



Baltic Cities Bulletin

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Making the Baltic Sea cities safer



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Baltic Cities Bulletin

Dear UBC Friends,

Our XI General Conference in Liepāja just came to an end. I dare to call it successful as it gathered over 200 participants from 76 member cities, including mayors, council members, city officials, experts and also representatives of other organizations. We will long remember its perfect organization, supportive and friendly people, and numerous interesting and inspiring discussions we all held.

Each meeting brings a lot of new ideas, inspires, enriches our experience and makes us eager to work with renewed vigour.

Thank you, Liepāja, for giving us such a positive impulse for a more intensive co-operation!

During the conference workshops we have been discussing i.a. the cities' attractiveness from the business, economic perspective. But could a city be attractive if it does not ensure the safety for its inhabitants and visitors? Safety and security are the basic needs that determine the quality of life. Steady jobs, health and wellness, safe neighbourhoods, safety against accidents, injuries or crime make citizens more reluctant to move out. And these seem to be crucial if the city wants to develop.

The Conference approved of creating the UBC Commission on Local Safety. We believe it will enhance the cooperation on various thorny problems our cities face nowadays.

This is a great challenge for us to make our inhabitants feel safe. The sprawling urban areas, heavy traffic, increasing number of visitors, the economic, social and spatial inequities have all serious impacts on the local safety.

This edition of the Baltic Cities Bulletin presents the ways on how to cope with the most important problems. How do the cities deal with such challenges as graffiti, homelessness, juvenile offences, mass events? How do they come up with the ideas? A bunch of solutions and best practices can be found in 23 interesting stories.

I am truly convinced that the consolidation and transfer of existing knowledge, awareness on urban safety and prevention are necessary to improve the quality of live in our cities.

With the Baltic Sea greetings,

Per Bødker Andersen
President of UBC



Kolding, November 2011



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In Næstved two trained inspectors check the safety and condition of public playgrounds regularly



photo: Edgars Porevics

XI UBC General Conference successfully carried out in Liepāja

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MAKING THE BALTIC SEA CITIES SAFER



by Leszek Walczak
Chairman of Commission on Local Safety
Chief of Municipal Guard of Gdańsk

LOCAL SAFETY UMBRELLA

Safety is one of the most important needs of a human being. UBC municipalities have done a lot for their citizens to provide a safe environment. But the question is if they can do more to make the inhabitants feel safe?

According to 2009 questionnaire on public order and local safety worked out by the Municipality Guard of Gdańsk, all municipalities face similar problems. Representatives of 34 Baltic cities indicated that the most vital local safety problems are connected with alcohol abuses, traffic, social riots, environment, illegal graffiti and trade, tourists and older people security and more.

A new way of improving the local safety

In October 2011 during XI General Conference of Union of the Baltic Cities in Liepāja the Public Order & Local Safety Working Group transformed into the Commission on Local Safety. The first workshop of Local Safety Commission pointed out the necessity of new and more productive forms of cooperation. It was also emphasized that the results in the local safety field depended mostly on a close cooperation with the community. The community policing implementation was considered a very effective and efficient way of improving local safety and thus the quality of citizens' lives.

The community policing focuses on promoting the public safety which significantly improves the quality of life. The municipalities are assessing what changes in orientation, organization and operation will allow the communities to benefit. It is a concept of a systematic use of partnership and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to crime and social disorder.

The collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agencies, the individuals and the organizations serve to develop solutions to the problems and to increase a credibility of the law enforcement institutions and the public trust. The community policing, recognizing that police rarely can solve the public safety problems alone, encourages interactive partnerships with relevant stakeholders. The

range of potential partners is large and these partnerships can be used to accomplish two interrelated goals of developing solutions to problems through collaborative problem solving. The public itself should play a significant role in prioritizing the safety problems.

The crucial role of the partnerships

The number of partners can differ from city to city, country to country. However, basically they include legislative bodies, public work departments, neighbouring law enforcement agencies, health and human services, schools.

It is also important that all community members including residents, formal and informal leaders, tourists, and commuters can be a valuable resource for identifying the community concerns. The partnerships should encourage the community to be more committed in achieving the goals by active participation in the public meetings and consultations. An invaluable role is played by non-profit agencies and service providers.

Also, the business partners can benefit from setting the local 'safety puzzles', as well. They have a great stake in the community bringing considerable resources to face the problems and community fears. They can also assist in disseminating information about police and its initiatives. Not only can they identify the issues, but also provide essential resources in forms of security technology and community outreach.

