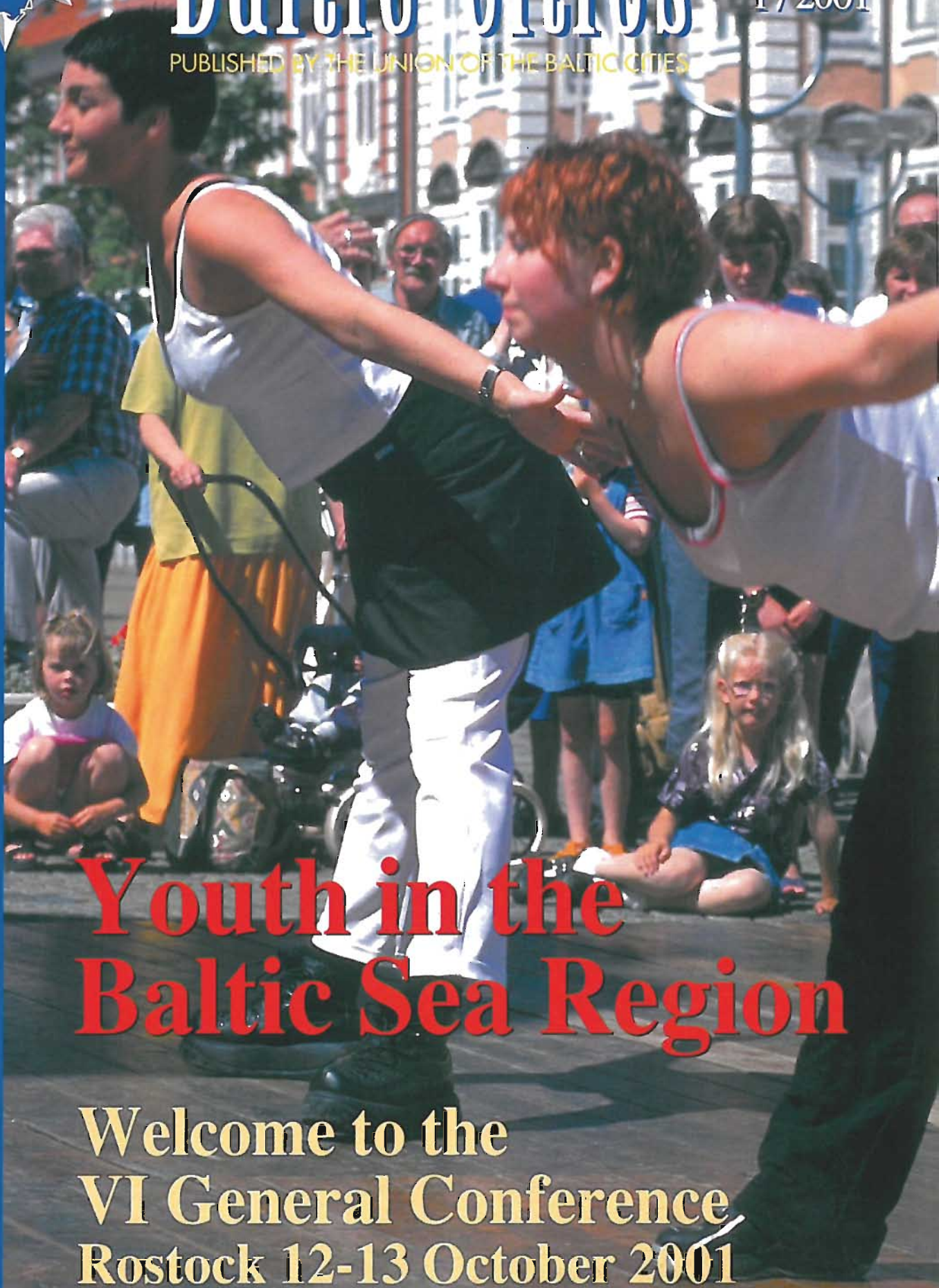




Baltic Cities Bulletin

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Youth in the Baltic Sea Region

Welcome to the
VI General Conference
Rostock 12-13 October 2001

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Paweł Żaboklicki

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Risto Veivo
Ewa Kurjata
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*

PUBLISHER

Union of the Baltic Cities
Secretariat
Waty Jagiellońskie 1
PL-80853 Gdańsk
POLAND
tel. +48 58 3010917
fax +48 58 3017637
e-mail: info@ubc.net
www.ubc.net
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PROOF-READING

Ewa Kurjata

*

NEXT ISSUE

Material for the next issue
must be sent by
7 September 2001

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COVER PICTURE

Summer entertainment
on Søndergade – the main
street in Horsens
photo by
Henrik Winther-Olsen

* * * *

Baltic Cities Bulletin



Dear friends,

An important task for UBC in the future is to involve youth and the young generation more in our organisation. I believe that a major problem for our cities is the lack of engagement of youth in city politics. However, I do not believe this is a sign of lack of interest from the young persons. On the contrary, the young generation is deeply engaged in issues of future, for example environment and sustainable development. The problem is to give space for the young generation and adapt the policies of cities to the needs and interests to their needs. I do think that the present issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin will give an overview of what is happening in this field in the UBC member cities!

The enlargement process has proceeded during the Swedish EU presidency. People in Brussels are optimistic, even if the hardest chapters are far from solved, for example agriculture. Many leaders from the applicant countries, on the other hand, are pessimistic because of the problems of agreeing on a date for the accession. One more worrying aspect is the falling popular support for EU membership. In some applicant countries the EU sceptics even have a majority among the voters.

One reason for this is the great distance between the ordinary people and the officials and politicians who are actively engaged in the issue. The UBC Board Meeting in Cēsis therefore adopted a resolution which was sent to the governments in the Baltic Sea Region and to the EU Commission. The main message was that the cities should be more involved in the enlargement process. The cities also need support in their work to prepare for the EU enlargement – today the cities are in general left to their own in this important process. After all, practically every aspect of city activity will be influenced very much of the enlargement.

We are approaching the next UBC General Conference in Rostock in October. The UBC general conferences are always an excellent opportunity to meet other cities and to discuss common matters. You are also very welcome to celebrate the 10th anniversary of UBC during the General Conference!

With Baltic Sea Greetings,

Anders Engström
UBC President

Kalmar, May 2001

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I. YOUTH IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUTH

AGENDA 21 Chapter 25:

“The youth comprise nearly 30 per cent of the world’s population. The involvement of today’s youth in environment and development decision-making and in the implementation of programmes is critical to the long-term success.”

Today’s young people are growing up in rapidly changing societies. Their attitude towards democracy, politics, social problems and everything that is connected with ‘the world of adults’ is very often different. The wall between those two worlds is not becoming smaller. Both worlds have different ways of thinking, different problems, usually don’t understand each other. It is much more difficult to encourage young person to work for the society and to co-operate with the society. What is more adults do not have any good idea how to solve the problem.

The problem of youth participation that touches all countries of the Baltic Sea Region, comes mostly from the relations between the youth and local authorities: the influence of youths on decision making process on the local level is very weak. Furthermore - usually there are no such relations. Decision-makers have more urgent problems, like new roads, social and urban problems. They are of the opinion that providing schools, medical and social care is enough also for youth. They also usually do not consider youth opinions, all in all they have better experience and power. Moreover, they do not have any legal duty to consult their decisions.

UBC, understanding the importance of youth in sustainable societies, made it their aim to help the member cities to change the situation, establish and develop the process of creation the conditions of participation and power for youth. UBC authorities will be opened for youth in nearest future. Creating of the UBC youth network and this bulletin is the beginning.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CITY - WHAT TO DO ?

The objective of youth participation must be that this group achieves real power in local society, both in the context of schools, local politics and voluntary organisations. It may sound obvious and some people can claim that that’s the way it is. Unfortunately it is very often not the fact. UBC’s survey sent to all member cities has shown the scale of problem.



Most of the cities have no youth policy, no youth council or Youth City Boards. Mainly the cities have no real will to change this situation - it is no use for them to treat youth as a partner. In Poland there is even no legal possibility to create youth city board as ‘an official body’. Of course, some municipalities do financially support many of youth activities but there is usually no real dialogue between them.

A growing feeling of powerlessness is spreading among young people. They want to participate and have an influence, make decisions and take the responsibility. What is strange, the fact is that the youth participation is not a problem of money - a lot of youth activities do not need the financial supports - only

some approval or institutionalised consultation and help from the municipality. It is easy to activate young people – if there is such a will.

As the result of such the attitude of the cities, young people do not want to participate actively in the lives of their societies because they do not feel welcomed. This is a vicious circle - adults think that youth do not want to take part in decision making, and youth is not taking part because adults are not helping and letting them to act.

This is not a good phenomenon – both groups become closed. The adults can not see the needs of the younger generation, the young get used to the passive attitude, do not want to influence on this what is happening around them. Such a situation causes in a way such social problems like drugs, alcohol, and crimes. This is a common truth, if the municipality does not invest in its youth, it will have to invest in the police and social help. And even if we do not go to extremes – youth is the future – and what will be a future if the future society will be so passive and dissociating themselves from the democratic system? Of course there are some solutions of this problem. The role of the city is just to choose the one that can be the best for their situation.

Society must be able to meet young peoples wish for influence and participation. This wish places demands first of all on the municipality and the political system, but also on the other authorities and institutions in the society that handle issues affecting the youth.

There is always good time to create a youth policy, to set an agreement between the local authorities and youth, good time to start the co-operation. This initiative may come from the grassroots but basically the municipality is the one that should make a first step.

But first of all, in order to achieve it, it is very important to start treating youth issues as a priority. Adults can not expect young people to take responsibility if at the same time young people do not feel that their views are being treated seriously.



As it was mentioned before - the city, heading to sustainable development, should create a youth policy - preferably as an official document, spread among young people in the city, document which is of course previously consulted with the interested side. This is a necessary basis that facilitates the following actions.

After starting the dialogue with youth there are a lot of initiatives that should be undertaken.

It is very important to emphasise the role of the school in the process. Student councils, students unions and other form for the influence on the school have the key function in the creating of the feeling of influence among the pupils. Participating in such bodies as well as in other voluntary, democratic associations

and organisations like scouting should be widely promoted. NGO's should be and mostly are the main field of getting a life and work experience for young people.

It is also very useful to create or help in the creation of youth council in the city, or a youth city board – this has a lot of positive effects. Participation in such a body makes it possible for youth opinions to be heard, teaches young people the rules of democracy. Last but not least, the youth city board is the basis for the closer co-operation between different young organisations and bodies within the municipality and as the examples show, can inactivate those organisations.

The co-operation should also have some more practical aspects. Especially having municipal officers responsible for

youth issues and activities in the city - people thinking like young people - is very helpful in the development of the youth policy. This process should be also co-financed by the municipality. As it was mentioned above, investing in youth activities now means fewer investments in the police and all social services tomorrow - it is really a very good business! Of course, such changes are not possible in one moment – the Rome was not built in a day - it is a long-term process. Nevertheless the municipalities must see the end of that way as soon as possible.

by Magda & Przemek Marchlewicz

City of Sopot

*e-mail: przemek_marchlewicz@wp.pl
magda@wp.pl*

EU WHITE PAPER ON THE YOUTH POLICY

What is a White Paper?

White papers are documents containing detailed and well argued proposals for Community action in a specific area. When a White Paper has been favourably received by the European Council of Ministers, it may become the action programme for the Union in the area concerned.

At present there is a process of creating a White Paper on Youth Policy, which means that we can expect a new EU policy in a foreseeable future. The Commission has indicated its will to acquire a genuine Community dimension and close co-operation with the local, regional and national authorities of the Member States. The White paper will cover the situation of young people and study their concerns and desires.

The Commission has insisted that the drawing up of the document should be done with a wide-ranging process of consultations which has been launched at all levels:

- with young people themselves through national meetings, European gathering and a Eurobarometer on young Europeans
- with national officials in the Youth field,
- with researchers,
- and with non-governmental organisations.

National Youth Meetings

There have been national youth conferences in all EU member states. The findings have been compiled in national reports. Participants were young people aged 15 to 25. The process was pushed

hard during the French Presidency in year 2000. The themes of discussion were Civil society incl. environment, economical structure and employment, well-being incl. health and suicide, youth autonomy (independence of parents, housing etc.), and Europe.

The national conferences resulted in an impressive large catalogue of opinions in all fields, like discrimination, labour market, education, internet, etc. There was a strong consensus in all consultation meetings – that this consultation process in itself is an important and interesting step towards stronger participation of young people in the European processes.

European gathering for Youths

On 16-17 March 2001, 135 delegates from Europe met in Umeå, Sweden to discuss conditions for young people in Europe. The meeting, which gathered young people, researchers, officials and the civil society from the EU, the EES/EFTA countries and the candidate countries, constitutes the final phase of a consultation process with the objective of drawing up the White Paper.

The two-day meeting included both plenary and workshop sessions. Ms Britta Lejon, Swedish Minister for the Youth Affairs, opened the meeting and was followed by representatives of young people, researchers, and the civil society addressing their respective participation in the White Paper process so far.

The Commission pointed out that the

White Paper has to be a living document and the starting point for a new debate on youth issues and for a new kind of co-operation at European level.

Some of the main conclusions from the working groups can be captured with the key words autonomy, participation and access:

- young people want to participate and be taken seriously;
- consultations with young people should be carried out also in the future;
- cross-sectoral system that allows for the sharing of good practices and knowledge in and between the local, regional, national and international level should be set up.

The White paper is expected to be finalised later this year. It is still theoretically possible to influence the process, even if it now is at a very late stage.

There is no legal base for the European Youth Policy yet. It is not part of any of the treaties that function as the legal basis of the co-operation in the Union. The White Paper may be a first step of creating such a policy. Even if the process so far has been set up by the Commission and the EU Commissioner Ms Vivian Reading, the voices of the young have been allowed to influence the coming White Paper in a very high and promising degree.

by Juhan Jamusson

UBC-EU Coordinator

e-mail: juhan@post.tele.dk



WHAT DOES YOUTHS' WORK MEAN ?

What are youth organisations doing?

Youth work is a separate field of education next to school and family. It offers young people free space needed for the development of their personality, which is not available to the same extent in school, family or on job.

What is the profit for the young people?

Youth organisations are self-organised representations of interest, which offer a platform to realise wishes and needs. Further, they give the opportunity for voluntary institutional learning and the development of abilities, to argue with young people at the same age and also with adults within the organisations. This fosters integration inside the organisations, but also emancipation outside. The voluntary engagement of the young people active in youth organisations is the foundation of their work. Through taking over general, often social tasks, the volunteer makes the issue to his personal one. This engagement offers a perfect opportunity to participate, also in creating society.

The right of the volunteers to get involved in all internal decisions of the organisation keeps them active. To live democracy within the organisation means to regularly start processes of agreement about specified and general aims of the organisation. This includes discussing traditions, objectives and their realisation between the members and member groups. These processes must become tradition and need to be constructive from the whole group and every single member needs to develop social competence.

Within the scope of what is offered by the youth organisations and statutory bodies involved in youth work, international youth work is a classic field of activity. European co-operation and integration is ever expanding, both in terms of the countries taking part and the intensity of their partnership. This stresses the need for regional co-operation within Europe and with its closest neighbours. Baltic Youth Forum – a loose co-operation between the national/regional youth councils in the Baltic Sea Region - aims at promoting and supporting regional co-operation in the youth field that

- bridges the gap between countries of different traditions,

- gives all partners mutual influence,
- co-ordinates mutual interests without tying its partners up (using the principle of consensus),
- is organised in a non-bureaucratic and flexible manner,
- opens up the European networks to all countries in Europe,
- gives youth a stronger voice towards European institutions.

What is the goal of youths work in the Baltic Sea Region?

The aim of the Baltic Sea youths' co-operation is to develop among young people a common regional identity and understanding of our common cultural heritage, while respecting the cultural diversity of the region, for improvement of young people's living conditions and development of their potential. The aim is also to promote an active participation of young people in the development of democratic and pluralistic civic societies in the States of the Baltic Sea Region.

What happened so far in the Baltic Sea Region in the field of networking?

Since March 1999 the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youths Affairs (see article further down) is connecting different actors in the field of international youth co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region:

Via the Secretariat the youth ministries in the Baltic Sea Region co-ordinate their work, exchange experience and develop a Baltic Sea youth policy.

