 2013 a joint Commission meeting (UBC Commissions on Environment, Energy and Transport) was held in April 2013 focusing on "Saving energy and the environment through sustainable transport solutions". This Commission meeting met up with over 90 participants from all UBC member countries. In addition to these above mentioned meeting the UBC EnvCom has been facilitating many meetings and workshops within project frameworks or together with several cooperation partners.

Bulletin

Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin had the 1/2012 thematic edition on "Towards new city cooperation". The 2/2012 edition focused on "Green Growth" with the editorial written by EU Commissioner on Climate Ms Connie Hedegaard. The 1/2013 edition focused on "Sustainable Transport" and the editorial written by EU Vice-President and Commissioner for Transport Mr Siim Kallas. The UBC Good Practice Database is working to better serve and collect information, data, good practices. More than 650 Good Practice cases are already listed in the database (see www.ubcwheel.eu).

UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015

Many goals of the Action Programme have already been fulfilled. The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2010 – 2015 has started well and has already committed several projects with a total budget of approximately 44 MEUR. These projects provide an excellent framework of action to address the challenges in practice. In 2013 a follow-up survey is planned to take place as an obligation included in the UBC Sustainability Action Programme and UBC Strategy.

EUSBSR implementation

UBC EnvCom is involved in several Flagship Projects. The Flagship Projects PURE (PA1), PRESTO(PA1) and INNOSHIP (PA4) are among the most successful Flagship Project implementation of the EUSBSR. Furthermore the UBC EnvCom is a central partner of the Turku Process into a Horizontal Action of the EUSBSR. In addition UBC EnvCom has been involved in priority area 5 "To mitigate & adapt to climate change" and priority area 8.4 "Make the Baltic Sea an Eco-efficient region".

The PURE projects and the partners have managed to remove three HELCOM "hot-spots" from the HELCOM Hot-spot list (problem list).

Projects

Climate related projects: CHAMP, BaltCICA, NetCom, Nordlead project

Wastewater/eutrophication related projects: PURE Phosphorous Reduction in Baltic Cities, PRESTO

Maritime policy/development related projects: SNOOP project, INNOSHIP Project – Sustainable Ports and Cities, SmartComp

Sustainable transport related projects: NEW BRIDGES, ELTIS + ,Quest, Challenge, Civitas Dynamo

Russian coordination activities: Finnish-Russian neighborhood cooperation

Commission on Gender Equality

The Commission on Gender Equality has continued its work to promote and enhance gender equality work around the Baltic Sea. Gender equality is promoted by developing cooperative structures for networking and the exchange of experiences and practical knowledge.

Meetings

During 2012 two annual meetings of the Gender Equality Commission were held in Helsinki, Finland and in Brussels, Belgium. During the meeting in Helsinki a seminar on gender budgeting was held with politicians from the city Gender Equality Committee and the representatives of Finland's Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. During the meeting in Brussels the Commission discussed possible connections with the EU Strategy of the Baltic Sea Region. The meeting was partly held together with the "BSR Local Platform on Social Development project". One focus of the meeting was to discuss the future joint projects. In June 2012 the Commission took part in the Commission on Health and Social Affairs meeting in Vaasa, Finland to present the work and to increase cooperation between the Commissions and other member cities. In October 2012 the Commission took part in the Executive Board meeting in Koszalin, Poland to present the current and future work of the Gender Commission.

Two annual meetings of the Gender Equality Commission were held in 2013.

The joint Gender and Urban Planning Commission meeting was the first joint seminar between these commissions. The architects, city planners, landscape architects, infrastructure planners, researchers and academics met the gender equality officers, analysts. 18 cities and seven countries around the Baltic Sea were represented. The participants were divided in six groups with mixed competencies working with two different cases.

Women and men in the UBC 2013

During 2012 and 2013 the Commission has worked on the updated gender equality report "Women and men in the UBC 2013" based on the previous report in 2009. The new report is to be presented and distributed at the XI General Conference in Mariehamn and then to all cities in the UBC, other organizations working with gender equality and stakeholders of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. The report aims to work as a tool for other commissions in their work with gender equality and as a knowledge base for cities around the Baltic sea as it offers a framework that provides the basis for the development of gender equal societies.