A significant role is played by the media which is a powerful tool of communication. It also helps to publicize the community concerns and to find new ideas in the shape of new law or code. Additionally, the media can have a significant impact on public perception of the law enforcement institutions and the local government.

How to organize the community policing?

Another aspect of the community policing is its organizational management, structure, personnel, and information system. All these elements should support community-oriented solutions.

This requires the application of the modern management practices



to increase efficiency and effectiveness. The activities of organizational leaders should concentrate on building collaborative relations to communicate, influence and educate others.

The community policing needs decentralization, both in the structure and in decision-making. The front-line officers should take a responsibility for their role in relation with the community. Also, the tolerance for risk-taking in problem-solving efforts should increase. The community policing affects the nature and development of the law enforcement units. Their procedures should focus on the principles and practices that have an effect in the street. The community and problem-oriented partnership should become institutionalized in policies, along with the corresponding sets of procedures.

The typical measures of the police performance should include such factors as community satisfaction, fear of crime indicator, the alleviation of problems, and quality of life. The community policing calls for a more sophisticated approach to evaluation—one should look at how feedback information is used, not only how to measure the outcomes. The community policing involves decision-making processes that are more open than traditional ones. If the community is to be a full partner, the authorities need an instrument to share relevant information on public order problems and operations with the community.

The community policing is characterised with a long-term assignment of the officers to specific areas. The geographic deployment plans can strengthen customer service and facilitate more contacts between police and citizens. This helps to develop a stronger relationship and mutual accountability.

To achieve the goals, the personnel should be able to deal with the multiple responsibilities and concentrate on a team approach to problem solving and relations with the community. Job descriptions should recognize community policing and problem-solving responsibilities and encourage recruiting employees who have a suitable psychological features.

Staff training needs to encourage creative thinking, a proactive orientation, communication and analytical skills. Personnel should be trained to identify and react in the conditions that could lead to offences and crime. Moreover, it should raise the public awareness and engage the community in finding solutions to problems.

Technical support

Technological enhancements can greatly assist in improving a two-way communication with citizens and in developing agency accountability systems. Technology provides the agencies with the powerful tools to communicate externally with the public and internally with their own staff. The Internet is used to provide online reports, reverse alarm phone numbers, and e-mail alerts, discussion forums, and feedback on interactive applications (surveys, maps). Thus, it contributes to the on-going dialogues and transparency. Technology also encourages an effective internal communication through reports, newsletters, e-mails and enhanced incident reporting.

The community policing also encourages the use of technology to develop accountability and measurement systems. In addition, technology can support crime/problem analysis by enabling agencies to gather detailed information about offenders, victims, crime locations, and quality-of-life concerns.

A major conceptual vehicle for helping officers to think about problem solving in a structured and disciplined way is the SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment) problem-solving model. The objectives of scanning are to identify a basic problem, determine the nature of that problem and the scope of its seriousness, and to establish the baseline measures. An inclusive list of stakeholders for



Citizens' involvement, flow of information, educational activities form the basis for the local safety.

the selected problem is identified in this phase. The police, with an input from the community should identify and prioritize concerns.

The analysis is the heart of the problem-solving process. The objectives of analysis are to understand the dynamics of the problem and the limits of current responses, to establish correlation, and to identify the cause and the effect. As part of the analysis phase, it is important to find out as much as possible about each aspect of the crime triangle by asking Who?, What?, When?, Where?, How?, Why?, and Why Not? about the victim, offender, and crime location.

The response phase of the model involves developing and implementing strategies to address an identified problem by searching for strategic responses. The response should follow logically from the knowledge learned during the analysis and should be tailored to the specific problem. The goals of the response can range from either totally eliminating the problem, substantially reducing the problem, reducing the amount of harm caused by the problem, or improving the quality of community unity.

The assessment attempts to determine if the response strategies were successful, if the problem declined and if the response contributed to the decline. This information becomes a part of the knowledge for the future. The strategies and programmes can be assessed for process, outcomes, or both. If the responses implemented are not effective, the information gathered during analysis should be reviewed.

Mapping the links among the victim, offender, and location and all other has been found useful in the problem solving. The police focuses on the factors within its reach, such as limiting criminal opportunities and access to victims, increasing guardianship, and associating risk with unwanted behaviour, instead of addressing the roots of the problem.