10 national youth councils around the Baltic Sea are forming the Baltic Youth Forum. They organise the Baltic Sea Youth Project with youth group leader training courses, contact-forums and an exchange of multipliers for a more intense and qualified youth work in the Baltic Sea Region. More than 2.000 young people get in contact with each other through this project and receive informal education.

The programme YOUTH gives European funding to youth projects not only in the EU member states but also in the associated countries and to a certain extent in Russia. National Agencies in all the participating countries support youth organisation in their applications and initiate processes in the region.

International organisations like the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-

operation (BSSSC), the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) and UBC develop their own youth policies to improve the conditions for young people in the Baltic Sea Region.

Many projects start on a grassroots level and their organisers are regional authorities or any kinds of networks on top of the above-mentioned institutions. Within this category we can find different forums, festivals and assemblies. Networking organisations exist for the handicapped, minorities, youth centres, youth branches of political parties, for environmental, ecumenical, artistic and Internet activities. Seminars and work camps on social, ecological, musical topics take place every summer.

What do we need for the future co-operation?

National governments and political authorities in the Baltic Sea Region must recognise the importance of young people in the society and give young people in the region the opportunity to influence political decisions that affect them, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

National governments in the Baltic Sea Region must increase the exchange of information on youth policy issues in order to strengthen this policy area in the whole region.

Political authorities should especially support projects of co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region that are initiated and implemented by young people.

Young people must be seen as a resource, not as a problem. This must also be reflected in the area of youth policy.

- Youth should be considered as a partner, a valuable resource and potential for the social development as a whole.

- The governments are asked to pursue the youths policy with a comprehensive approach and to make youth issues a cross-sectional topic. In this context, "good practices" should be considered as examples.

- There is a need to create favourable framework conditions for multilateral co-operation between young people in the region. All actors involved must be committed to this objective.

by Ina Werner

e-mail: balticsea.youth@gmx.de



BALTIC SEA SECRETARIAT FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS

The idea of a project "Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs" is to create a new project job position for the duration of three years, which would be integrated into the already existing structure of the Baltic Youth Office at the Regional Youth Council of Schleswig-Holstein.

The overall goal-oriented objectives of the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs are founded in the commitment to serve as a centre or hub for information distribution and co-ordination for all forms of co-operation activities between youth policy structures, between governmental and non-governmental youth structures

as well as youth projects in the Baltic Sea region as defined in the objectives, priorities and actions adopted by the Visby Baltic Sea Youth Minister Conference.

The Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs will work closely together with other co-operation structures in Baltic Sea Region such as the Secretariat of the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Co-operation and the Secretariat of the Council of Baltic Sea States to promote all initiatives to keep youth questions on the agendas of these structures. Furthermore, it is the objective of the Secretariat to promote co-operation in

an all-European context and to help build up good working relationships with other European regions, e.g. Barents Sea and the Mediterranean.

Further information:

Ms Ina Werner
Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs
Holtenauer Str. 99
24105 Kiel, Germany
e-mail: balticsea.youth@gmx.de
www.balticsea.org



SEMINAR ON YOUTH WORK AND YOUTH POLICY

The seminar on Youth Work and Youth Policy was held at December 8-10, 2000 in Mözen, Germany.

The Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs at the Regional Youth Council of Schleswig-Holstein invited people from regional and local authorities in Baltic Sea Region working with youth issues. Each region/municipality was asked to send one person working with projects and exchanges and one responsible for youth policy.

Together they wanted to give actors in regional youth policy a forum to discuss and exchange experience and find common interests for future co-operation; to contribute to the Baltic Sea political structures like BSSSC and UBC and to help to create, support and get information

and Education, Marginalized Youth, Youth Exchange and Financing, Networks and Organisations. Three smaller working groups were formed which discussed in more detail the questions of 1) Youth Exchange and Financing 2) Networking, Organisations and Information and 3) Participation.

In the final plenary the participants agreed on the following steps:

1) A network of youth workers in the subregions of the Baltic Sea Region will be established. On top of that every country will nominate a national representative. These persons will provide their colleagues within the country with the information they get from the international level. BSSSC will co-ordinate this network with the support of

the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs.

2) The same will happen on local level. We agreed that there are different challenges existing on the local level. UBC might support the establishment of a network of the national representatives. But both networks of national representatives will co-operate.

3) The next BSSSC Conference (25.-27.10.2001 in Riga) will offer a workshop on youth co-operation. The idea is that the network of national representatives will prepare this workshop to secure that the content is hitting the needs of the regions.

4) The next UBC Conference (12.-14.10.2001) will focus on Social Affairs and include a workshop on youth issues.

5) Ideas and topics for next meetings:
- participation methods
- social politics (like crime prevention)
- Baltic Youth Survey (Kari Paakkunainen)

The members of the working group concluded that much more time must be spent on discussing youth policy on the local and regional levels. They suggest that this topic be the subject of a workshop at the next BSSSC-Conference in October 2001 in Riga.

the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs.

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A Reprimand to All

I pity those who do not see that we are the creators of a New World. I pity those who do not feel our power and do not see our desire to create and form this new future for us, our children and grandchildren.

Knowledge has nothing to do with age. One can go through a lifetime without having found out one single thing, which can make a difference, while another can come up with one idea after the other. It is important to listen to what others have to say instead of being stuck with your own ideas and not being able to move forward from there.

I pity them because they are missing out on a whole lot. They are missing out on listening to our ideas because they think, "they know better".

Us youngsters need to set a good example when we enter our youth organizations. We need to make the older politicians open their eyes and see us for what we are.

Too many older (and wiser?) people see politics as a ballgame. All you have to do is get the ball in the net to get more points for yourself and maybe your team; yet mostly it is about earning prestige for yourself!

If you score, you get the credit for it, although someone else might have done all of the work up until the very last minute. And this, I must say, is the most superficial and shallow way of getting

the job done! We need to go out there, do the job ourselves and make others see us for what we are; fighters!

Seeing politics as something you do for yourself is deeply wrong. Politics are about making things happen and making a difference for others and yourself. Do not ever do things to make yourself look good in the eyes of others, it will mostly have the opposite result.

That is also why we, as the new generation, need to learn from the older generation and take their ideas and analyze them before we throw them away, just as they can learn from us. We represent the youth of today, we make things happen, and it is us who have to live in the world they are about to create.

We have to make them listen, make them believe that we too have ideas and that we too are responsible people.

Be the way you are and bring your ideas to our New World. You, just as I am, are the flower of today's youth. Make your dreams come true. Make them listen!

Kristine Lund
Youth Council of Kolding
City of Kolding
Tel. +45 7930 1061
e-mail: ribn@kolding.dk
kanarieflugl@hotmail.com

Voices from the Youth Café Vessu at Kotka

Kotka "City by the sea": 56 000 inhabitants, app. 11 000 (7-25 years), 4 youth houses, 5 camp and outing areas, 100 sport associations, 25 youth associations

Pekka (16 ys): "We have services at Kotka enough except a real skiing place. One can survive here, only if you find a job."

Taija (14 ys): "There are too few places for youth at Kotka. Especially in the summer there should be arranged different events and happenings. Youngsters should be asked much more about their opinions."

Tuomas (16 ys): "I wish more action for young at Kotka. Living in here is anyway tolerable!"

Tiia (17 ys): "There are youth places enough here at Kotka, but too few happenings. We could have more working places and especially in the summer."

Essi (16 ys): "It's really nice to live at Kotka. There's always something to do, I never feel boaring. We have youth houses like Vessu and Otsola. I don't miss anything in here!"

Youth, Viljandi, Democracy

At the beginning, there was nothing. Then He created the pavement and the street lightening...Then He created the cars and buses and made them move.And He made parks and shopping centers. And He looked upon his work and he saw that it was good. And He called it Viljandi. Then He made a man and a woman to rule the place...

Well, the man and his wife have done quite a lot of work by now.Did I tell you that they were also told to go forth and multiply? Anywhay, they did. There are over 20 000 people living in Viljandi right now, over 3000 of which go to school. To teach all these children and to shelter them during a day, the man and the woman have built 6 kindergartens, 6 schools and a college.They have organized sportclubs, music schools, art clubs and so on....Recently, they have erected a youth centre to help the young people here to spend their leisure time rationally.I could tell you a lot of what these nice people have done, but my goal is to tell you a story about democracy.

Once, one of the many children, came to the man and asked:" Daddy, what is democracy?" The man thought and decided not to tell them, but explain by showing. At first, he took the boy to the kindergarten and showed little kids around a table. "What shall we do today?," asked the nurse. "LET'S PAINT!!!," shouted the children. And they painted... So, if the majority wants something and says so, it will be done! Then they went to a school. There they saw a group of young people sitting together and discussing some current school problems.In some time, the students reached a compromise about how to solve these problems.The next place they visited, was the town hall, where a session was being held. But no, it was not the town council. It was the Youth Council of Viljandi. At that moment they were discussing some details of the many programmes they took part in (the Hansa Youth, UBC, etc).

Well, if it's not clear yet, come to see for yourself. You will find Viljandi on every European map.

Liivi Parrest

Member of Viljandi Youth Council

I in my town - Riga

I'm a girl. I am 17 years old and I live in Riga. My name is Anita. These are words how I usually introduce myself to other people.

I can tell you a bit about myself and my hobbies. If I will tell you that my hobbie is sport you probably will think: "O! It is so boring and common place!". And that is why I will say that the sport I am going on with is tourism and climbing. In my opinion it is much more interesting than other, everyday sports. That way of sport means for me much. I am going on with it almost 4 years now. The best moments in that sport are: you can go on a hike whenever you want and always there will be somebody who will enjoy you, tourists are the best people in the world and it will never ever be boring with them. On more good thing is that I have found very good and loyal friends there. I like that my classmates usually are asking where I am going to go next weekend or have I got some competition.

I will tell about usual hike we have. At first all participants are meeting at one place. Very often the hike starts at 7 or 8 a.m. so people are sleepy, but all of them are full of enthusiasm even if it is raining outside. The hike is 2 or 3 days long and we carry out ~ 40km. It is time full of jokes and fun. When hike is finished nobody wants to go home. In the next training and even long time in the future the hiking participants are remembering and laughing. The place where the hike will be comitted we can choose by ourselves. It usually choosen near waters and different cultur objects.

One more interesting time is when we are going to the competition. There are no much tourists in Latvia if we are comparing with basketball players. So competitions every year are organised by the same clubs as previous.

So these are things I like to do most of all. By the way I have one more interest and it is youth club.

And now after you have read that article you can see what I'm doing and what kind of things youth in Riga are doing.

My e-mail is: anitux@hotmail.com



FRIENDSHIP ABOVE BORDERS

In 1997, students and teachers from Aalborg together with students from Bremenhaven and Kaliningrad, took part in exciting environmental camps organized by ECAT in Kaliningrad.

The camp was placed in Lesnoye, a little village in The National Park "Curonian Spit". Day by day we worked in mixed groups, and very soon students and teachers made friends with one another. Besides environmental issues we had a lot of social activities outdoors. We organised performances during which we introduced ourselves in songs, drama, etc.

The first Ecological Summer Camp ended up with the performance engaging all the participants as actors. We were all standing in a halfcircle - except a Russian girl - who was sitting on the floor with many lit candles in front of her. Another participant began to read a text by Joanna Macy. It was about all the animals who were in danger of extinction. Here is a little bit of the text which Natasha read to us:

"When Noah's time went to the end he prepared the list of the animals, too. We usually imagine how he stands near the ladder of the ship, calling the names of animals and deletes the names from the list. Today we delete them again.

Indian python
Howling monkey
Mountain lion
Grey wolf"

Each time an animal was mentioned in English it was repeated in Russian, German and Danish. And the girl on the floor put out a candle for each animal. A lot of invited people told us later that it

had been a really great experience.

The camp boss was Sasha, a wonderful man. He could make a lot of fun, but was also very serious about his job. Everyone - from the youngest to the oldest - loved



Sasha. And so did we. On the last evening when all the participants had been gathered by the bonfire, with songs, sausages and bread, he invited us to tea and cakes in his room. Suddenly Sasha made a touching speech for us. He had bought a little thing for each of us and said; "Even if you are Danes or Germans, and I am a Russian, we have made friends. I will never forget you. I love you." A special spirit and silence spread around in this little room. And we will never forget this.

Saying goodbye was hard. Sitting in the aeroplane one student said; "It is strange that after 1½ hours flight time - you are in

quite another culture!" After this first summer camp a lot of letters crossed the sea, because so many of the participants had made close friends. We wanted to improve our knowledge of the Russian people and hoped that a new Ecological summer camp would be arranged next year. And it really happened. We gathered a new group of young people. In fact we, the teachers, have been in Kaliningrad 4 times and hope to go there this year, too.

There is a big difference between Russia and Denmark. We have noticed that a lot of Russian young people are extremely hard-working. They know that it is very important for them to learn other languages.

We could tell many things about the Russians - among other things that they love to give presents to other people. And one thing many people could learn: they never give up. They always find a solution.

The National Park "Curonian Spit" is a wonderful place. The nature is beautiful. Let us hope that the Russians will follow their ideas not to spoil the forests and the coast with tourism at the spit. We have lost our hearts to this place and to the Russians. Visit "The National Park", and you will understand why we have found "Friendship across all borders".

It is really outstanding how young people from different countries meet each other and live together closely. Only then will they understand other people culture and manners.

Further information:
Niels Brusgaard and Hannah Jensen
City of Aalborg
e-mail: hajen@daks.dk
nbrus@daks.dk



YOUTH CLUB "DISKORS"

Nowadays life offers a lot of temptations and a lot of unknown. The youth is the one that suffers mostly of this problem. We could say that it's their own fault, that nobody forces them to use alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, etc. although it is also the responsibility of parents, the state and the society. Legislation does not restrict drug dealers. Statistic shows that young people are those who suffer from drug the most.

Seven young people founded an

alcohol and nicotine free youth club "Diskors". The main purpose of the organisation is to offer entertainment as well as other possibilities to spend free time in the clean environment. "Diskors" is going to offer educational events, possibilities to meet famous people (lectures, politicians, and actors) and performances of young musicians. The idea was supported by the local authorities and in the mass media.

To run a club is rather complicated but

it is not necessary to mention the value of such a youth club. That is why we want to stress more the initial stage, especially the process of formation which strongly reveals the need for friends and also financial support.

Further information:
Ms Ieva Malceniece
City of Cēsis
Tel. +371 412 10 19
e-mail: ieva@dome.apollo.lv



NEW PAGE - NEW FUTURE

In Bergen, like in many other cities, a growth of experimental drug use among juveniles have occurred in recent years. The department for Reach-out-work spotted these trends in the early 90's, and was able to quickly establish contact with the innovators in the new so-called "techno" subcultures.

Along with some well known DJ's the department started an information campaign "Stop the drug, not the dance", later renamed as "Future". The main task for "Future" is to initiate contact with juvenile groups as well as single individuals. The intention is to break down resistance against drug information, create an arena for reflection about drug use and be a guide for those who are willing to, or in need for help to establish a drug free life. One important aspect in this work is to educate juveniles for voluntary work for "Future" as the young people are best qualified to communicate with young people. Those voluntary workers are called "Dozerne". They go to

techno/trance/hiphop parties to spread information about drugs and drug use. "Dozerne" also work at Futures "Open house" where juveniles can come to better their skills in DJ'ing, breakdance or just having fun.

Another important task is information meetings in schools both with pupils and their parents. They have already achieved one important goal: it is now legitimate among juveniles in the risk zone to openly say no to drugs!

Another new project in Bergen is New Page. This project is designed to prevent criminal and violent behaviour among a group of juveniles. The project is based on a cooperation with the highest rated basketball club in Norway, Ulriken Eagles. Social workers are responsible for documentation of the juveniles personal background, upbringing and current situation, and for establishing contacts between the youngsters. The juveniles are connected with a high profiled basketball player who do the daily follow-up work.



That means that the basketball players visit the juveniles in school to motivate them, due to their status as idols. Another important task in this project is to keep the juveniles active in a positive way. The basket player do a lot of follow-up work in the juveniles leisure time, taking them to bowling, cinema, etc. The juveniles are also given the responsibility to function as guards at Ulriken Eagles home games in cooperation with professional guards. To map the juveniles skills, and get them to use their talents in a positive and constructive way are the projects main goals.