Joint project proposal

The Commission together with the "BSR – Local Platform on Social Development", a project run by Umeå, has drafted a project proposal that has been sent in to the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility Secretariat to be reviewed. The Commission has also been in contact with the coordinator for priority area - Health within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region to introduce the Gender Equality Commission as an important network and platform and to discuss project ideas.

Commission on Health and Social Affairs

Meetings

Meeting of the UBC Commission, Vaasa, 5-6 June 2012

The meeting was devoted to the social welfare, health promotion and preventive actions in the UBC cities. 42 participants exchanged the experiences on how the cities deal with these issues and how the collaboration with external partners look like. Also, the future commission activities were discussed. Vaasa, together with the speakers from other cities and NDPHS provided excellent contributions.

Meeting of the UBC Commission, Tartu, 30-31 May 2013

On 29-31 May 2013 in Tartu, Estonia the annual meeting of the UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs was held under the leading title: "Ways to a community based system of social services for vulnerable groups. Social welfare of vulnerable groups in the Baltic Sea Region". There were 51 participants from 19 cities, namely from Tallinn, Rakvere, Sopot, Tukums, Klaipėda, Elbląg, Jyväskylä, Maardu, Narva, Naestved, Jõgeva, Vilnius, Elva, Kaunas, Malmö, Helsinki, Gdańsk, Tampere and Tartu.

Due to professional reasons Mr Wojciech Drozd will not be able to work as the chairman of the Commission any longer.

Commission on Local Safety

Meetings

The 4th Commission meeting took place on 20-21 October 2011 in Nacka. Representatives of nine UBC members took part (Botkyrka, Gdańsk, Karlstad, Nacka, Örebro, Tallinn, Turku and Vilnius) to discuss issues related to public safety, compare knowledge and gained experience.

The 5th Commission meeting held in May 2012, was organized by Tallinn Municipality. The following representatives from ten cities took part in that meeting: Tallinn; Örebro; Nacka; Karlstad; Gdańsk; Turku; Helsinki; Riga; Jelgava; Vilnius. The meeting was devoted to elderly and ways to ensure safety for older people.

The 6th meeting took place in Gdańsk on 5-7 September 2012 and was merged with International Congress of Active Mobility. Several topics were devoted for safety traffic on the streets and brought to the members of the Commission range of good solutions and examples on organizing safety traffic in the cities. The Chairman and two Vice-chairman were re-elected. There were seven participating cities: Nacka, Jelgava, Riga, Botkyrka, Vilnius, Karlstad, Gdańsk.

The third Congress of Active Mobility, attended by over 250 representatives from European countries, was devoted for popularization of different manners of active mobility and increasing safety traffic on the streets.

City of Jelgava organized the 7th Commission meeting that took place on 13-14 June 2013. The main topic was "Street violence – prevention and elimination". Representatives from ten cities participated this meeting: Jelgava, Riga, Vilnius, Liepāja, Gdańsk, Botkyrka, Nacka, Karlstad, Tallinn and Turku.

Exchange program

Based on experience from 2011, some UBC cities decided to carry on exchange program. During reported period three exchange programs were conducted:

Vilnius and Riga – November 2012 – totally 11 officers;

Vilnius and Tallinn – April, May 2013 – totally 8 officers;

Gdansk and Vilnius – September 2013 – totally 4 officers.

Safe and Cool competition

In the beginning of 2012 the Commission announced "SAFE & COOL" grant competition for the UBC member cities schools to award the initiatives aimed at promotion safety. Gimnazjum No. 16 from Gdańsk won the competition for the project: 'School – housing neighborhood = our safe home' and has been granted 2.000 EUR.