Let's cooperate

The concept of community policing is one of the best ideas assuring not only good relations of the law enforcement agencies with the residents but first and foremost bringing measurable effects in the scope of safety. The other ways and ideas of dealing with the safety problems are described in this edition of the UBC Bulletin.

On behalf of the Commission I would like to invite all to cooperation.



Karlstad - a safe municipality



by Gunnar Dahl and Mia Marklund

There is a Safety Centre in Karlstad in which professionals, e.g. municipal security developer, police officers, social workers, on-call crime victim services, etc. work together in order to improve safety in the municipality. There is also a group called, 'Youths for safety', which comprises ten specially selected and paid youths aged 18 - 21 who work with peers on safety issues at schools and danger prevention in situ during late evenings in the city centre.

Every operation is to be knowledge based, i.e. that the work is based on different criminological knowledge about crime and its possible effects. The number of car break-ins has been reduced by 50 % over recent years. Other examples include efforts to create safer schools and neighbourhoods. Moreover, safety walks have been arranged where residents themselves are free to make suggestions for safety-creating measures in their communities.

There is also extensive support and assistance for victims of crime. Measures are implemented in order to reduce the risk of crimes being repeated. In Sweden, there are relatively few people and places that are affected by reoccurring crime. Karlstad has less crime and people are safer than in other municipalities of similar size.

"We are now working with study groups and safety walks for women in different residential areas. The reason for this is that women often



The youth for safety

have different feelings of what is unsafe than men do. Studies have also shown that with age women feel more insecure than men. We have produced the study material ourselves and it contains the causes of crime and insecurity as well as examples of different solutions," said Gunnar Dahl, Director of Operations.

An interest from other municipalities about the organisation and its work has been considerable. It has even led to an exchange with England with support from the EU.

"Being a member of the UBC Commission on Local Safety, we have not only the opportunity to learn from and be inspired by others, but also to provide examples

of what we have seen that works in crime prevention and safety-creating measures in Karlstad."

MORE

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Safety improves in Jelgava

by Liene Rulle

Jelgava has made great strides in the urban safety, most of them in the frame of the project "Creation of disaster management system in neighbouring regions of Latvia and Lithuania, Phase II".

Project results in Jelgava include risk assessment, a developed United Civil Protection (CP) Plan for the city, Jelgava region and Ozolnieki region, improved risk management information system, improved transport infrastructure for fire-fighters and rescue service, Intelligent

Transport Management System and closed data transmission network system, municipal centre of operative information.

United CP Plan sets the procedure on how to prevent and eliminate the possible damage to the inhabitants and environment as fast as possible. The possible disasters in industrial objects and on roads, the social, health, natural disasters, agricultural and other risks were assessed.

Results of several projects were combined in one target – the Municipal Centre of Operative Information (POIC). It was opened up on 8 February 2011. POIC consists of four sub-units: crisis elimination control centre, operative control unit of the municipal police, traffic con-



trol centre and united dispatcher point where the control system of problem registering is used. POIC main function is to gather information that is important for civil protection and provide it to the operative services and other services involved in disaster management. One source of information is the communication with the inhabitants. The phone line 8787 is active where the inhabitants can report problems. Currently POIC receives an average of 60 calls from citizens per day.

The POIC, in cooperation with municipal, national and regional institutions, carries out an operative collection and processing of reported problems and their further dissemination and action control.

The Intelligent Transport Management System – also managed from POIC – provides a connected operation of traffic lights. Thus the safety of traffic has been improved in the city – it is possible to handle traffic more effectively and optimize the flow of transport on the transit and main streets reducing the number of traffic accidents. The centre already shows good results - ensuring non intrusive safety measures in everyday life, guaranteeing faster action in possible emergencies, and promoting participation of citizens in making Jelgava safer.

MORE

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School Watch

by Monika Lestberg

School Watch is the newest unit in the Tallinn Municipal Police Department. At first, in 2009 there was a school watch project focused on the work with children at school. Now there are 6 officials in the unit to supervise how the law, which regulates the usage of tobacco and alcoholic beverages, is followed on the school grounds and in the places popular among the young.