Further information:
Utekontakten
City of Bergen
Tel. +47 55 56 86 00
e-mail: utekontakten@bergen-kommune.telemax.no



YOUTH AND CHILDREN FRIENDLY TOWN

Bützow municipality is engaged in creating a family friendly town, especially by involving children and youths. Many projects have been initiated within the Local Agenda 21 process that began in 1997.

One important organ is the Youth Council. During the last three years the young members have organised special youth events, where they informed other youths about rules of local elections and invited local politicians. Another, already traditional, event is the annual "Youth Rock Night" with up-and-coming bands. The Youth Council initiates art exhibitions with drawings of pupils, theatre performances, contributes to local festivals and much more.

Also thanks to the Youth Council Bützow hosted the German campaign "Caravan for more children's friendliness". On September 10th, 2000 a big children's day with lots of attractions and great contributions of local associations was



celebrated. One highlight of that day was the "Children's Assembly" where children aged between 9 and 11 interviewed the mayor and two local politicians.

Youth clubs and schools are also involved in our Local Agenda 21 projects where pupils can choose different themes. During a project week one group analysed the traffic along frequented school ways. They recognised that there is a traffic light needed at a special crossing. As a result this light was built. In another school the children and youths bought an old transformer house and reconstructed it as an accommodation for little animals, e.g. bats and hedgehogs.

One children club integrated their children in the planning of a new playground. The municipality later built this playground following the children's wishes. All the youth clubs would be connected and participate in a new project "Local Youth Network". By internet technologies young inhabitants can communicate with each other and are informed about events and projects.

With all these projects Bützow wants to show perspectives for young people. They can take part and join in the local development. An example that they really want to do this, is the participation of a youth group in the UBC youth network "Youths Concerning a Sustainable Future" (YCSF) which met in Bützow in October last year.

Further information:
Mr Mathias Alsleben
City of Bützow
Tel. +49 384 6152272
e-mail: mathias.alsleben@t-online.de





TRAINING FOR YOUTH ORGANISATION LEADERS

Actually it was good that I learnt about my trip at short notice. Frankly speaking, I was fed up with the city. I was called a day before the trip 'Would I be on the waiting list?' I thought, 'No wonder, I have heard that there are plenty of people willing to take part in the training. Leading an organization is the topic of the training. Excellent, a useful thing not only for an NGO but also for my future work.' We all met at the railway station in Gdynia. Young people from different organizations, different corners of Poland. The bus we were to go by to Krynica Morska was far too big for 20 people. We saw most of the people for the first time, so we all preferred single seats away from other passengers. When we reached our destination, it was quite late. The trainers had already been waiting for us. 'They work in the Warsaw Foundation of Education for Democracy,' I recalled, 'it's good, I have heard a lot of good things about them' Already after dinner the activities started. At once great speed. Those who thought they had come to

spend the weekend lying about and relaxing were wrong. As I thought, get-together activities first. Actually I had already taken part in all those plays many times, but once again they turned out to be useful. We felt we were a team. Next day the reveille at 8 a.m. Very early. Then activities at once. And like this for four days. After all we had come to learn something. It's good activities were not a series of lectures. Actually all this time we spent on showing our abilities, while trainers only led discussions or exercises. On the bus back home we all sat together.

Results of the training? For sure I got to know a lot of new organizations whose existence I was not even aware of. And that was the main objective of the training. Integration of organizations, associations whose offer is addressed to young people.

Following a series of training for young leaders, Centre for Youth Co-operation



Here we are all together

and Mobility attempts to make it easier for Polish organisations to contact similar ones operating abroad. So, at the end of March representatives of European NGOs came to Gdynia on a study visit. They got to know their Polish equivalents.

Further information:

Mr Piotr Paciorek
City of Gdynia
Tel. +48 58 620 24 80
e-mail: cwm@cwm.org.pl



LIEPĀJA YOUTH CENTRE

On June 16, Liepāja Youth Centre – one of the municipal non-profit organizations – will celebrate its 5th anniversary. The Centre has been established as a bilateral project on the initiative and with the support of Nynāshamn.

At the beginning the main goals were to increase health status among young people through information about health and health-related issues with a focus on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention, relationships, raising self-esteem, giving psychological support.

During this project there had been organized exchanges of trainers/facilitators, teachers, youth volunteers, youth workers between the participating organizations from Liepāja, Nynāshamn and London Borough of Brent, which joined the project in 1997.

Also educational summer camps have been organized for young people from Latvia, Sweden and England. Social contacts, learning about cultural differences and a possibility to practice English language gave important contribution for the youth from the Centre.

One very important experience was participation in International Youth Conference in Brussels in 1997. It was a first step for the Centre of going into youth politics. This gave knowledge of youth after-school activities in Europe and gave a possibility to determine common problems and the differences.

The bilateral project between Nynāshamn and Liepāja ended in

autumn, 1999. However, Liepāja Youth Centre is still living and developing step by step – trying to take an active role in youth politics in the city. Liepāja Youth Centre, together with a non-governmental organization "Youth School of Democracy", is trying to establish youth organization network for non-governmental youth organizations to offer a bigger range of after-school activities in the city.

Since its opening Youth Centre has been a popular meeting place. Now due to the initiative of young people the centre has increased its activities and now it offers many different topics for lectures and discussions, support for youth in projects and it gives a possibility to join a youth club with discussion groups, workshops, psychological support groups, youth volunteer education, and other activities.

Liepāja Youth Centre and all other youth institutions in Liepāja city are open for an International cooperation and experience exchange.

Further information:

Mrs Linda Rozentale, Director
Liepāja Youth Centre
Tel. +371 34 81646
e-mail: lindaroze@yahoo.com



Participants of Liepāja Students Council's camp presenting self-painted T-shirts



YOUNG LEADERS

FORUM OF YOUNG LEADERS

One day, sitting in our scouting office, we realised that there is a lot of youth organisations at Sopot. Most of them are working individually and don't even know about their own existence. We decided to organize a conference and invite all youth NGO's and local authorities.

Together with about 20 different NGO's, we discussed possibilities and analysed the needs of young people in our town. The conference "Forum of Young Leaders" was a successful kick-off of youth co-operation. We realised that there are a lot of things to do with youth in our city and we want to change it. By acting together, we are more powerful, especially as the local authorities are open for co-operation. All this creates a favourable "environment" for youth.

A Youth City Council is being organized. The statute, giving relatively substantial powers to the Youth Council is almost ready. We are waiting for "political" decisions to be taken now but we are positive that our opinions and ideas will be taken under consideration. We know that it is just a first step to create the local youth policy and to make Sopot a municipality of young people. We have made the good climate and field for future co-operation between youth and municipal authorities.

Mr Przemek Marchlewicz
e-mail: przemek_marchlewicz@wp.pl

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

On 19-21 October 2000 a Baltic Sea Youth Seminar on "Intercultural Learning"

was held in Kiel. The primary goal of the conference was to study basic differences between the behavioural patterns of young people of different nationalities. Soon after the first workshops, the conference became a lesson of tolerance, a guide how one must battle his stereotypical impressions and prejudices! This had an immensely positive affect on participants and was a clear stimulus to going deeper into the problem. We had managed to identify our bias but we couldn't come up with the solutions. Soon, however even this had been tackled. I am sure that participants of the seminar had been filled with drive and vigour and will act against stereotypical thinking in the not only nearby future!

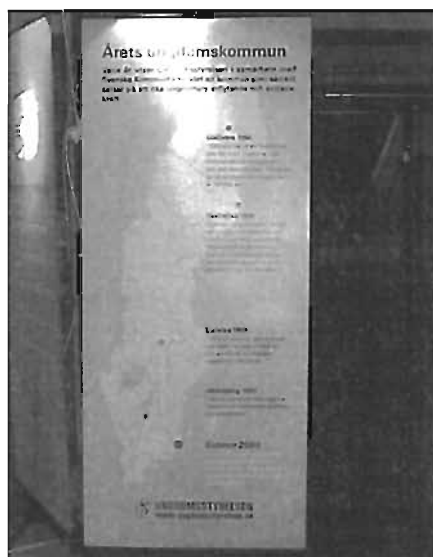
Mr Jan Jędrzejowicz
Polish Guiding and Scouting
Organisation, City of Sopot



YOUTH CITY OF THE YEAR 2000 IN SWEDEN

Since 1996 the city of Kalmar has run a large-scale project with the aim to increase the input and influence of young people in the city. On the 23 November 2000 Kalmar received the distinguished award "Youth city of the year". Kalmar was nominated for its relentless efforts in taking heed of the opinions of the youth and for its engagement and experience in city development. Also commendable are the long-term youth projects.

The project "Kalmar in focus – the perspectives of children and youths" is about creating a new dimension within the youth policy based upon reports taken from the UN Child Convention and Agenda 21. The influence of youths, their experiences and perspectives are both important and needed by adults. The increased influence of youths has become an important focal point and a natural step in the development of the city. Decisions will be addressed from a child's and youth's perspective, children and youth's will be able to take part in the decision making process. An important part of this project has been creating channels and outlets to enable children and youth's to voice their opinions and questions concerning political agendas. Today we work with several different "reference groups" following up with yearly studies aimed at providing a detailed picture of



children's and youth's opinions and perceptions of their city. We maintain that there aren't really any specific guidelines concerning the influence of children and youth within political agendas. As a result of this we are going to introduce youth perspective policy in all sections of the municipality organisation. We have drawn up a checklist that will be used in connection with decision-making within all sections of the municipality organisation and relevant political bodies. Trusts and companies in the municipality will help set up both the long term and short-term goals for the project and

educate their staff in all aspects of the UN Child Convention. As a follow-up measure all aspects of the project will be included in the city annual report. A number of youth projects have been run over years. One of these examples is "The House" a youth centre which operates as a central body for arts, recreation investments and activities and is run by youths for youths. Kalmar is also involved in a project - "Youth concerning a sustainable future".

In Sweden there is talk of democracy being in a state of crisis primarily due to a lack of party political interest amongst youth. The average age in committees and organisations is increasing and the number of youth actively voting, decreasing. I don't believe that the youth of today are less interested in politics than previous generations; I do however believe that the democratic structures have yet to be developed at the same pace as society. Many of today's youth seek other ways to voice their opinions, instead of traditional ways and as a result of this it is important to continue to develop "Kalmar in focus – the perspectives of children and youths".

Further information:
Mr Pär Israelsson
Youth advisor
City of Kalmar
e-mail: par.israelsson@kalmar.se



WHO ARE THOSE YOUNG VOLUNTEERS ?



They are happy, open and free people, participating with great desire in the programmes of Spiritual Guidance Centre for Youth (DPJC). They find themselves in one of DPJC's programmes:

Operation Snowball volunteers, during weekend camps at schools, present topics on the dangers of alcohol and all other substance abuse to their health and their social and emotional development. The volunteers discuss with other teenagers, teach them how to develop their self-esteem and how to say "no", show that one can have fun without substances.

In "**The Snail**" programme, after

screening, volunteers go through 4 months of training, become youth leaders and begin working with children from disadvantaged family backgrounds at summer camps. The volunteers in training, develop their relationship skills, learn about the child's psychology and take part in seminars. At the camps, youth leaders assist

children. The average ratio is one leader for 4-5 children. Together they play sports, games, and learn social skills. In 2001 the volunteers continue in the expanded programme - daily activity centre for children having difficulties in school or at home.

The "**Teen Club**" is frequented by juvenile delinquents referred to by the local police. The leaders work with the younger teenagers in weekends throughout the year. During the summer and winter holidays they have camps. The older teenagers, come for individual work on Tuesdays to develop their social, job and life skills.

The **Youth-line** volunteer counsellors provide psychological, anonymous aid on-line, to those going through a crisis.

The **Natural Helpers** team runs weekend seminars for youth to develop their relationship skills and helping skills for their peers in their natural environment – school, university, work.

Home-bound elderly and handicapped persons are visited and helped by youth volunteers from the **Works of Mercy** programme.

Other programmes include: **Big Brothers/Sisters, The International Award, It Takes a Village to Raise a Child.**

Volunteers – innovative thinkers, who have new life skills and find happiness in knowing that one is needed. DPJC volunteers are very happy to share their new experiences.

Further information:

Mr Richard Liskauskas
City of Klaipėda
e-mail: dpjc@takas.lt



CHOOSING THE PUPILS COUNCIL

The 22nd of March 2000, was an important day for the pupils, who represented the basic and secondary schools' self-governments. They gathered together in Marijampolė Pupils creation centre. They were chosen to form Marijampolė Pupils Council.

Members of the Pupils Council are trying to solve school children's problems. One of the most important problems is drugs. Therefore we organised the conference "Schools without drugs" on the 1st of December. Mayor of the city, self-government's representatives, policemen, doctors, journalists, teachers and, of course, pupils were invited to this conference. The experience how to prevent drugs spreading was shared by Lithuania Pupils Parliament, Health Committee manager and chairman of Marijampolė Pupils Council. The conference participants came to conclusion that the reason why young people use drugs is their leisure

when they have too much of it and they are not involved in particular activities. The second reason is an access to drugs: the price is low and it is quite easy to get it. The third reason the participants would choose was their parents' attitude towards their children, which lacks some care and attention. The main reason is the following: there is no certain preventive program to stop drugs spreading prepared by the government of Lithuania. That is why the resolution was declared at the end of the conference. This resolution was presented to the representatives of self - government, schools, police and media.

We think that there are a lot of other problems between schoolchildren and we will try to solve them too!



Participants of the conference "Schools without drugs" working in groups

Further information:

Mr Vaidas Adomaskas
Vice-chairman of the Pupils Council
City of Marijampolė
Tel. +370 43 76172
e-mail: vaidasa@excite.com



INTEGRATION WORK

Since its historical establishment and developing as a “closed town”, Sillamäe used to have very special resources, thus there was industry, resulting in a special social regime in the former time. Due to a fast and highly developing industry during Soviet time there was shaped a very special population content: technical intellectuals, well educated engineers, teachers, doctors and many other specialists from different regions of Russia. Nowadays Sillamäe has the highest rate of non-Estonian people comparing to other Estonian cities.

These features make some special priorities in the field of youth work. There is quite much work done on the issues of integration. We are making our best to find new partners for youth work, establish new links and contacts between youth and organizations from different regions of Estonia. There are many projects providing exchanges of pupils of regular and vocational schools, we organize many different camps in several parts of Estonia, where besides formal Estonian language courses youngsters have perfect possibilities for informal communication.

Evaluating this study-visit both sides found that there are a lot of ways for further co-operation, and especially in the field of youth work.

The municipality has undertaken one more dimension in the youth work: prevention of drug addiction. A sudden increase in drug users, especially among youth, and HIV infected people raised a demand of a special program directed towards prevention of drug and developing better sport and healthy traditions.

There are many youth NGOs working in the town, that concern many different areas of social and youth work, such as ecology, social work, politics, education, sports, arts etc. The largest and the most active youth NGO is Organization on Support of Youth Initiatives – ESN, that involves hundreds young people into its' activities.

Further information:
Mr Aleksandr Bogens
City of Sillamäe
e-mail: lx_box@hotmail.com



SUMMER SCIENCE IN OUTOKUMPU OYJ

It seemed like it was going to be a perfect fooling-around-day. No rest for the weary, though the summer vacation had started only a week ago, but we had the honour and privilege to wake up at 7 a.m. and zoom through the city. Not to our usual senior high school. Our destination was Outokumpu's premises in the eastern fringe of Pori.

It is a well-known fact, at least here in Pori, that our senior high school, PSYL, is natural science-oriented in its curriculum.

Annually, some twenty students are approved to join the venerable group of natural scientists. The chosen few have special scientific courses of their own, concentrating on experiments and expeditions. Of course, they study the normal theoretical courses in physics, chemistry and biology, too.

Cooperation with the industry has given birth to many fruitful teamwork projects, including the ones with Outokumpu-group. In particular, the summer course was organized by Outokumpu Research Oy (ORC) which, as the name suggests, is a research institute working for the benefit of the whole Outokumpu-group. This collaboration is quite valuable, for Outokumpu is not only the major employer in Pori, but also a corporation of international magnitude. Thus it was able to provide us with resources unavailable to our school itself.