Joint activities with other UBC Commissions and other organizations

- The third Congress of Active Mobility
- European Crime Prevention Network project
- Initial cooperation with the Council of the Baltic Sea State Secretariat (CBSS) in order to take a lead of the Flagship Project within EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) under Priority Area Secure scheme.
- International Conference of Municipal Police on October 2012 in Riga, the main topic of this event was „Municipal Police – guaranty of the safe city”.
- European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS) Conference "Security, Democracy and Cities : The Future of Prevention", December 2012, Paris.

Commission on Sport

“Sport is cool” Campaign

In 2012 the Commission concluded the Campaign entitled “Sport is cool” whose objective was to prevent young people from being inactive in their free time. The Campaign’s main objective was to promote among young people sport as an interesting alternative to regular pastime and consequently to stimulate them to actively spend their free time. Within the “Sport is cool” Campaign the UBC Commission on Sport organised three grant sessions in 2010, 2011 and 2012

2011 UBC Commission on Sport Grant Session “Sport is cool”

“Sport is cool” grants were awarded for those projects which offered original ways of encouraging young people to pass actively their free time as well as propagated physical activity among them. Among the supported projects there were the below ones:

1. „Tourism on my doorstep”, Võru (Estonia)
2. “Cityport – Youth sport”, Kaliningrad (Russia)
3. “Bicycle Paths for Everyone”, Liepaja (Latvia)
4. “Catch the amber wave”, Klaipėda (Lithuania)

2012 UBC Commission on Sport Grant Session “Challenge the Water”

In 2012 the Commission announced „Challenge the Water” grant competition. The idea of the contest was not only to change the attitude of youngsters, by showing that doing sports could be attractive, fun and challenging, but also to promote sports that are connected with water, making young people discover advantages of living in the seaside. The best application proved to be the project from Chojnice, Poland – “The first sailing step” which was awarded a 5000 euro grant.

Cooperation with UBC Commissions and other organizations

The Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association – WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Health in the Baltic Region. It coordinates and promotes the goals of Healthy Cities operations in the region. Its aim is to improve public health through healthy diet and physical activity.

Senior Activity Centre in Gdynia – is involved in the work for the benefit of the elderly people, attempts to promote mental and physical activity among this age group.

UBC Commission on Youth Issues – being youth-oriented, the UBC Commission on Youth Issues has been approached by the Commission on Sport, and a closer cooperation started. Its main objective is to implement the “Sport is cool” Campaign and to reach as many young people from UBC member cities as possible.

Meetings

The Commission intends to organise its 2013 Annual Meeting in Kaliningrad in autumn 2013.

Website

The Commission regularly updates its website so that it contains topical information about the Commission, its actions and undertakings.

Commission on Tourism

Meetings

Meeting in Liepāja 2011

The Commission held its meeting on 6 October 2011 in Liepāja, simultaneously with XI UBC General Conference.

Meeting in Vilnius 2012

The annual meeting of the Commission took place in Vilnius, Lithuania on 29-31 March 2012. 20 CoT members, guests and observers were welcomed by Mr. Jaroslav Kaminski, Deputy Mayor of the City of Vilnius. Baltic Sea Region – Perfect Tourism Zone and two projects – AGORA 2.0 and „Enjoy South Baltic!” were presented.

Projects

Enjoy South Baltic!

ESB! is a new and innovatory cross-border project co-financed from European Development Funds within South Baltic Programme 2007-2013 implemented by partners from Poland, Lithuania and Germany. The role of CoT/KARR is to promote and disseminate information about the project.

Partners meeting in Rostock

Second ESB meeting took place in Rostock, on 5-7 February 2012. During this meeting the market research study results were presented.

AGORA 2.0

Project in a nutshell: Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 – 2013, Priority 4 Attractive & Competitive Cities And Regions, Duration 3 Years (Dec 2009 – Dec. 2012); 24 Partners From 9 BSR Countries + Associated Partners From Russia (Kaliningrad)

4th AGORA 2.0 Meeting took place in Stockholm on 29 September - 1 October 2011

5th AGORA 2.0 Project Meeting was held in Kaliningrad on 26-28 April 2012

CoT/KARR together with the National Foundation for Enterprise Culture in Gdynia and the Entrepreneurs' Association in Rostock Region, as partners in the project, carried out online research and prepared survey for internet users. Now CoT/KARR is working on the development of research results.