In Estonia it is prohibited to use tobacco and alcoholic beverages for the under-age. Although it is forbidden to smoke in public institutions since 2009, there is still a big problem with smoking on the school grounds. Here the adults have an important role. During the supervision the attention is mainly put on the under-age smoking problem. The unit started with the lessons for both children and their teachers on the harmfulness of smoking, usage of alcoholic beverages and other opiates. Last year one new topic was snus and its harmfulness. Snus is a new popular opiate among the Estonian youth. Selling snus is prohibited in Estonia, but it is legal in Sweden. So through Sweden snus reaches Estonia. Snus is easy to use, it does not leave betraying smell on the cloths and hands and many adults, including teachers, do not discover its usage. During the preventive work the parents were also asked to take part in various lessons. Many of them are not aware of the newest opiates on the market. Thus, their hidden harmful impact on health is not common.

Additionally, the School Watch keeps eye on the kiosks near the schools. Unfortunately, the experience shows that the tobacco and



The preventive work is very important. The unit started with the lessons for both children and their teachers on the harmfulness of smoking, usage of alcoholic beverages and other opiates.

alcoholic beverages are sold to the under-age which should be punished.

Many headmasters appreciate the School Watch Unit. Thanks to its work the school grounds have become a better place for the young. Starting from this school year four schools in Tallinn have the supervision unit, where MPD officials are watching over public order. Tallinn MPD wishes that all schools could be safe and pleasant environment for all children to grow and learn.

MORE

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Risk management in Næstved

by Steen Nedergaard Jensen

Næstved City Council has adopted a policy on risk management. Risk management is a necessary response in a world where there is a need to act proactively against threats of health, safety and public welfare.

Risk management is about prevention and damage control. Not only regarding great natural phenomena like hurricanes and floods, but in particular the closer things in daily life, such as preventing harm to children when they play in the municipal playgrounds.

Risk management, however, is not only a municipal task. It must include the collaboration between the municipality and other public authorities, and what is more important, between citizens and businesses.

In the long run, risk management will not work, if the citizens do not change their behaviour and attitudes.

The municipality together with the police, the local homeowners' and housing associations, are discussing how to increase the security of citizens' homes and surroundings. A citizen can do very little to protect own property, but acting together, e.g. in neighborhood watch-programme, citizens can protect each other's assets.



The municipality works systematically with safety on the playgrounds in schools and kindergartens. Two trained playground inspectors check the safety and condition of public playgrounds regularly.

Næstved also participates in the annual business fair in cooperation with the police where the dialogue with citizens and businesses about protecting property is ensured.

Another programme run by the municipality is distribution of smoke alarms for senior citizens and socially vulnerable citizens.

Næstved works in the streets to remove graffiti from municipal and other public facilities. The aim is that Næstved must at all times appear as a clean and neat city. One graffiti will quickly turn into a lot of graffiti. The same reasoning applies regarding vandalism to road signs. All damaged ones will be replaced quickly.

Also, there is a set of regulations for safety and standards for sustainable construction and regulations for systematically setting up CCTV and fire alarm systems in the schools.

In Næstved risk management is based on one office with its own budget.

MORE

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GRAFFITI

When it is not the art



by Dovilė Šulcienė

Vilnius perceives the art of graffiti as a form of self-expression of the youth. When self-expression manifests in forms opposite to the law (in this case, illegal graffiti - damage of another person's property), it is considered as a problem that must be solved. The application of forced methods (penalties, sanctions) alone will not solve the problem, but will rather suppress the formation of personality and raise the increasing protest of the youth. Therefore, the municipality is in search of positive methods for the prevention of illegal graffiti and support the origin of nice graffiti in the legal places. However, the graffiti drawings are inappropriate in the Old Town of Vilnius, which is enlisted as UNESCO's protected objects, as well as on the external walls of buildings and structures.



Each year, the municipality allocates approximately LTL 0.5 million (approx. EUR 144,956.95) for removing illegal graffiti. On 11 June 2004, the Graffiti Prevention Work Group was formed. The activity of the group was mainly focused on the selection of places for drawing legal graffiti. The group is composed of the representatives of municipality, law enforcement and youth organizations.

The municipality has prepared the Illegal Graffiti Prevention Programme for 2010-2011 which includes the application of the following measures:

- Legal spaces for graffiti drawings (currently 7 places),
- Controlling violations (patrol in the areas visited by graffiti drawers, administrative penalties for violators),
- Promoting police officers, detaining the drawers of illegal graffiti,
- Involving and informing the community members,
- Prevention projects.

The illegal drawers are imposed with an administrative responsibility. Administrative penalties vary from caution to the fine in the amount of up to LTL 2,000 (approx. EUR 580). The minimum fine is LTL 10 (approx. EUR 3). The criminal responsibility is also applied for destruction or damage of property.