Thirteen hard-working senior high school students of PSYL took part in the course. Although it was mainly intended for second-year students, the majority of participants had yet to experience their second year of studying. In addition, the group included a few “non-scientists”, who also wished to gain some extra knowledge of physics and chemistry. All the time during the week we had the opportunity to work among the full-time workers of the ORC so we weren't left on our own.

The general idea of the course was to simulate the refining process of nickel. This was done in the very laboratories where the actual research takes place. The tests included were small-scale models of real processes and pieces of equipment used in Outokumpu Harjavalta Metals Oy. During the process we ground, strained, dissolved and analysed a nickel-rich stone substance. In other words, we started from ore and ended up having rather pure nickel, just like in the real process.



Students working together with ORC specialists

On the final day the assessment and assignment reports were given. Writing one is by no means a piece of cake, but fortunately we had already had some experience with them. The Outokumpu staff as well as the students and their teachers were very satisfied with the results of the course and are eager to carry on the tradition.

This is how Jenny Pyykkönen, one of the participants, felt after an extra one-week session of studying: “At first, I just went along out of curiosity. By Friday, though, I had found the course to be very educating.” The friendly staff and the food in Outokumpu were also very well-liked. In a nutshell, the practicality of the course was like a fresh spring breeze compared to the usual senior high school, in which the studies are often pretty isolated from the working life. We bet none of the participants would really have preferred fooling around.

Further information:
Perttu Heinilä & Luke Jäppinen
City of Pori
e-mail: ritva.kuusisto@pori.fi



THE CITY OF YOUTH

In Tartu for 100 000 citizens nearly 33 000 are young people. From them 16 000 are school children, 13 000 university students and 2000 studying at vocational schools. So we get about 50 000 youngsters, who besides family life, school and work wish to develop and experiment themselves.

The City Council's youth service supports youth initiation, and if necessary advises young people in their activities. Our goal is to make young people's needs, suggestions and opinions heard in city council and government, so that they could create favourable conditions for youth development and initiation.

The Council's youth service has worked for 6 years. It is one of the best working services in Estonia. The youth initiation and activity is increasing. Co-operation between different groups is working and hopefully the creation of Tartu Youth

Council will speed this trend, as now young people participate in city council financial support distributing process.

Youth festival "Pulss" which took place last summer, will be held also this year from 29-30 June. We wish that "Pulss" would become the no. 1 youth festival in Tartu. Very popular among youth is also the street rave party "Stretrave" in the end of August. This event has gathered different opinions among older people - from really negative to positive because of the style and loudness of the music, but we consider that one night a year it is permissible.

A new idea, which found support, was information fair "Start fever", which was organized by young people and offered information about possible free time activities in Tartu's clubs, sport schools, organizations. Youth department also organizes project management training

courses for young people, so that they could realize their good and interesting ideas.

Every summer there are several youngsters who have to spend their summer at town. A big event, which is coming this summer, is the project "Bears summer", which offers several training, competitions. With that we hope to prevent youth from drug and alcohol use.

There is much more to tell about Tartu youth activities, like a youth workers co-operation network. Therefore we leave our contact details and say "WELCOME" to all, who are interested in Tartu youth activities and want to co-operate with us.

Further information:

Ms Luule Press
City of Tartu
Tel/Fax +372 7 442 257
e-mail: Luule.Press@raad.tartu.ee



ADVENTURE WITH EUROPE

The School European Club was established in school-year 1998/1999. However, this year it has been at the peak of its activity.

The first Competition of Knowledge about European Union had been taken place on 19 September 2000. The club had organised it under the aegis of Chojnice's Mayor Mr Arseniusz Finster. The Club is going to organise the second edition of that competition on 10-11 September 2001.

Our members take part in various contests and achieve successes. For example: on February 2, 2001 in Cracow I was placed second in 1st All-Polish Competition of European Knowledge. It

was organised by 'Foundation for European Integration - European House'. One of the prizes was a trip - 'VIII Eurorejs' - by track of European institutions. It was an unusual experience for me, because I could see how it all worked.

The Club takes care of all students and organises lectures on European integration for everyone who is interested in it. The lecturers are mostly members of the club. It's a really good fun for all of us.

We also organised a lecture of Mr Leszek Zygnier who was talking about human rights. This lecturer teaches at Mikolaj Kopernik University in Toruń.



Competition about the knowledge on the EU

We can do something together and change the world for better!!

Further information:
Ms Karolina Dziubek
City of Chojnice
Tel. +48 52 3974927



ARENA FOR YOUTH

The youth workers have started with young people a project "Participating Arena". The goal is to get youngsters interested in participating in the municipal life and decision making, to prevent drinking alcohol, using drugs. And the methods are:

- training so called supervisors among youngsters,
- supervisors supporting other youngsters f.ex in school problems,
- giving chances to the young to arrange

events,

- supervisors get to know different support systems for young in Kotka

The project has been given a national award for its goal "From young to young". All activities around the project will continue until 31st May 2002. The municipal youth office of Kotka, the regional parish and two schools are involved with the project.

The Youth Forum on the 3rd May 2001
In May the youngsters of the project

have invited all politicians from town council and different boards and the officials to answer to their questions according young people living conditions in Kotka. The subjects will be schools, housing question, employment and leisure time services. Maybe it will be a tough task for politicians to find answers satisfying young!

Further information:
Ms Helena Kempas
City of Kotka
e-mail: helena.kempas@kotka.fi



PSYCHOLOGICAL CREATIVE YOUTH CENTRE

The Psychological Creative Youth Centre (PCYC) is the most popular youth organization in Šiauliai. The PCYC, a non-profit organization registered in 1997, is active in the sphere of education among youth. Psychological and creative activities take place in the Daily centre. The Daily centre for teenagers was founded in 1998. The youth prepare different projects financed by the Lithuanian and foreign funds. Teachers, artists, psychologists, social workers also work in PCYC.



PCYC is the most popular youth organisation in Šiauliai

Over 230 young people take part in the centre's activities. projects are prepared and coordinated by the founders, specialists and the Youth Council consisting of 18 young people above the age of 18.

The organisation's mission is to provide the youth with psychological assistance, through a wide range of programs, and to educate mature, creative personalities. The aims of PCYC are:

- prevention of psychological crises and suicides;
- psychological and social assistance to the youth;
- development of creative self-expression;
- organization of creative free time;
- education of young people.

Some of the PCYC programs are: "Youth line", "Daily Centre", psychological and creative group activities, "Youth post", creative meetings with artists, seminars on psychological education, individual psychological consultations, leisure time clubs and discussion evenings, radio and TV programs "Our time".

"Youth line" is an psychological on-line assistance. Šiauliai's Youth Line is a real member of the Lithuanian Association of Psychological on-line assistance. Volunteers not only consult but associate with other organizations, and take part in courses organized for them.

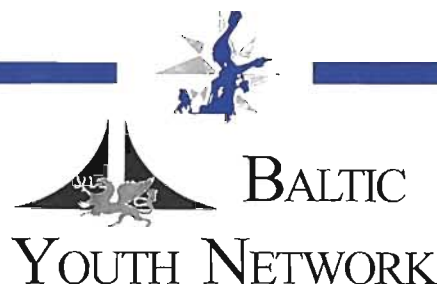
"The Daily Centre" works with teenagers from families in need of social assistance. Free time activities are as follows: training, corrective behaviour, creative activities. Social assistance is

provided as well. Their leaders prepare psychological and creative activities for young people. All young people from our city can take part in the following groups:

- Psycho-gymnastics (self-regulation, mental and physical exercises);
- Drama studio (the art of acting, performances);
- Art studio (creative self-expression in art, improvisation);
- Poetic thinking (interpretation of texts);
- Communication techniques (more effective communication way, dialogues);
- Poetry and drama lovers (analysis of the works, presentation to the audience);
- Fluent speech (the art of public speaking, stage improvisation);
- Know yourself ("I" and my life, choice, wishes, the meaning of the life).

PCYC collaborates with Šiauliai Children Clinics, Mental Hospital, Health Education Centre, Children House, Police Station, Children Rights Protection Bureau, Youth Psychological Help Centre in Vilnius, Psychological and Social Help Fund in Vilnius, Kursenai Youth Centre, Psychological Consulting Centre in Denmark.

Further information:
City of Šiauliai
Tel/Fax + 370 1 520 850
e-mail: pkjcentras@hotmail.com
www.geocities.com/pkjcentras



In 1997 a group of young people in Rostock was established to develop a new source of information and a possibility for communication through connections with schools. Because the eight young people live in different cities they needed the Internet for their work anyway and developed this instrument to the concept of their project.

They want to offer a forum in the Internet for young people to get in contact with each other, to solve together problems with homework, to find information relevant for school in on-line libraries and to just talk about music and soccer.

At the Pax Baltica Teenager Symposium in 1998 in Karlskrona, Sweden, they decided to co-operate with the other young people from the whole BSR. The on-line server – still in the phase of development – should be completed by information about the Baltic States and Belarus, and of course also be open for young people in this region. So the project – since 1999 with the name Baltic Youth Network – changed from a regional school network to a European Youth Podium and Info-Service on topics like school, spare time and more about politics.

Since this time the eight members of the group work on the online service. Many programmes (e.g. the connection of articles and composition to the database) must be programmed by the young people themselves, so sponsors and authors must be found. For this reasons Baltic Youth Network became a registered NGO in spring 2000.

In a few weeks the technical preparation will be finished. Then web sites have to be designed, editorial staff has to be organised, information must be collected and advertisement must be started. The Baltic Youth Network is looking for volunteers to support the eight young.

Further information:
Mr Tilman Schubert
Mr Matthias Zarach
City of Rostock
e-mail: byn@zachrau.de





CHILDREN PARLIAMENT

A decreasing number of citizens participating in the election shows that there is a need of taking special efforts to prove the importance of democratic procedures, specially, young people participation. Their knowledge of mechanisms governing the decision-making on administrative levels is low.

In 1999 the *Initiative group*, consisting of Association of Lithuanian Pupils, Union of School Children of Lithuania, Association of Organising Leisure for Children and Youth and Centre of Civic was established. *The partners of the project* are the Parliament of Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Education and Science, Chief Election Commission, Lithuanian National Group of ELSA.

The Parliament of School Children of Lithuania is an institution, which unites pupils. Universal elections to the Parliament were held in 700 primary and secondary schools on 24 March 2000.

The main functions of the Parliament of Pupils are as follows:

- to represent the interests of school children in Lithuania;
- to analyse the laws significant to school children;

- to prepare and provide draft regulations, and their amendments for the Lithuanian Parliament,

- to consider the actual pupils' problems.

Within the project 56 seminars were organised in the cities. Over 900 school representatives participated, and then organized elections in their schools. It is expected that elections to the Parliament will contribute to strengthening performance of local and social pupils' organisations that will be able to influence the decisions of Lithuanian Parliament.

The Parliament of School Children of Lithuania, especially democratic elections, has an educational significance. It promotes the civic education, develops practical skills preparing to active participation in the social life. The Parliament of Lithuanian Pupils provides an excellent opportunity for the society to hear about the actual youth problems.

Further information:
 Mr Girvydas Duoblys
 Civic Initiatives Centre
 City of Vilnius
 Tel. + 370 2 22 44 18
 e-mail: Girvydas@post.omnitel.net



YOUTH AGAINST AIDS

An association "Youth against AIDS" was established in December 1997 and registered in 1998.

Its main objective is to be an informative body dealing with youth and society at reproductive age. The association leads the instructing work about HIV/AIDS, STD (sexual transmitting diseases) and its prophylactics in order to help to limit the spreading of those diseases. We talk about the sexual education and family planning work not only with youth but also with risk groups like "street children" or parents and teachers.

Special activities that should be mentioned are active, regular informative-educational works at discotheque. The workers do there social questionnaires and distribute information materials. Within the "Discotheque project" questionnaires were prepared and evaluated. The representative of the YAA participated at Molin's conference about HIV/AIDS at Spain. They

participated also at radio "99½ formed broadcast "Me, You, He, She" with quiz questions about HIV/AIDS, STD and sexuality".

We have handed in project at Sorros Found competition about youth creative-educational summer camp for ethnical minorities, to help them integrate in Latvian environment and receive information of full value about youth sexual education and family planning, HIV/AIDS and STDs prophylactics. Our association co-operates also with a dealer of leading condom producer in Latvia.

We also prepare informative materials about youth sexual upbringing, STD prophylactics, family planning and reproductive health.

Further information:
 Ms Gita Gange
 City of Riga
 Tel. +371 372275
 e-mail: gita@latnet.lv



PREVENTION OF AIDS

During recent years Latvia has been facing a very topical problem – increasing number of young drug addicts. The surveys, done in Tukums town schools show that 30 % of pupils have tried narcotics. A number of people infected by HIV are increasing as well – in 1999 Tukums district had 8 recorded cases, in year 2000 – 16, thus Tukums takes 7th place in Latvia regarding the number of these patients.

One of the most often mentioned ways of getting infected is carrying virus with blood, shaking syringes and needles to get injections of narcotic stuff. To be aware to the intravenous narcotic users and to diminish getting infected with HIV/AIDS syringe exchange centres have been formed in Latvia.

As a result of joint cooperation between Tukums Town Council Social Department and AIDS prevention centre the first syringe exchange centre has been formed outside Riga. The centre provides not only exchange of used syringes to new ones 1:1 but also it offers consultation. HIV test analysis is being planned in future.

To inform the community about HIV and AIDS several events have been organized in Tukums. One of them was seminar for school teachers, social workers and other people interested in the problem with debates on the following themes: What is HIV/AIDS? What are narcotics, their classification. The possible help to a drug addict, AIDS patient.

On the World day of AIDS **youth club 10 x10** held a special event about HIV/AIDS during which young people were writing their answers to a letter of a young person infected with HIV, they also gave their opinion.

To promote a healthy approach to life the main task would be to inform young people about disastrous effect of narcotics. So we would be happy to receive information, suggestions how this work is done in other cities.

Further information:
 Ms Laila Dzalbe
 Head of Social Department
 City of Tukums
 e-mail: tukums@dome.apollo.lv



EVERYDAY SURROUNDING

This year we have started a project which is co-operation and knowledge exchange in the field of environmental education between Lahti and St. Petersburg. "The Everyday surroundings of young people" includes for example home, school, travelling, free time and friends. The target group in this project is young people between 13-20.



Two working groups of young people met in Lahti and St.Petersburg

The aim of the project is to get young people to describe their everyday life, experiences, their surroundings and feelings most important for them. They also can tell what does not satisfy them or what they want to change. To describe these different kind of ways can be used e.g. drawing, painting, drama, music, poetry, videos and models. That material should be seen next spring on an exhibition in Lahti and St. Petersburg. The message from the young will be delivered also to the decision-makers.

The partners in this project are Health Control and Environmental protection Centre; Environmental School and Youth Department in Lahti and Youth Creativity Home of Frunzensky district in St. Petersburg.

Two groups of 6-12 young people are going to be gathered in Lahti and in St.Petersburg. The groups and the leaders are going to work on everyday surroundings and exchange experiences and share information. The aim is to get the young people in Lahti to interact with the young people in St. Petersburg and to involve young people in the environmental issues. The group in Lahti is going to visit St. Petersburg in September and the group from St. Petersburg is going to re-visit Lahti in December. We are going to share information on methods used in the field of environmental education. We are also planning to produce new environmental education material for young people.

Further information:
Mrs Jaana Hiltunen
City of Lahti
Tel. +358 50 5594090
email: jaana.hiltunen@phnet.fi



YOUTH'S LESSONS IN PUBLIC

The main problem now is not to repeat the 'elder comrades' mistake and reduce all to empty chatter. There are nearly 320 youth organizations in St. Petersburg. Yet only few of them are really active. The most important problem for the majority of them is money - where to take it from and how to divide it.

There is an exemplary inter-regional social movement 'The Northwest', whose members took authority in their hands by participating in this year's municipal elections. Now, they can implement their own policy in some city districts. In all 111 municipal units the six million St. Petersburg Region 1000 of deputies were elected. While their average age was 50, only 30 persons in their late twenties won mandates and only two were younger than 25.

'Class governors will replace the former pioneer leaders. The main thing for them is not to forget to work, and to study.'

In the Moskovsky district the 'Council of learning youth' was elected. It will represent young people in the local governmental institutions. The Council consists of 26 schoolboys from all districts. With special deputy certificates, they can participate in sessions of the council and will have a 'parliamentary immunity'. They will also receive the right to free travel.