Baltic Culinary Route - enjoy Baltic Cuisine

The aims of the project:

- preparation of the final tourist product with the involvement of the UBC member cities;
- creation and promotion of the concept of "Baltic Cuisine";
- promotion of the Baltic Sea Region, its traditions, customs and current tourist offer

Commission on Transportation

Meetings

"Revitalize the city for sustainability" - Joint seminar of the UBC Commissions on Urban Planning, Environment, Energy and Transportation, 8-11 May 2012, Halmstad

The seminar focused on practical group work, as well as discussions and interesting presentations on this interdisciplinary topic.

Joint Seminar on Sustainable Transport solutions – Meeting of the Commissions on Transportation, Environment and Energy, 10-12 April 2013, Tallinn

The Commission arranged two speakers for one part of the programme, as well as elaborated the summary report from the Joint Commissions Meeting.

Bike to School Grant Competition 2011

In October 2011 the Commission on Transportation announced the results of the grant competition entitled "Bike to School" addressed to junior secondary schools, secondary schools or non-governmental organizations. The applying organizations had to prepare a project/programme concerning promotion of cycling on the way to school for young people aged 13-18. 13 grant applications were submitted from Jõhvi, Tallinn, Tartu, Võru, Jūrmala, Kaunas, Panevėžys, Šiauliai and Elbląg, Gdynia, Koszalin, Pruszcz Gdański, Ustka. The winning cities were: Tallinn and Koszalin.

Walk to School Grant Competition 2012

In September 2012 UBC Commission on Transportation has organized the Walk to School Grant Competition. Within the competition 7 grant applications were submitted (Rakvere, Võru, Kemi, Chojnice, Gdynia, Kaliningrad, Soederhamn). Out of these applications the international jury has chosen the winners: Võru, Rakvere and Gdynia.

European Road Safety Charter

Since 2009 the UBC has been a signatory of the European Road Safety Charter. The Commission on Transportation has been fulfilling 3-years' commitments resulting from the membership in this Charter.

Projects

The UBC Commission on Transportation supported the following projects: SEGMENT – Segmented Marketing for Energy Efficient Transport, ABC.MULTIMODAL project, ELMOS project, CIVITAS DYN@MO project. The Commission on Transportation assisted in dissemination of project activities on UBC TransCom website.

Conference : Trolleybus in a Modern City, 21-22 March 2013

The Commission actively supported organization of the conference: *Trolleybus in a Modern City* organised within the TROLLEY project in Gdynia on 21-22 March 2013.

UBC Commission on Transportation Website

The Commission's website is constantly updated. The website serves as a source of information which includes links to international organizations dealing with transport. The website provides its visitors with automatically updated EU transport news from EurActiv portal.

Commission on Urban Planning

Since autumn 2011 there have been no changes in the steering group. The members are: Mara Liepa-Zemesa from Riga, Marek Karzyński from Gdynia, Isabella Forsgren from Umeå and Niels-Peter Mohr from Aarhus (Chairman).

Meetings

Seminar in Halmstad, 9-11 May 2012, "Re-vitalize the city for sustainability"

The seminar in Halmstad was the 25th seminar in the history of the Commission on Urban Planning. The anniversary was celebrated together with the commissions on Energy, Transport and Environment, and in this way it was the first joint seminar. The seminar involved social, economic, environmental and architectural aspects of sustainable city development and raised questions on how to overcome physical and mental barriers in sustainable urban planning and how to create synergies between the sectors.

Seminar in Elblag, 1-3 October 2012, "Elblag City Centre 2040"

During the seminar different lectures were presented about the Elbląg way of the city reconstruction and its further steps were discussed. The participants learned about the reconstructions in Gdańsk, Rostock and Stralsund and the different philosophies through-out the decades.