The majority of graffiti drawing cases are identified by the police officers who are promoted by the municipality with letters of appreciation or cash bonuses.

Thus far all pretrial investigations on the illegal graffiti drawings have been terminated, because the activity was qualified as a violation of the administrative law. One pretrial investigation initiated by the Safe City Department of Vilnius Municipality has been suspended without identifying the guilty part.

The municipality cooperates with the representatives of the community and is in constant search of the promoters.

- The illegal graffiti prevention projects were organized in 2005, 2009 and 2010 during which the illegal graffiti were painted over and competitions of legal graffiti drawing were organized.
- The posters of graffiti prevention and memos on graffiti were distributed in the city.
- Police officers prepare discussions with senior students and their parents regarding the illegal drawing of graffiti.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM

- The approval of more places for legal drawing of graffiti (under-crossings, schools under renovation, special concrete blocks) through the cooperation with graffiti artists.
- Establishment of places where the drawing can be performed without coordination with the municipality.
- The promotion of police officers detaining the drawers of illegal graffiti.
- The assistance to organizers of graffiti drawing contests (organizational assistance, support with paint and other means).
- Creation of prevention videos to be shown at schools, in the public transport means.
- Operative removal of graffiti.
- Promotion among citizens to inform about violations.

MORE

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THE PROJECT: SOCIAL RISKS

by Hans-Ivar Swärd

Today many resources are put into technological risk management, security systems, control and surveillance, but without knowledge of the human factor no system can be safe. That is why the project Social Risks is necessary to increase the knowledge about how an individual feels and acts when it comes to risks of a social character.

What is a social risk? It is the probability for an unwanted event to occur or the consequences if the event occurs. A social risk has its roots in socio-cultural and socio-economic conditions. In the worst case, it can result in serious consequences for people, fundamental social functions and trust, security, democracy and human rights.

The project Social Risks is run by the County Administration Board in the Swedish Södra Götaland together with the County Council Västra Götalandsregionen and the Malmö University. The objective is to increase the knowledge of risks of a social character and to work for integration of the social perspective in a sustainable development. But the project must be carried out on the local level, as well.

Nacka is one of the three pilot municipalities that will work for the implementation of social risks in the work with municipal risk- and vulnerability analyses and contingency planning. At the same time Nacka's objective is to increase the knowledge of the social risks and the factors behind them. Increased knowledge and analyses will give us better possibilities of preparing ourselves to deal with different problems when they occur in the case we haven't been able to prevent them.

To make the analysis possible, as well as to make reasonable comparisons, it is necessary to create a number of indicators which are applicable on different local conditions. This is only an example of some 30 indicators that Nacka has identified: the number of unemployed adolescents and young people, children with difficult childhood and adolescence, people not taking an active part in society, feeling of being an outsider, low confidence in society's actions, people addicted to alcohol and drugs, pupils who abuse drugs, violent crimes, cultural clashes (not only ethnic clashes).

More knowledge of differences between individuals and groups can improve the risk management to reduce the number of people affected and exposed.

To get there, many actors in the society, from scientists to representatives from authorities and municipalities, from practitioners to the public, must become aware of those differences. Because of that the project Social Risks is very important, to try to find indicators and risk factors of a social character with individuals in Nacka.



MORE

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ECOLOGICAL MUNICIPAL GUARD IN MALBORK

by Aleksandra Kapejewska

Frequent traffic jams and obstructions no longer pose any problem for the Municipal Guard in Malbork. Owing bicycles and electric scooters, the municipal police officers can quickly reach every location in the city. The use of the vehicles combines the idea of promoting the ecological actions and ensuring the safety of city residents and tourists mainly in the city centre, the surrounding of the castle and the boulevard on the Nogat River, especially during the holiday season.

Apart from its bicycles, the Malbork Municipal Guard move around on two scooters which, propelled by electric energy, do not emit any exhaust fumes. Depending on their versions, the scooters can cover up to 100-140 km, while the total charging period amounts to max. 5 hours. The single-track vehicles can ride with the maximum speed of 110 km/h and do not generate any sounds. They are not only ecological but also economic. The maintenance costs are much lower in comparison with the traditional single-track vehicles and they drop to almost zero in the case of the bikes.

The municipal police officers on bicycles and scooters not only secure the public order, but are also quite an attraction, being the most often photographed object in the town.