Apart from this, the 'Elections in a democratic society' course started in two district schools. Children elected own 'presidents' of schools, used actual documents by political parties and worked on Russian electoral legislation and laws. Older boys proposed candidates, formed groups of support and developed propaganda. The programs of those seeking place in school parliaments touched upon all problems significant to children. These were democratic control of school, educational process, progress evaluation, discipline, order, attitude towards the nature, etc.

Then, the 'Republic of School-land' in one of the district schools was created. Students invented their own 'Duma', president, and own 'cabinet of ministers'.. Each class elected a governor, responsible for organizing boy's participation in school's public life. Also 5 departments were organized: administration, sports, education, culture and information. The responsibilities of the governor and departments were approved on the meeting of a school дума, which develops defending pupils' rights.

Young readers will read only about what they are interested in and troubled by. So... they have to write themselves

A project was created with the oldest children's newspaper of Russia 'Five Corners'. Once a week a city specialist on the child's rights responds to problems of the juvenile readers.

Also, the 'Yunkors' (young journalists) appeared in the city's landscape. Beside myself, there are about 30-40 youngsters in the age of 13-18. All of them have a status of 'youth correspondents' and they try to combine their studies of journalism with some practical work. They edit their own two pages: one is dedicated to all sides of everyday school life and the second is on 'the teenagers in nature' - the inner life of teenagers, their problems with parents, friends, the loved ones, etc. The newspaper's motto is: "the newspaper, which helps youngsters to become adults, and adults to understand youngsters".

'The Yunkors' also actively participate in other activities related to school life, ecology, etc. They try to determine most vital topics of their life, sometimes unmask dishonest headmasters. Lastly, about 40 percents of articles in 'Five corners' are written by children and we also publishes children's letters. We have received over 5000 letters in 6 months—it's a real record.

Alexander Malkevich
City of St.Petersburg
Tel. +7 812 2742573
e-mail: malek@chance.ru



ADVENTURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

From the 9th to the 10th of June 2001 the City of Vaasa will for the second time be organizing a Nationwide Adventure Race for young people between 15 to 19 years of age. An International Adventure Race is being planned to take place in Vaasa next year.

The idea for the race was born from a need to offer meaningful activities for the weekends soon after schools break up for the summer, a period which has often proved to be very problematic. Our purpose was to find activities which would be meaningful and challenging enough to appeal to young people and motivate them to participate.

At the time the idea of the Adventure Race for young people was created people were more and more interested in looking for adventure and experience as a pastime activity and a way to keep fit. Also in Finland Adventure Races have already been organized for a few years and activities involving adventure and experience have been used as part of education since the beginning of the 90's. After these experiences it was only a question of time when the idea of the



Adventure Race for young people would see the daylight.

In June 2000 we organized the first race covering 100 kilometres. The race attracted a very heterogeneous group. Nine teams of 35 young people wandered in the woods and used the waterways of Vaasa and Mustasaari. The physical fitness of the participants was very varied. Some were students of the senior high school specializing in orienteering. They had exercised a lot. The other extreme consisted of young people who had had hardly any other exercise than occasional walks to school. All in all we were greatly surprised to see that of those 35 who started off 34 finished the race. The greatest surprise of all was the fact that even those who did not believe to make it actually did.

The race this year covers 120 kilometres and includes at least the following events: roller skating, orienteering/running, paddling, all terrain biking, water and climbing events. The race starts on Saturday morning at about 8 o'clock and breaks up for the night around 10 o'clock p.m. On Sunday the race goes on with the final 40 kilometres from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Considering the young age of the competitors special attention is paid to security.

Our aim this year just as in previous years is to give every participant a souvenir and a prize to take home. It is very important to notice every participant particularly when we want to suggest also in practice that the idea is not to win but participate and do one's best.

In short, during the second weekend in June there will again be a joyful meeting in Vaasa and everybody will be richer with these many experiences.

Further information:
Mr Pertti Viitala
City of Vaasa
e-mail: pertti.viitala@vaasa



AHTELA CENTRE



Ahtela is the name of a centre for youth camps and courses, owned by the local authorities in Turku. It is administrated by Turku City Youth Department, for the use of various youth organisations and groups. The surroundings of Ahtela cover an area of 44 hectares, including one kilometre of beaches and shores at the Baltic Sea.

We would like to invite you and your group for a visit to the youth centre Ahtela, which is situated in the beautiful surroundings of the Finnish archipelago. The centre caters for groups of all sizes and ages, and can accommodate 120 person in 7 different buildings. If we make use of the whole Ahtela area, we can host as many as 3,000 people. At Ahtela you can find grounds for various ball games, an exciting adventure trail, a varied orienteering course, and an outdoor stage for shows and performances of different kinds. You can combine water sports with

experiencing the Turku archipelago (often said to be the most beautiful in the world), enjoying the sea and the fabulous beach.

New winds blowing at Ahtela

As a result of contacts between the Ministries of Education in Finland and Estonia, we have a solid basis for co-operation with Estonia. A fresh breeze is sweeping in as the Turku Centre for Youth Affairs and the Estonian Youth Work Centre are planning a new sea route between their two youth camp centres. The objective is to sail from Ahtela to Klooga in Estonia and back, spending a few days in both countries. About 15-20 young people from each country will take part. Crossing the Gulf of Finland in this way is something entirely new, and adventure is in store for the young crew. We will see what other forms of cooperation will follow: perhaps it will be a hot air balloon flight next...

For the summer of 2001, we have other

common activities planned, as we are going to carry out voluntary maintenance work at both the youth camp centres for the second year in a row. Young people from the Turku workshops for unemployed youth, as well as their instructors, will visit Klooga in June, and in the autumn a group of young Estonians will arrive at Ahtela for some sweaty work, sanding and painting benches, but also for having fun.

We also have a camp exchange programme. The LIIKU camp in June will receive Estonian guests, and the handicraft camp in Klooga in July will, in turn, have participants from Finland. The participants at the handicraft camp will, among other things, make felt hats and work with clay.

Looking forward to seeing you at Ahtela!

Further information:
Ms Pirjo Lehtinen
Secretary for Youth
City of Turku
Tel. +358 2 262 3135
e-mail: pirjo.lehtinen@turku.fi



II. UBC TODAY

30TH EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN CĒSIS

The 30th meeting of the UBC Executive Board was held on the 16-17 March 2001 in Cēsis, Latvia, upon the invitation of Mr Janis Beikmanis, Mayor of Cēsis. The first part of the meeting was attended by the Members of the Board, the second part was open to all Member Cities.

Mr Engström informed that UBC Vice-President Eugenijus Gentvilas has become a Minister for Economics of Lithuania. The Board expressed sincere thanks to Mr Gentvilas for his outstanding contribution to the UBC work during last years and wished him a lot of success in his new challenging and responsible post.

EU enlargement

The situation today regarding the involvement of cities in the EU enlargement process is not satisfactory. The discussion is carried out almost entirely between the EU and the national governments. The Board issued a statement calling for the cities involvement in the EU enlargement processes. The paper shall be sent to the EU, CBSS, Ministries of Foreign Affairs of all Baltic Sea countries.

VI General Conference

Ms Petra Hamann, Rostock, introduced the preliminary programme of the conference. First day of the conference will be devoted to "Social justice in the new millennium". The second day of the conference - the General Assembly - is devoted to internal UBC matters such as reports, elections etc. The organisers succeeded to attract very important speakers eg. Ms Anna Diamantopoulou, EU Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs.

UBC 10th Anniversary

The Board expressed opinion that main anniversary celebrations should be held during the General Conference in Rostock. The arrangements could include for example: exhibition of photographs, culture events, etc. The President created a special working group responsible for the anniversary arrangements.

Finances

Mr Pawel Żaboklicki, Secretary General, submitted UBC financial report for 2000. Mr Żaboklicki underlined that all member cities but one paid their membership fees and the financial position of the Union is secure. Mr Żaboklicki also presented the adjusted version of UBC budget for the year 2001. The Board took note of the financial report for 2000 and adopted the adjusted budget for 2001.



A new Commission ?

City of St.Petersburg put forward a proposal to create the UBC Commission on Information Technology, as the IT is a strategic sector for the whole Baltic Sea region. The Board asked St.Petersburg to organise a conference to discuss the ways of UBC involvement in the IT sector. The Board requested member cities interested to participate in the working group on IT, to take a contact with St.Petersburg.

Information on ISPA

The Board invited to the meeting Mr Gunter Weiss, Head of EC delegation in Latvia, who introduced the new EU programme ISPA – Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession. ISPA is one of the EU's three financial assistance programmes set up to assist the 10 candidate countries in CEE to prepare for accession. Program supports infrastructure projects in the fields of transport and environment. ISPA's budget in the period 2000-2006 is 1.040 million Euro.

UBC LA21 Action Program

Mr Risto Veivo, UBC Environmental Coordinator, reminded that the UBC LA21 Action Program 2000-2002 was approved by the V General Conference in 1999. He stressed that the overall implementation of the program was successful. Mr Veivo said it is necessary to prepare a new program for 2002-2003. The Board authorised the Commission on Environment and the UBC LA21 WG to

start preparations on the new program.

Other matters

Representatives of the UBC Commissions submitted activity reports from the period June 2000 – February 2001. Most of the Commissions will have their annual meetings in the first half of 2001.

Mr Juhan Janusson, UBC EU Coordinator, informed that this year he had three national meetings about the Interreg III B, ie. in Tartu, Gdańsk and Cēsis. The next one shall be held in Šiauliai, right after the Board meeting. During these meetings cities from applicant countries discussed project proposals to Interreg III B.

Within the UBC-LVRLAC project the study tour in the BSR for 15 high-level city decision makers from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania is scheduled in April 2001. The representatives of LVRLAC will visit Stockholm, Nacka, Turku, Kalmar, Gdynia and Gdańsk. The study tour shall concentrate on environmental protection issues.

Next Meeting of the Executive Board shall be held in Malbork on 15-17 June 2001.

*by Pawel Żaboklicki
UBC Secretary General*

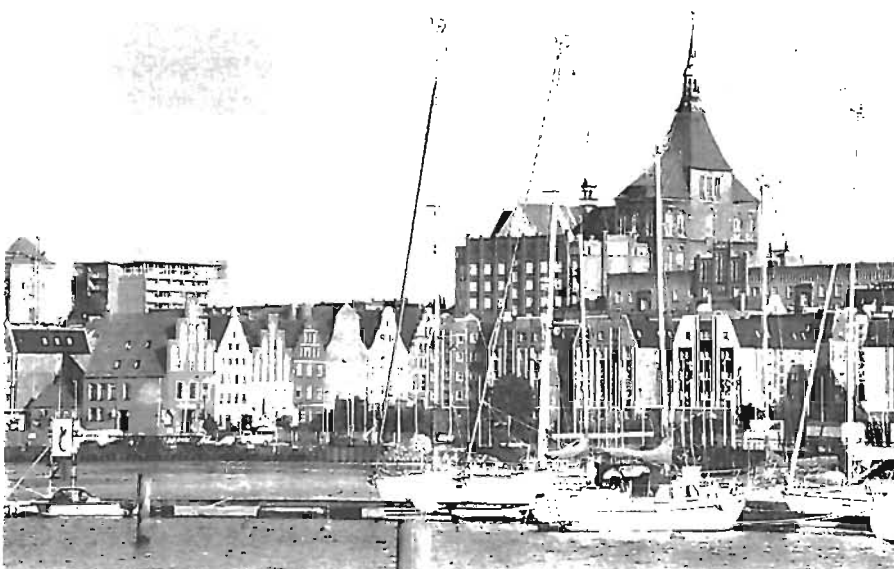


VI GENERAL CONFERENCE ROSTOCK, 12-13 OCTOBER 2001

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

It is a great pleasure for the Hanseatic City of Rostock to host the VI UBC General Conference. Representatives of all UBC member cities are invited to take part in discussing together with EU and non-EU politicians one of the challenging aims of the EU enlargement and the topic of the thematic day of the UBC General Conference: 'Social Justice in the new Millennium'.

After the panel discussions on Friday morning participants will have the possibility to go into further details of the topic in five workshops. Here representatives of the UBC member cities can exchange their local points of view and discuss 'Social Policy', 'Labour Market Policy', 'Participation of Children and Youth', 'Gender Equality', 'Health and Social Equality for Everybody' from the enlargement perspective. The Union of the Baltic Cities will thus continue to contribute to build a peaceful Baltic Sea Region with social security and equality for all its inhabitants. For the first time a resolution, a 'Social Charter for UBC member cities' is possibly adopted during the General Conference's thematic day.



The first day will end with a reception by the Mayor of the Hanseatic City of Rostock and the already traditional 'Best Local Agenda 21 Practices Award Ceremony' in one of the most beautiful locations of the old city the 'House of the Guilds' (Ständehaus).

The second day will start with the meetings of the UBC Commissions and then internal affairs of the UBC will follow, like activity reports, elections, financial matters, etc.

The UBC will present a Conference Resolution for adoption at the end of the day.

Another novelty will be the exhibitions about the activities of the UBC and its Commissions.

One of the highlights of the General Conference will be the Festivity celebrating the 10th anniversary of the UBC in the City Hall on Saturday.

Looking forward to receiving you and to challenging and fruitful communication.

Hanseatic City of Rostock
Com. Health & Social Affairs
Petra Hamann, Karin Wohlgemuth
Tel. +49 381 381 1136/ 1452
e-mail: ubc@rostock.de

UBC ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD 2001

The Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award will be organised for the second time this year. The first award, organised in 1999, was successful. It gathered 15 applications – most of them very high quality. On the basis of the award process, also the Best City Practices was created.

The intention of the award is to encourage member cities to develop their environmental administration and services in innovative ways for the good of the whole municipality and its citizens.

The award ceremony will take place during the General Conference in Rostock, 12-13 October. The award guidelines and

brochure will be published by the Commission on Environment during May. All interested cities are warmly welcomed to participate!

More information:
UBC Commission on Environment
e-mail: ubcenv@netti.fi



BUSINESS COMMISSION MET IN LIEPĀJA

On April 19-20, 2001 Liepāja was hosting the annual meeting of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation. Liepāja has taken over the responsibility for leading the Commission in year 2001 from Kolding and will pass it over to Tampere in year 2001.

According to the established pattern the chairmanship of this Commission is changing every year, furthermore it is alternatively a city from the western country and a city from CEE country.

The following topics had been put forward to discussions during the meeting which gathered participants from 14 UBC member cities and even 2 municipalities who are not members of UBC yet were

interested to join the event – municipal support to businesses and Special/Free Economic Zones as a tool facilitating entrepreneurship, Public Private Partnership, IT and e-city. Liepāja and Latvia representatives offered the participants keynote speeches on these topics, and then discussions followed – both in the conference room and even outside it before and after the wonderful concert of Liepāja Symphony Orchestra, during bowling session.

As participants agreed, the meetings of the Commission and active participation in the work of the Commission is a good opportunity for people from various cities to get new information on business

environment and business opportunities around the Baltic Sea, share experience, build networks and develop new projects. After Liepāja meeting the participants will keep up the contacts and elaborate more the ideas initially outlined during the workshops, hopefully being able to present already concrete project outlines to the participants at the next Commission meeting.

More information:
Ms Ligita Pudža
Commission on Business Cooperation
City of Liepāja
Tel. +371 3404790
e-mail: ligita@dome.liepaja.lv

JOIN UBC CLASSES !

The meeting of the UBC Commission on Education took place in Kärđla, Estonia on 20-22 April 2001.

In the meeting were in focus news and information about the UBC classes with emphasis on joint school projects of member Cities.

A representative of the Commission on Environment in Turku, Mr Niko Remes shared his experiences on the organisation and implementation of the environmental projects.

The secretariat of the Commission on Education has worked for a very short time therefore good advice was welcome.

It was participants from Lithuania, Latvia, Finland, Sweden and Estonia in the meeting, together 14 people.

The ideas of the UBC classes

One school (on the high school level) from every City can participate in this project.

Goal

Every participating school sets his own goals according to the curriculum, but there are some basic skills what will be developed taking part in this project:

- working with texts,
- working independently,
- working in groups,
- international cooperation between groups,
- political and cultural skills,
- language skills,
- using technology (Internet).

Contents

Democracy, EU, Multi-cultural region, Environmental problems, Security, Sustainable development, Economical prospects of the Baltic region, Future developments of the region.