Seminar in Umeå, 26-29 May 2013, "Building the Inclusive City"

The Umeå-seminar was a joint seminar with the Gender Equality Commission and had its focus on "city planning with gender equality and children's perspective.

The seminar focused on accessibility issues, children's perspective and gender equality perspectives. The seminar involved practical work, discussions and presentations illustrating good examples together with a bus tour to interesting places in Umeå with a focus on gender equality and a child's perspective.

Seminar in Kolding, 15-18 September 2013, "Cities in Transformation"

Together with the Commission on Culture this seminar focused on "Creating potentials for City Life".

The seminar presented different methods to create potentials for change and new developments in the cities. The workshops focused on local challenges to bridge and connect very different areas in Kolding, trying to enhance their individual identity and make them part of the living city – creating potentials for city life.

Commission on Youth Issues

City of Tallinn has been a Chair of the Commission on Youth Issues since 2008. Since April 2011 the Chairman of the Commission has been Mr Mihhail Kõlvart who is the Deputy Mayor of Tallinn. The Vice Chair cities are Gävle and Turku. The secretariat of the Commission is located in Tallinn.

Meetings

Commission meeting in Kemi 21-23 February 2012

28 people from 14 cities attended the meeting. Marianne Anttila and Ilona-Evelyn Rannala opened the meeting. UBC Commission on Sport representative Joanna Lehman also actively took part of the meeting.

Commission meeting in Gdynia 29 October- 1 November 2012

27 people from 12 different cities participated the meeting. Fair of Good Ideas and Practice “Youth work structure of your city” and “Tolerance and intergenerational dialogue” were held to encourage cities to develop their systems, learn from other experiences, good examples and possibilities.

Commission meeting in Gävle 2-5 April 2013

35 participants from 12 different cities participated the meeting in Gävle. The workshop was held about youth unemployment from a different perspective to understand youngsters situation better.

Other activities

In 2011-2013 Gävle, Kotka, Guldborgsund and Jyväskylä have officially joined the Commission (by signing Letter of Intent) . There have been 17 different cities from 9 countries participating in Commission’s work actively and regularly during the period 2011-2013.

The COIY representatives participated in evaluating UBC Commission on Sport Challenge the Water! Grant Competition. CoYI has had three planning meetings for Mariehamn conference: one in Turku and two in Mariehamn. CultHus from Guldborgsund Nykøbing has supported a lot with writing projects and has been very active in Commission.

The Commission has been actively informing about its work in UBC Bulletin regularly.

Project „Life, Media and Participation – Youth in Baltic Sea Region“

Duration: 01.03.2012- 31.08.2013

The main themes of the project were lifestyles, subcultures and attitudes in democratic processes and how does democratic life work in different cities and countries and how can we influence it.

The concept of how to plan youth democracy campaigns foresees round-table discussions with politicians to exchange experiences between youngsters and decision-makers on participation processes in their municipalities. The start-up of these discussions was joint international workshop/seminar. The seminar was held on 20-24 September 2012 in Tallinn and Kloogaranna.

Information spreading

Commission on Youth Issues has updated web-page www.ubc-youth.org and has account in Facebook CoYI – Commission on Youth Issues. Also a Youtube channel has been made – UBC Commission on Youth Issues (<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCujLjtqmKPP07cjU0YNiQ7g>)

Baltic Cities Bulletin

The Baltic Cities Bulletin published by the UBC Secretariat provides information about the work of the Union and news from the member cities. Moreover, an emphasis is put on covering some specific fields of general interest which are presented as main themes of each issue. The bulletin is printed ca. 4000 copies and sent out to over 200 Baltic cities as well as to the number of Baltic and European organizations and institutions including the EU. The bulletin is also available on the internet at <http://www.ubc.net/publications>

In the last period the following issues have been published: “Making the Baltic Sea cities safer”, “Welfare and health promotion”, “Youth prospects and participation”, “Education through culture”. UBC Cities Events Calendar 2012 was issued in both a paper and an electronic versions. 2013 edition is available online at <http://www.ubc.net/calendar>

The UBC website and Facebook profile have been updated regularly.