Way of working

Every school will complete one group of interested students (UBC class) and the supervisor. It will be the project team.

Team takes 1-2 projects per one year.

Every project has a home page, so everyone can see what is going on, what are the problems and results, to make proposals or to express his opinion.

Every year ends with summer school(s) in one (or more) of the participating cities, so the participants can meet each other and to discuss the problems. And have some lectures or seminars on actual subjects.

At the moment

There are two participating schools – Rodengymnasium from Norrtälje and Kärđla Secondary School. We have had some meetings where we have discussed the project ideas. One of them was the meeting of students.

In the meeting it was people from UBC cities, who thought that it could be groups of students in their cities interested on UBC classes.



Participants in front of Suuremoisa High School

Discussion

Chair of the meeting was Vice-Chairman of the Commission on Education, Mr Ivo Eesmaa. Mr Eesmaa presented the idea of the UBC classes. After the representation it was an interesting discussion about this idea. Participants from Sweden were of the opinion, that there are existing many similar possibilities for students already. The participants from Baltic states told that the students in their cities have no possibilities today to do something like the idea of UBC classes. So, for concluding we can say that the meeting was interesting and it were people interested from the idea of UBC classes. I hope we will go on with the idea and it will inspire the students to do together interested projects!

Mrs Mirje Auksmann, Secretary
UBC Commission on Education
Tel. +372 46 32010
e-mail: mirje.auksmann@kertel.ee



ENVCOM AND AGENDA 21

UBC Local Agenda 21 Working Group and Commission on Environment met in Liepāja, Latvia, 19-20 March 2001. The meeting gathered 31 participants representing member cities and partner organisations in all Baltic Sea Region countries, except Norway.

During the two days in Liepāja, basis were created for the preparations of new UBC Agenda 21 Program, different project ideas discussed, and new contacts between members created. In addition to intensive hours in seminar rooms, the participants also enjoyed the splendid hospitality of the local organisers, and

participated in an interesting on-site excursion.

During the excursion, e.g., the new Phare-funded Ground Water Pumping and Iron Removal Station was presented. Liepāja is the third largest city in Latvia, and the strategic goal of the city is sustainable development. While fostering economic development, much is being done in Liepāja for putting in order the environmental infrastructure and ensuring safe, healthy living environment.

The next Commission's meeting will be organized on the occasion of the General Conference, Rostock 12-13 October.

SUFA IN SOPOT

The second workshop of SUFA Project was organised in Sopot 5-7 April. During the three wonderful spring-time days, 15 participants from the Baltic States, Poland, the UBC and ICLEI deepened their understanding on different aspects of local Agenda 21 projects.

The local organisers, Magda and Przemek Marchlewicz, had also provided the participants with interesting social

program, including e.g. a "high-speed walking tour" around the city and its surroundings. As the workshop coincided with the Commission on Sport meeting, the participants of these two events even enjoyed dinner together.

The last workshop will be organised in September in Haapsalu. The Research and Information activities of the project are also proceeding, and all UBC cities will soon receive interesting reading from the Com. on Environment (i.e., Human Resource and Good Practice Reviews on LA 21).

The SUFA Project has received co-funding from the European Commission DG Environment, Finnish Ministry of the Environment, and Nordic Minister Council. The project is a joint effort of the UBC, ICLEI and Åbo Akademi University.



On a "high-speed walking tour" in Sopot

Further information:
Commission on Environment
e-mail: ubcenv@netti.fi

PREPARING UBC AGENDA 21 2002-2003

The UBC is creating a new Agenda 21 Action program for the coming two-year period, 2002-2003. The Executive Board made a decision on starting preparations for the new program in its meeting in Cēsis, Latvia, 16-17 March. Technical preparation was delegated to Com. on Environment Secretariat and Local Agenda 21 Working Group.

The current UBC Local Agenda 21 Action Program (2000-2002) was approved by the General Conference in Stockholm 1999. The overall implementation has been very successful. Most of the planned activities will be finalised by the end of 2001. Of the nine finalised or on-going projects, four are co-ordinated by the Commission on Environment Secretariat, and five by different member cities. The goal of wider participation and mobilisation of resources has been met. The total costs of these nine projects are approximately 1.2 MEURO.

These projects have provided good services and participation possibilities to UBC members. As most of them will soon be fully implemented - it is time to plan more.

The goals of the program with regard to political influence, contacts and networking have also been met. The UBC has played an active role in Baltic 21 and HELCOM, being officially responsible for much of the work in cities. We have also been actively involved on the European level, with regard to the Sustainable Cities Campaign and in European expert groups and in liaison and co-operation with the European Commission DG Environment.

EUROPEAN INDICATORS AND BALTIC 21

UBC Commission on Environment, together with Commission of the European Communities, is organising the translation and printing of European Common Indicators to twelve East European languages. The aim of the European Common Indicators is to improve monitoring of progress towards sustainability and to provide objective and comparable information from local authorities across Europe.

At the moment the material is available in the official EU languages. Now indicators' Technical report and Methodology sheets are translated to Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovakian and Slovenian. In addition Commission on Environment organises the dissemination of the technical report and promotion of the initiative to target groups.

UBC Commission on Environment is also currently starting a feasibility study about European Common Indicators in monitoring Baltic 21 in the cities of Baltic Sea Region. It got recently funding for the study from Nordic Council of Ministers.

More information:
Ms Sanna Salminen
Com. on Environment Secretariat
Tel. +358 2 230 2202
e-mail: ubcenv@netti.fi



COMMISSION ON SPORT ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Com. on Sport was held on 7th April in Sopot.

In the meeting participated 20 representatives of 13 cities from 7 countries: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden and Poland.

This year the meeting of the Commission was particularly interesting due to very good speeches of the invited foreign and Polish speakers. Representatives of Aalborg in Denmark described their *Senior Sport Project*. The *Network for the European Youth Work in Sports* was presented by its co-ordinator from Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The possibilities of the EU support while organizing sport events were described by the UBC EU Co-ordinator.

Speakers from the Polish Floorball Federation in their speech *Unihockey – Sport for Everyone* explained the idea of this universal sport to the participants.

During the meeting it was announced which cities received grant from UBC for organising sport events. On the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the UBC, Commission on Sport decided to award more grants this year. Allocation of a greater number of grants will contribute to broader promotion of the UBC.

The following cities received the financial support for the sport events:

1) Gdynia (Poland) – IX Twin Cities Sporting Competition (10-13.05.01)

2) Jurmala (Latvia) – Beach Soccer Cup of Jurmala (summer)

3) Klaipėda (Lithuania) – UBC Sports Games (27-29.07.01)



After the bowling competition in Gdynia

4) Panevėžys (Lithuania) – Panevezys Sports Festival (24-26.08.01)

5) Panevėžys (Lithuania) – UBC Volleyball Tournament (19-21.10.01)

6) Tukums (Latvia) – International Football Teams Competition for Juniors (20-22.07.01)

7) Vilnius (Lithuania) – IV International Vilnius Races (19.09.01)

Further information:
Commission on Sport Secretariat
City of Gdynia
Tel. +48 58 620 83 12
e-mail: wngdyfor@miasto.gdynia.pl

WELCOME TO ESPOO !

The 5th annual session of the UBC commission on culture will be organized in Helsinki and Espoo in September 2001. The programme will include sessions about structures and financing of art education, as well as presentations and demonstrations of different working models and practices.

The arts education session day is Friday, 7 September. The programme will begin in Annantalo Arts Centre in Helsinki with a presentation of the working model of the arts centre and lectures about organization and financing of art education. Annantalo Arts Centre develops and carries out research into various forms of arts education, provides training for groups such as day nursery personnel, produces special programmes

On Friday afternoon the programme will continue in the Cultural Centre of Espoo with speeches and discussions about international cooperation in music education and visual arts education for children and young people. Espoo Cultural Centre is the main arena for the performing arts and art festivals in Espoo. The centre offers facilities for concerts, plays, films, exhibitions etc. It also houses a library, a music Institute and a branch of the Adult Education Centre.

Saturday 8 September will be the meeting day of the cultural commission, including an interesting presentation and demonstration of cooperation in audience education between the Finnish National Opera and the city of Espoo.

More information:
Ms Helena Varri
Tel. +358 9 816 57502
e-mail: helena.varri@espoo.fi
Ms Jaana Lindman
Tel. +358 9 169 3598
e-mail: jaana.lindman@hel.fi

BEST CITY PRACTICES

Five city couples have been chosen into the Best City Practices project according to their applications. All the city couples include a city with a good environmental practice ('guiding city') and a city interested in learning and implementing this good practice ('partner city/learning city').

At the moment the city pairs are doing study visits. The study visits will be reported in the second BCP workshop, which will be organised 7-10 June near Kaunas, Lithuania.

The chosen city couples are:

- Sundsvall (Sweden) with its Agenda 21 process and Sopot (Poland)
- Bützow (Germany) with its Agenda 21

process and Sillamäe (Estonia)

• Turku (Finland) with its Air Quality Monitoring and Panevėžys (Lithuania)

• Gotland (Sweden) with its Environmental Bus and ECAT Lithuania

• Elbląg (Poland) with its Environmental Education program and Šiauliai (Lithuania)

In the BCP project, task of the city pairs is to do a feasibility study e.g. to find out if it is possible to implement the good practice of the guiding city in the learning city. During summer, city pairs will continue the feasibility studies and their results will be reported in the third workshop, autumn 2001. After the third workshop, the whole project will be reported by UBC EnvCom Secretariat.





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TOURISM COMMISSION IN VILNIUS

Finally the Commissions meeting in Vilnius took place. About 30 members and others took the chance of meeting in Lithuanian "Jerusalem". The meeting was hosted by the City of Vilnius, and so it was opened by the Deputy Mayor Mr Vakarinas on the 25th of April.

Mr Dahl, Kalmar, the Chairman of the Commission since 1999, held an informal meeting. Especially invited to the meeting was Mr Löwendahl from the BSR Interreg IIC/IIIB Office in Karlskrona, informing the participants of the new EU Interreg IIIB programme. Since this is an important aspect of the forthcoming development all over the BSR, the lecture of Mr Löwendahl initiated many questions and a rewarding discussion was born.

The meeting focused on the future of the Commission and its work, and as a result of this discussion it was found that there is still a want and a need for training and development activities in tourism. The activities of the Baltic Tourism Academy within the EU-project "Baltic City Tourism" and the further development of the planned exchange programme was presented by the secretary of the Commission, Mr Viktor Rydell, Kalmar. Mr Rydell also presented the financial report for the year of 2000 and the status of the Commissions budget.

A partly new steering committee for the Commission was elected, consisting of representatives from the following cities:



Kalmar (Chair), Mr Kyrre Dahl
Palanga (Vice-Chair), Mr Martynas Uzpėkis
Rostock, Mr Roland Methling
Kaunas, contact person not set.

Finally there was an opening given for *Gdynia* to take part in the steering committee after discussion with the *Gdynia* City Board. Officially the Steering Committee starts its work this October.

The new constellation of the steering committee wishes to thank the City of Vilnius, and especially the Vice Mayor and the organisers at the Vilnius Tourist Office, Mr Gintaras Aleksiusas with staff, for an excellent organisation. It was all extremely satisfactory. Thank You!

More information:

Mr Kyrre Dahl, Chairman
e-mail: kyrre.dahl@kalmar.se
Viktor Rydell, Secretary
e-mail: viktor.rydell@kalmar.se

HEALTH AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS TREATED IN KARLSTADT

Eleven participants from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden took part in the regular meeting of the Commission on Health & Social Affairs on 23-24 March 2001, in Karlstadt. We were warmly welcomed by the Mayor of Karlstad Ms Lena Melesjö-Windahl and Lars Näsström the quality manager of the health and medical care.

All participants exchanged their experiences in the field of youth work, care for the elderly and handicapped. Two Study Visits in a Care Home for elderly and handicapped and a Home and working place for mentally handicapped offered by the City of Karlstad completed our programme. The UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs introduced the participants to its main fields of activities like project work in the past, ideas for future activities, publications of the Commission, networking. We explained the ongoing projects and invited everyone to take part in it. We invited to and informed about the thematic day of the UBC General Conference 'Social Justice in the Baltic Sea Region', 12 October. We talked about the workshop topics like Social- Labour Market and Gender Equality Policy in Municipalities from the Enlargement Perspective, Participation of Children and Youth, Health and Equality for Everybody and every participant will be searching in their own communities for speakers who could contribute to the workshops as well as to the elaboration of a conference resolution - a Social Charter. Ulla Näsman from Sundsvall will be the one.

One of our important tasks like distributing duties and responsibilities of the commission's network could not be carried out.

TRANSPORT COMMISSION KICK-OFF

Welcome to Göteborg, in midsummer time, on 25-26 June 2001, to re-establish the network for professionals around the Baltic, active in the field of transportation.

Based on the feed-back received from the letter sent out in early March we are organising sessions focusing on Mobility Management, Road Pricing, aspects of Public Transport Management and on the potential for improving the conditions of Pedestrians and Cyclists.

Each session will start by some minutes

of introduction presenting different aspects relevant for the UBC cooperation. We will then try to identify topics and activities suitable for further efforts within the Commission on Transportation.

More information:

Ms Lisa Sundell
Commission on Transportation
City of Göteborg
Tel. +46 31 61 37 24
lisa.sundell@trafikkontoret.goteborg.se

More information:

Ms Petra Hamann
Com. on Health & Social Affairs
City of Rostock
Tel. +49 381 381 1136
e-mail: ubc@rostock.de



WORKING ON WATERFRONTS IN GDAŃSK

On 18-22 April in Gdańsk the UBC Commission on Urban Planning organised a Seminar on Best Practice in Urban Physical Planning and Urban Design entitled: "Waterfronts – development opportunities in cities".

The seminar was arranged in the close co-operation with the UBC Secretariat, the Gdańsk City Council and Synergia 99, the owner of the Gdańsk post-shipyard areas, which were assigned for investments having the character of the new fragment of the City of Gdańsk. In the place of the former Gdańsk Shipyards the complex foundations of the modern city are being projected.

An important, perhaps the most important fragment of the future building are the waterfronts.

In the framework of the presentation of the subject, the participants were presented a wide spectrum of problems, including the historic background of the Baltic cities cooperation and the vision of the BSR development strategy. An extremely interesting lecture was given about the Old City of Gdańsk urban code in connection with the projected areas. Also there was presented a data

base regarding the big studio and project investments concerning the post shipyard area. Participants had a possibility to catch



Participants from 22 cities, 9 countries

sight of this area during the bus and ship journey.

We analysed the area in many aspects of the sustainable development in order to record the results during workshops.

By the work of all participants in three groups we obtained a fresh, interesting outlook and perhaps a new conception of the development of this area. The last act of the seminar will be the report which will present in a detailed way the conclusions and graphic conceptions. The UBC Commission on Urban Planning will meet together this autumn in St. Petersburg to work on the city infrastructure problem.



CITY COUNCIL OF GDAŃSK

The Seminar on



COMMISSION ON URBAN PLANNING

**BEST PRACTICE IN URBAN PHYSICAL and URBAN DESIGN
"Waterfronts - development opportunities in cities"**

Gdańsk, Poland, 18-22 April 2001



More information:
Mr Ryszard Biały
Member of the Commission
City of Gdańsk
e-mail: apro@apro.pl

NATIONAL SEMINARS ON INTERREG III B

Interreg III B will be by far the greatest program for co-operation projects between local and regional authorities in terms of money. The European Union will probably publish the first call for projects after summer of 2001.

In spite of the importance and the large amounts of money involved, Interreg III B is generally not very well known, specially in the applicant countries. UBC therefore arranged a series of national meetings during the first months of 2001 in order to inform the member cities about Interreg III B. The first meeting was January in Tartu for the Estonian UBC

member cities. It was followed by a meeting for the Polish cities in Gdańsk, and finally meetings in Cēsis, Latvia and Šiauliai, Lithuania.

It takes a rather long time to establish a project and partnership of good quality. Experience shows that if preparations start when the call for projects comes, it is usually too shorttime. When the call comes, the outline of the project, a preliminary partnership and a general idea of the activities in the project should be clear. The time after the call should be spent on the application form and all formalities at first hand.

Mr Juhan Janusson, UBC EU Co-ordinator, gave information on Interreg III B at the meetings. Both the program as such and specific project ideas were discussed. Hopefully they will result in many high quality project applications.

More information:
Mr Juhan Janusson
UBC EU Co-ordinator
e-mail: juhan@post11.tele.dk





URBAN PLANNING AND INTERREG

UBC Commission on Urban Planning has now built a network between colleagues in 45 cities around the Baltic Ocean. Since we started two years ago we have carried out four seminars. The last one was held in Gdansk in April. Before we met in Malmo, Umea and Helsinki. The topic for the first three seminars was Best Practice and we have presented our impressions and conclusions in three booklets. If you are interested in these booklets, please let me know.

Step by step, we have noticed that we can not only discuss but also solve planning questions together. We successfully made such an experiment in Gdansk for the first time. We can work together for two important reasons. All participants at the seminars are colleagues, city architects and planners.

Our wish is to continue our seminars next years by getting financial support from Interreg III B (and Phare/Tacis). We need resources to prepare and arrange 6-7 seminars. We need money to make it possible to arrange seminars even at places, which cannot afford to subsidise a seminar. And we can "pay back" by presenting ideas on how to solve important planning questions. Maybe as "Some common Baltic Planning

Standards". At our seminars we have noticed that the ongoing processes are very similar in different cities and countries. Planning problems and possibilities are of the same character, even with very big difference in size between the cities.

Regional – local planning

Most of the interests in terms of EU-financed projects are connected to the regional level. However, there is a clear connection between the regional and the local level concerning planning questions.

Through local studies of problems and opportunities we can find interesting regional connections. From municipal point of view we apprehend regional planning mainly having a strategic direction. Planning which is intended to be realised belongs to the local level. In regional planning cities are often pointed out as the growth centres in the regional economy. Size, structure, location are important factors, having an influence on the possibility for the city to shoulder this role as an engine for the region. The design of the urban setting represents not only an important factor for the development of trade and industry – the city as a setting for production and innovation – but appears also as decisive for the movement of people.

Connection to VASAB 2010+

VASAB 2010+ also focuses on the regional perspective and development. Our experience is that regional development needs the support of local authorities to gain strength. This is a reality in most of our countries – in some countries even underlined by the planning system. At the same time, the local authorities must be included in the broader dialogue to see and understand their role and possibilities in a regional development perspective. This is the background for some comments we have made to the draft for VASAB 2010+. To the potential cooperation projects mentioned in the document we will suggest the additional potential project "Exchange of experience between local authorities on how to support regional development and manage possible negative effects."

More information:

Mr Lars Brattberg
Planning Office
City of Malmö
Tel. +46 40 342300
e-mail: lars.brattberg@malmö.se

INFLUENCE TO THE CITIES !

The enlargement process is steadily going on, unfortunately far above the heads of the cities. In order to secure a success, the cities should be involved in a higher degree. There are many risks with the present process. First, the popular support for the accession is weaker, because the processes do not involve the authorities closest to the citizens, the local authority level. Secondly because almost every field of city activity is affected by the enlargement, and in order to make the adjustment swift and uncomplicated, the relevant level should be involved from the beginning.

Realising this, the UBC Board adopted a statement at the Board Meeting in Cesis recently. The statement is directed to the national governments in EU countries as

well as applicant countries and to the EU commission.

The UBC Board urged the national governments in applicant countries among other to

- Strongly enhance the dialogue between the local and national government level in matters regarding European Enlargement and to inform the cities on the current situation,

- Give cities responsibility for certain activities in connection with the enlargement, specially issues regarding the citizens involvement and such matters that influence the policy and activities of cities in a high degree and to

- Give the cities support to take charge of necessary and needed tasks in connection with the enlargement.

The Board called on the national governments in the EU countries to

- Give far better support to the local authority level to co-operate with partners or their organisations in EU and the applicant countries in order to secure a smooth transition.

The European Union was asked to

- Support co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region to facilitate the enlargement process on a local level, also in small and medium sized cities, through Interreg, Phare, Taix and other facilities.

- Work with non-bureaucratic methods on funding of training, seminars, placement of staff, study tours and other activities, preferably in co-operation with partner cities in EU countries and their organisations

The resolution has been distributed to the national governments in the Baltic Sea Region as well as to the European Union.



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Connection to VASAB 2010+

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EU COORDINATORS MET IN KOTKA

The 5th meeting of the EU Coordinators' network was held in Kotka, Finland on 4-5 May 2001. The City of Kotka has prepared an interesting program for participants.

As inspiration to the networks' future activities, the Finnish Association of Local and Regional authorities demonstrated their experiences from a project on strengthening local governance in Russia. The presentation opened an inspiring debate about the many challenges which local governments in former Soviet Union face.

Following, the City of Pori told about their experiences in setting-up a Finnish network of EU co-ordinators. The Finnish network started out with only 3 participants and today they count about 40 participants. The experience is that the sharing of best practice and information is very fruitful when engaging in EU activities. The network meets annually for contact as well as for dissemination of

information, the network has developed an extensive web-site for the members.

The experience of the Finnish EU coordinators' network is very relevant for the UBC EU Co-ordinators that are setting up a new agenda for the activities. There is a large demand for knowledge and sharing of best practice in the field of EU organisation and development at local and regional level, specifically towards the BSR authorities. Until now the network has dealt with many of these questions and has carried out training activities. To further strengthen the network activities, the participants of Kotka meeting agreed to take contact with EU co-ordinators in their own countries in order to establish a platform of contact in the respective countries and thereby combine national and UBC networks to extend the sharing of experience.

Additionally, it was agreed that the UBC EU Co-ordinators network needed a strategy for its future activities. This

network is of great importance for cities involving in EU activities, and the meeting discussions proved that there is a strong wish to further develop the network structure. A working group of 3 persons will therefore work on a proposal for a strategy for the network activities. The working group consisting of Kotka, Tallinn and Aalborg will meet in June.

Furthermore the city of Kotka presented the new harbour area, which has gone through an extensive development to be one of the most important harbours in the Baltic Sea Area.

All participants in the Kotka meeting would like to express their gratitude to the City of Kotka for the warm welcome!

Next meeting of the UBC EU Co-ordinators will take place in Aalborg in the autumn.

More information:
Ms Charlotte Pedersen
City of Aalborg
Tel. +45 99 311516
e-mail: cp-borgm@aalbkom.dk

UBC-LVRLAC COOPERATION

The co-operation between UBC and LVRLAC, UBC sister organisation in East Africa, has taken speed from January 2001. The first co-operation projects are well under way. The first priority is to strengthen the LVRLAC organisation.

Mr Magnus Rydén, the former UBC web-master from Kalmar, visited Africa in February to start projects aiming at introducing modern Internet technology for internal and external communications. Ms Iwona Śmigierska-Belczak from the UBC Secretariat visited Entebbe to discuss daily routines in a city network secretariat with her colleague in LVRLAC.

One important task is to introduce the UBC concept of Commissions and Networks. The first meeting was with the UBC Women's network, and Ms Hjärdís Höglund was leading a seminar which led to the creation of the LVRLAC Women's network.

Next activity was a study tour in April to the Baltic Sea Region. 15 high ranking politicians and officials as well as the leaders of LVRLAC started their tour in Nacka, where the main attraction was the

environmental pedagogic centres. It has got followers in Latvia and Lithuania, and the idea is to export the idea of such a centre also to Lake Victoria Region.

The next stop was Turku, secretariat of the UBC Commission on Environment. The environmental activities concerning the river that flows through Turku, Aura River, was also studied.

After Turku, the group travelled to Kalmar to meet the UBC President and have political discussions. There was time also to study the engagement of the city in tourism and the Tourism commission as well as some environmental projects.

The finale of the tour was in the Tri-city region, where the Commission on Sport introduced itself in Gdynia, and the UBC secretariat presented their work in the new premises in the Gdańsk New Town Hall.

The next step will be to start work on creating Environmental Pedagogic Centres with inspiration from Nacka and their experiences. Mr Guldbrand Skjöberg will be responsible for that.



Study Tour to the Baltic Sea Region - visit in Kalmar

There will be a meeting at the end of June between UBC and Sida in order to evaluate the results so far and to discuss the continuation of the project. There is a three-year agreement between UBC and SIDA. The prerequisite for UBC to engage is that no part of the cities contribution to UBC shall go to the project. SIDA pays all costs, and there is even a small financial profit for UBC.

More information:
Mr Juhan Janusson
UBC EU Coordinator
Tel. +45 33 912969
e-mail: Juhan@post11.tele.dk





YOUTH CONCERNING SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The idea of Youths Concerning A Sustainable Future came to the light in Kalmar in 1996. First it was set as an exchange project for youth from Kalmar Län, Sweden, Kaliningrad Region, Russia and Gdansk Voivodship, Poland. The project participants were young people active on the local level and interested in ecology, democracy, etc.

In the beginning, our project seemed to be just an occasion to meet people and get new nice experience, but just as the time passed, we saw the real meaning of the project. 'What can we do for other youths and for sustainable development and future? How to get power as youth and to make the decision-makers take our opinions under their consideration?'

In 1999 we got new members and organised two more meetings in Kalmar. We came to the common conclusion that we wanted to influence on young people in the Baltic area. A lot of young people in the Baltic Sea area are not aware of their possibilities to influence their societies.

That is why we decided to spread our



network and organise more meetings and workshops that would make it possible to combine the broadening of our minds, sharing our knowledge, experiences and thoughts with other youths. The topics we want to deal especially with are Agenda 21 issues and decision making process. Our first step in achieving it was invitation that we gave to the young people from Butzow, Germany, whom we met during our meeting in Gdansk in February 2000.

During those two years of our activities we managed to develop a very close contact with the UBC, whose President

supported us strongly from the very beginning. We also established the co-operation with the Commission on Environment. Our representatives took part in Riga in workshop about the youth issues. Already in 1999, there occurred an idea to create a network between youths around the Baltic connected with UBC. It seemed to be a perfect possibility to make decision-makers in our region listen to young people's opinions.

Now we are slowly starting – slowly as we are still waiting for the response from all the UBC cities – each one got the letter from the President, Mr Anders Engstrom but not many has answered.... So please check whether your city can help us to create the youth network....

More information:

Ms Karin Hallengren
karin.hallengren@kommun.kalmar.se

Mr Przemysław Marchlewicz
przemek_marchlewicz@wp.pl

3R METHOD IN UBC

The UBC Executive Board decided to introduce the 3R-method for analysing and following up the Gender Equality perspective in all activities of the UBC.

UBC has in the General Guidelines and the Action Plan decided that Gender Equality will be integrated in all the work within the organisation. How do we follow up these decisions? There has been a lack of simple and practical methods in analysing gender factors.

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities (SALA) established in 1995 a committee, which has the task of developing methods for the work on gender equality. The committee introduced the 3R-method as an analytical tool, to produce information needed to gender mainstream an operation in a systematic way.

The project "Gender equality in local Agenda 21" under the UBC Women's Network has used the 3R-method in analysing the local Agenda 21 process in three cities, Lahti, Lübeck and Sundsvall.

By answering questions under the headings Representation, Resources and Realia activities can be analysed from a gender equality perspective. The analysis shows how power is shared between women and men and how gender aspects affect the activities.

Proposals and decisions, even those which do not explicitly take up gender equality, affect women and men in different ways since women and men are living partly different lives. A gender mainstream policy takes this into consideration.

The first R, **Representation (1R)** is a systematic analysis of the representation of men and women in the process and in the different operations.

- Who are the chairpersons of the boards, the committees and other groups?
- Which is the target group? Men or women? Boys or girls?
- Who are writing and preparing the proposals and the plans? Who are the members of project groups, working groups, reference groups, etc.

The second R, **Resources (2R)** is an analysis of how the resources, e.g. money, space and time, are allocated between men and women.

The third R, **Realia (3R)** is an analysis of different values and norms which can be expressed in questions like: Are the interests and wishes of women and men being met to an equally great extent? Which experiences and values have governed the decisions? Whose needs are being met? Which are the effects and the results for women compared with those for men? What is the factual contents of the operations? For women? For men?

This way of analysing the UBC activities gives us a good picture of the situation and we will follow up the decisions about Gender Equality, taken by the UBC Executive Board.

More information:

Mrs Hjördis Höglund
UBC Women's Network
Tel. +46 60 122241
e-mail: hjordis.hoglung@ebox.tninet.se



III. MEMBER CITIES IN ACTION

Cutty Sark Tall Ships' Race 2001

An armada of the most beautiful tall ships in the world will gather in Bergen for eventful days 26th - 30th of July as a part of the traditional Cutty Sark Tall Ships' Race 2001. The city of Bergen was a host for the tall ships also in 1993 and it was a tremendous success.

This is one of the greatest international sailing events. The fascinating sight of more than one hundred tall ships at bay, 3000 young sailors from all over the world and hundreds of thousands visitors will create a carnival atmosphere in the Fjord Capital of Norway.

The harbour area will constitute an exciting environment with restaurants, live music on stages, competitions, shows and fireworks. Photographers will have plenty of exciting photo opportunities, not only the fabulous Parade of Sail on July 30th when all the ships will sail in company from the Bergen harbour.

Cutty Sark Tall ships' Races are organised by the International Sail Training Association (ISTA) and have been arranged every year since 1956. This year's race starts in Antwerp in Belgium 4th July, goes to Ålesund and Bergen and finish in Esbjerg in Denmark 7th August.

Among the tall ships that will come to Bergen are Sedov and Statsraad Lemkuhl. Sedov is a four-masted barque and the

largest sailing ship in the world. Her overall length is 117 metres and the sail surface is 4,192 m². Bergen is Statsraad Lemkuhl's homeport, and she is Norway's largest and oldest square-rigged sailing ship. The ship is also one of the world's oldest sailing ships and we dare say one of the best preserved.

More information:

Cutty Sark Tall Ships' Race
City of Bergen
Tel. +47 55 56 33 40
e-mail: cuttys@online.no
www.tv2.no/cuttysark

Our Hobby – Guitar

A guitar workshop will take place in Wismar from July 2nd to July 8th 2001. 18 guitarists will compose an orchestra and create a program with works from past centuries and the varieties of rock, pop, and blues.



The orchestra will play a concert in Wismar and participate in the second state-wide Mecklenburg-West Pomerania Music School Day in Bad Doberan. The participants will be 18 young people between 15-18 years from different cities. Aside from morning orchestra and tuning rehearsals, a professor from the University for Music and Theatre from Rostock will give instruction for the solo repertoire. The afternoon and evenings will belong to getting to know the immediate area around Wismar, meeting with Wismar's music students and excursions to the state capital of Wismar's music students.

The project is sponsored by the city of Wismar. The overnight stays, breakfast and dinner are organised and provided by parents. If you are interested please contact us !

More information:
Mr Michael Grunewald
Music School Wismar
Tel. +49 3841 211881

Exhibitions, exhibitions...

Gallery Otso, founded in 1985, focus on Finnish and international contemporary art. In the calendar you can find the exhibitions **Can you hear me?** at the 2nd Ars Baltica Triennial of photographic art, and in the early autumn four young Swedish women artists in the exhibition **Artforce 2001**.

Newly opened exhibition at the Gallen-Kallela Museum **Finland Depicted - in Hearts and Minds** shows the Finnish nature and scenery used and adapted as a spiritual and material symbol of the nation. The landscapes of the exhibition range from the middle of the 19th century to 1910. You will find here leading Finnish artists of the period and also documentary material on travel in the early years of the last century, telling how the concepts and ideas of landscape art were made to create an image of Finland abroad.

The Glims Farmstead Museum is a glimpse of the Espoo of yesterday. The old buildings of the Glims farm are in their original locations in the well preserved cultural landscape of Karvasmäki Village. The oldest buildings are from the 18th century. The characters in Mauri Kunnas's delightful Doghill books will come to Glims for a long visit lasting almost a year. The exhibition **The Doghill Gang at Glims** includes an activity room for children, completed with puppet theatre, work demonstrations etc.

The exhibition **Beads Talk-Jewellery and Ritual Objects from Western Africa** tells about bead production and trade over the centuries. It will also tell about the symbols and religious significance with the use of beads in Western Africa Today. The exhibition includes objects from the collection of Helinä Rautavaara and other individuals, supplemented by photos and films.

More information about exhibitions at www.espooli.fi





New University

Klaipėda University – the first newly founded university in the independent Lithuania recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. An organization “Students’ Union of Klaipėda University” is 5 years old since April. The Union is already one of leading youth organizations in Klaipėda.

It takes part at the Round Table of Klaipėda non-governmental organizations and also at meetings of Lithuanian National union of students. In the last two years together with other organizations or alone The Students’ Union of Klaipėda University have organized more than 60 concerts, parties, and festivals. Every year the union organizes few projects concerning youth activity, health and drug addiction topics.

The union has also its difficulties: sometimes it is money, sometimes a lack of professionalism and practice that has always been a problem to most non-governmental organizations, especially youth organizations. The most vital affairs concerning student life were taken care of by the union which is becoming more and more involved in the management of university dormitories. Dormitories is a crucial part of student life as a great number of Klaipėda University students come from outside Klaipėda.

After a new Law of Higher Education came into force the students’ representatives – the union became even more powerful. It has a right to delegate 6 senators to the highest Universities body – the Senate; has a voting right in the Councils of the faculties and more. Winning the recognition of a valuable partner in governing university meant a lot for all students. It puts on responsibility but is very pleasant too.

There are no such magic remedies that could handle all the issues. A young state, especially a young organization has to go through all the development stages in order to become a strong organization.

More information:
Mr Egidijus Liubinavicius
City of Klaipėda
Tel. +370 6 398870
e-mail: egidijus@ip.ku.lt



Baltic Ring of Gdynia Twin Cities completed

One of the strategic aims included in the document “Strategic Plan for Gdynia” was to close the so-called Baltic Ring of Gdynia Twin Cities. The Ring was completed on 24th February 2001 during the stay of Gdynia City Hall representatives at Kunda (Estonia) by signing the Agreement on Twin City Cooperation.

Altogether 10 cities belong to this Ring: Aalborg (Denmark), Gdynia (Poland), Kaliningrad (Russia), Karlskrona (Sweden), Kristiansand (Norway), Kotka (Finland), Kiel (Germany), Klaipėda (Lithuania), Kunda (Estonia), Liepāja (Latvia). Most of the above mentioned cities are at the same time members of the Union of the Baltic Cities. Establishing the



City Board Member, Mr Michal Guć and Mayor of Kunda, Ms Anne Tasuja exchange the signed agreement on co-operation

Baltic Ring will contribute to development of new co-operation possibilities both within the twin cities and the UBC activities. Besides, UBC membership of the cities belonging to the Baltic Ring and bilateral agreements create favourable conditions for realisation of new projects supported by EU funds.

The Agreement concluded with Kunda provides a direct exchange of inhabitants, completion of joint projects as well as organisation and participation in the events aimed at mutual presentation in the fields of education, culture, sport, tourism, environmental protection, social care and economy.

Kunda is situated in the northern part of Estonia in the district Virumaa. Kunda village was first mentioned in the year 1241 and in 1938 it received the city rights.

Kunda is associated mainly with

cement, which has been produced there in the cement factory for over a hundred years. Development of the town started at the beginning of the 19th century together with the foundation of the port. Port activity contributed to the increase in the town’s trade. At present the most important firms in Kunda are: Kunda Nordic Cement Ltd, ABB Kunda, Lajos Transport Services.

More information:

Ms Monika Pawlińska
City of Gdynia
Tel. +4858 620 83 12
e-mail: umgdyfor@miasto.gdynia.pl

VIRUS

On 18th January this year a youth club ‘Virus’ was founded at Šiauliai. It is an organization for young people from secondary schools and gymnasium. Though the club has been existing only for three months, its activities are already known among schoolchildren.

Activities of the club. ‘Virus’ popularises healthy way of life. It encourages creating one’s own system of values based on emotional origin. The members of the club share their personal experience. They seek tolerance when communicating with different people. Knowledge of young people’s psychology help ‘Virus’ in their activities.

Steps taken by the club. On the initiative of the club on the 24th of February the youth forum ‘Be free’ was held. A lot of schoolchildren took part in the forum that was devoted to a problem of using drugs. They brought drawings, posters and wall stands reflecting the consequences of bad habits. There was also a vivid discussion how to solve youth problems. On the 28th of March another seminar ‘In the trap of drugs’ was organised.

Everyone of sixteen and older are welcome to join the club. At present there are 15 members. The club has its board, regulations, attributes and ready made project.

More information:
Mr Benas Gudinaevicius
City of Šiauliai
e-mail: zumbastiky@yahoo.co.uk



Project "Balance of Oxygen"

Society "Sopot For The Environment", together with Sopot Municipality and Polish Guiding and Scouting Association initiated a project "Balance of oxygen". The aim was to define how much of oxygen is produced in the urbanised areas of Sopot and how much is used in the life processes. But the most important aim was to involve young people, who in fact are realising the project and thus to make them more ecologically conscious.

The first step was to make an inventory of green areas. The youth had to find single trees or green areas, define the species, measure, the plants calculate the surface areas of leaves and needles. All the measurements were marked on the map of the city in scale 1:500. In this way we counted that about 40% of the urbanised area in our town is "green".

The project may sound very easy but it was really a big work! We wrote about 100 pages of materials and we have prepared a map that had about 6 square meters of surface. The first, and most difficult part of the project, was finished with the big meeting of scouts, pupils from primary schools and local authorities, an event connected with planting of new trees in our town.

About 200 of young people, who took part in the project learned how to define species of plants and how to take care of green areas. We also learned that it is not so easy to do something together!

We haven't already counted the balance: it's the second stage of the project, unfortunately it is the role of specialists. There is also the third stage – it is to be based on co-operation with other municipalities from Baltic Sea Region. The idea is to compare the results in towns and to think together about what can be done in order not to waste oxygen resources on our local and global level.

The educational aspect of the project is priceless: the work for sustainable development of today's adults has to be based on involvement, ecological consciousness and education of the youngest generation. Sopot Municipality is now looking for partners for the project from the Baltic Sea area!

More information:
Ms Magdalena Marchlewicz
City of Sopot
e-mail: magda_marchlewicz@wp.pl



"National cooking is one of the means of interaction between countries and people"

Meeting of Partners

At the beginning of March 2001, Vocational School in Sillamäe organised international festival-competition for partner schools from Kotka, Finland, (Professional Institute) and from Russia St.Petersburg. The motto was "National cooking is one of the means of interaction between countries and people". Participants were teachers and pupils from cooking departments.

The main aims of that event were: cooperation between vocational schools, understanding of cultural traditions through cooking of national dishes, learning about culture, customs, traditions and history of the countries, comparison of professional knowledge and skills as well as improving professional language.

All the participants had to present decorations of their tables and to tell about national special features of dishes.

The winners in modern and stylish decoration of dishes were students from Estonia. Olusterve (Estonia) was good at national special features in cooking, St.Petersburg was rewarded for original taste of dishes and Sillamäe for professional skills. All teams got diplomas and gifts. They had to also answer to different question about their impression of the festival, teams, kitchen equipment, excursions around the vocational school, the city of Sillamäe, the Narva Castle and another culture events.

All Estonian Vocational schools were informed about this event. The cooking competition and some cultural events were recorded and were shown in TV. Photos and films can be used at professionals lessons and as advertisement at cooking departments.

Maybe it will be a good tradition to held such professional competitions of vocational schools and more Baltic towns will take part in them in the nearest future.

More information:
Ms Inna Nazarova
City of Sillamäe
e-mail: skool33@hotmail.ee

Information Site for Baltic Sea Tourism

It is but a few weeks since information on tourism projects and organisations in the BSR has been made available on the web site www.balticseaturism.com.

The goal of the project running last year was to enhance cross-border co-ordination and provide a site for tourism activities.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economy and Technology, the Association German Coast - a marketing tourism alliance - was entrusted with this project. Performed by the two Rostock-based associations PROTOUR and REWAS, it took as a basis the extensive investigation on co-operation in the BSR.

This web site provides data on tourism projects and organisations in the Baltic Sea area. Possible users might be governmental and non-governmental authorities as well as the business interested. Thus, cross-border activities based on co-operation between interested partners may be developed. This is especially interesting for the multitude of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in the Baltic Sea area.

Each user is to be allowed free access to the site. Each person or organisation may public its project. Hopefully, many will use this opportunity.

It is necessary to broaden the information pool by including tourism offers generated by co-operation across the Baltic. The most important way to accomplish this is to publish projects on the web site, thus also enabling tourists to use the site as an information source.

Now, there are 34 tourism projects in the data bank. 25 of them are supported by the European Union. 260 regional, national or international tourism organisation all over the Baltic Sea region are in the data bank.

More information:
Mr Gerhard Beese
City of Rostock
Tel/Fax +49 381 459 00 40
protoure.v.rostock@t-online.de



Mobile Parking in the City Centre

It is possible to pay for parking via mobile phone in Tallinn. The service introduced by Estonia's leading mobile connection operator EMT has been actively used by drivers since July 2000.

The most innovative GSM Wireless Service. M-Parking was a nominee for the most innovative GSM Wireless Service for customers showing innovation in development, design, market appeal or usability in the offering of new wireless based services to customers at the recent GSM Association conference in Cannes.

The success story. Since its introduction in summer last year, M-Parking has gained 25% of the total parking turnover and more than 10 000 new customers. From the point of view of the Tallinn City government, they have eliminated debt collection risks and reduced the necessary bureaucracy needed to administer conventional parking systems, thus following up on their promise of reducing administrative costs using new technology.



Statistics.

Payment: 25% of total parking turnover

Usability: 22,000 operations monthly

Number of clients: 10,000

Number of cars in Tallinn: 200,000

Number of parking places: 2,500 – 2,700

How it works?

The principle behind M-Parking is that the operator offers micro-billing services to the traffic regulation agency. Through an operator, their attendants can get information on cars, which have paid for parking using the M-Parking service. For car owners, M-Parking provides relief from coins, coupons, scratch cards, etc. They pay for parking while paying their mobile phone monthly bill. And they pay ONLY for the time they actually parked.

Starting a parking session. To begin parking, the customer sends an SMS message with the license number of the car and the location code of the area he is parking in. This will fix the beginning time of the parking session. Alternately parking sessions can be started through WAP.

Ending a parking session. To end the parking session, the customer needs to call a short number, which will then fix the

ending time. The client will receive an SMS for feedback with the time and the amount of money was used for parking.

More information:
<http://m-parking.net>
e-mail: info@m-parking.net

Youth Organisation for Voluntary Activities

AUSTEJA is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation for voluntary service, established in 1991 to spread, stimulate and support voluntary work, idea of peace and international mutual understanding and friendship.

During last years AUSTEJA organised and participated in several different activities eg. 7 international work camps in social and environmental fields. Last year the organisation started working with deaf and blind children in cooperation with society for people with hearing disabilities "Tyla". AUSTEJA has already cooperated with Special School in Panevezys for 4 years. This year volunteers have already started their service in this school and in the Day Centre for Disabled Youth in Panevezys. There was also a cycle of seminars for local NGOs aiming to promote voluntariness in Lithuania and spread the principles of voluntary service in the non-profit organisations.

AUSTEJA is a member of East-West Working Group in the widespread network of voluntary organisations – SCI (Service Civil International) and cooperate with EastLinks, ICYE, CCIYS and many others.

AUSTEJA participates in the European Commission programme "Youth" and since 1999 in European Voluntary Service. Hosting organisations in Lithuania Austeja mostly work in the social field: work with children, the disadvantaged, elderly, orphans. Lithuanian volunteers are mostly interested in social and art projects. Interest in ecological issues can be noticed though quite weak, but it is expected to grow up in nearest future.

More information:
Jokubas Lileika & Vaida Spokeviciute
Austeja, City of Vilnius
Tel. +370 2 611 710
e-mail: austeja@post.5ci.lt
www.5ci.lt/austeja

IFDMYE

IFDMYE - The International Forum of Decision Makers on Youth and School Exchange is a non-profit international Association. It was established following the first successful International Conference held in Israel in 1992. It has since been proceeded by 3 more successful conferences: Germany in 1994, Spain in 1996 and Belgium in 2000.

Main Aims of IFDMYE:

- To increase the role of Local Authorities in developing Youth and School Exchange
- Bringing together decision-makers in this field to establish new partnerships and exchange ideas and experience
- To develop models for bridging hostility to friendship
- To minimise xenophobia through youth and school exchanges
- To develop ways to reduce costs in youth exchange

Activities of IFDMYE

- The periodical organization of international conferences and exhibitions, seminars, workshops and training courses
- The establishment and maintenance of a permanent office for the collection, study and distribution of information and research in the field of Youth and School Exchange.
- Cooperation with national and international agencies, as well as governmental and non-governmental offices, research and academic institutes
- Encouraging programmes for the exchange of young people
- Coordinating partners to provide high-quality, educational programmes at lower costs

At the last conference held in Namur, Belgium, we were delighted that 85 participants attended from over 20 different countries. A variety of subjects were discussed and participants had an opportunity to present their ideas for exchange projects/programmes.

More information:
Secretariat of IFDMYE
Tel. +972 3 695 5024
e-mail: ulais@netvision.net.il
www.ulais.org.il



CITIES - MEMBERS OF THE UBC EXECUTIVE BOARD:



UBC Executive Board during its meeting in Cēsis, 17 March 2001

Aalborg
City Hall
Boulevarden 20
DK-9100 Aalborg, Denmark
contact: Ms Charlotte Pedersen
Tel. +45 99 311516
Fax +45 99 313135

Bergen
City Hall
Radstuepass 6, P.B. 805
N-5002 Bergen, Norway
contact: Mr Arne Landro
Tel. +47 55 565840
Fax +47 55 566401

Gdańsk
City Hall
Nowe Ogrody St. 8/12
PL-80832 Gdańsk, Poland
contact: Mr Maciej Lisicki
Tel. +48 58 3058344
Fax +48 58 3012620

Liepāja
City Hall
Rožu iela 6
LV-3400 Liepāja, Latvia
contact: Ms Ligila Pudža
Tel. +371 340 4790
Fax +371 340 4777

Pori
City Hall
PL 121
FIN-28101 Pori, Finland
contact: Mr Aulis Laaksonen
Tel. +358 2 6211016
Fax +358 2 6211246

Rostock
City Hall
Neuer Markt 1
D-18050 Rostock, Germany
contact: Ms Petra Hamann
Tel. +49 381 381 1136
Fax +49 381 381 1913

Šiauliai
City Hall
Vasario 16-osios 62
LT-5400 Šiauliai, Lithuania
contact: Ms Aiste Zaleviciene
Tel. +370 1 596 306
Fax +370 1 524 116

Stockholm
Stockholm Reg. European Committee
Gota Ark 190
S-11872 Stockholm, Sweden
contact: Ms Lillian Westerberg
Tel. +46 8 615 8882
Fax +46 8 452 9685

St. Petersburg
City Hall
Smolny
RUS-193060 St. Petersburg, Russia
contact: Mr Vladimir Churov
Tel. +7 812 276 1068
Fax +7 812 276 1633

Tartu
City Hall
Raekoda
EE-2400 Tartu, Estonia
contact: Mr Peeter Tulviste
Tel. +372 7 361202
Fax +372 7 361430

ATTENTION Member Cities !!!

The theme of the next bulletin will be "SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION". Everyone is welcome to send material to be published in it.

The deadline for contributions is 7 September 2001 - please respect it.

The Editorial Board wishes following contributions to the bulletin:

- Stories related to the theme
- Short news about activities in the cities
- Vivid and creative photographs to the stories

Please do not hesitate to contact the UBC Secretariat in any questions relating to the Baltic Cities Bulletin!



PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Mr Anders Engström
Kalmar Kommun, Box 611
S-391 26 Kalmar, Sweden
Tel. +46 480 450096
Fax +46 480 450099
e-mail: anders.engstrom@kalmar.se

SECRETARIAT OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki
Secretary General
Waly Jagiellońskie 1
PL-80853 Gdańsk, Poland
Tel. +48 58 3019123
Tel. +48 58 3010917
Fax +48 58 3017637
e-mail: info@ubc.net
<http://www.ubc.net>



Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is a network of currently 99 member cities from all 10 Baltic 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 nine working Commissions on Business Cooperation, Culture, Environment, Education, Health and Social Affairs, Sport, Tourism, Transportation and Urban Planning. 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 the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) and the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE).

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 Union's Secretariat in Gdańsk for more information about the UBC work and the rules of entering the Union.