MORE

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KiVa: A national antibullying program

by Christina Salmivalli and Elisa Poskiparta

Being bullied by peers at school is a threat to the healthy development of numerous children and youth all over the world. As in many other societies, bullying has been a big concern in Finland for several decades. For many years there was a persistent belief that the problem can be tackled by legislative changes (i.e. putting schools under the obligation of developing their own action plans against bullying), or by a commitment of school personnel to intervene immediately whenever they see bullying taking place ('zero tolerance'). Based on what is known today, reducing bullying requires systematic, ongoing efforts at the level of individual children, classrooms, and the whole school. Moreover, school personnel need concrete tools for bullying prevention work with children and youth, just as they need clear guidelines to intervene when bullying is detected. KiVa has a strong theoretical basis and is based on decades of research done by our group at the University of Turku and other leaders in the field from around the world. The program is predicated on the idea that how peer bystanders, who are neither bullies nor victims, react when witnessing bullying is crucial for either maintaining bullying or putting an end to it. Influencing the peer context is thus essential in effective antibullying work – and this is what the KiVa program does. The Finnish school system has a reputation of being highly effective in terms of producing good academic outcomes (<http://pisacountry.acer.edu.au>). However, it is even more appreciated that the Finnish govern-



ment wanted to take students' school well-being seriously and decided that preventing bullying was a priority. Funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture has enabled the group at the University of Turku to develop a comprehensive, research-based antibullying program which has already helped thousands of children and adolescents in the country. In Finland, the effects of the KiVa program have been evaluated in numerous studies. Besides reducing the prevalence of children bullying others or being bullied by others, the program leads to positive changes in antibullying attitudes, empathy, and constructive bystander behaviors. It increases school liking, academic motivation and even academic performance, and reduces social anxiety and negative peer perceptions. Importantly, the effects of KiVa seem to generalize to multiple forms of bullying, including cyberbullying which often takes place outside the school context. The use of KiVa in Finnish schools is remarkable. During the first three years of a national rollout of the program, 90% of schools providing comprehensive education have adopted it. International interest in KiVa has risen as well, and evaluation studies are beginning in several countries outside Finland, including the United States and the Netherlands. The strong theoretical and empirical base of KiVa leads us to believe that it will work in other contexts outside of Finland, as well.

MORE

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Pruszcz Gdański invests in safety

by Bartosz Gonddek

Pruszcz Gdański which is a town with almost 30 thousand inhabitants has always had an opinion of a safe and citizen-friendly one. The new century which brought rapid development made the city authorities face new challenges, also in terms of improving safety. *The rapidly increasing number of citizens and new infrastructure made it necessary to construct city monitoring. Its centre is located in the seat of Municipal Guard – says Janusz Wróbel, Mayor of Pruszcz Gdański. Already the first months when the system was operating resulted in apparent fall in the number of vandalism incidents.*

Currently the radio monitoring system covers essentially the entire western part of Pruszcz Gdański. This year a transmitter station will be installed on the sugar factory chimney. It will enable the monitoring to cover the eastern part of town, as well. The recording devices guard not only public safety, but also the traffic rules.

There are eight masts in Pruszcz Gdański where devices recording speeding are installed. They're moved, according to the need, even several times a day – says Leszek Banaś, Head of the Municipal Guard



Safety means not only support for intervention services. It's also about new collision-free roundabouts, safe streets, internal network of bicycle paths, etc..

– the number of tragic events, especially with participation of pedestrians has fallen thanks to the devices.

The city invests not only in electronic safety systems. The Police in Pruszcz receive a grant for fuel. Outstanding police officers receive special awards for detecting perpetrators destroying the municipal possession. The Town Council bought the unmarked police cars in the last years.

This year, upon the Mayor's initiative the Emergency in Pruszcz received a modern rescue motorcycle equipped, among others, with a defibrillator.

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Crime prevention work

by Olaf Haugen

Crime prevention is not only the police's responsibility. The problems cannot be solved by one department alone. Crime prevention is dependent on broad forms of co-operation. To get results it is necessary to work holistically in close cooperation with the police and all sectors of the municipality, schools, parents' associations, volunteers and various organisations. Parents play a key role. It is necessary to get the message through them and inform them of the importance of upbringing and togetherness in these processes. In Kristiansand the experiences of co-operation and holistic competence in this field are positive. It is the strong belief of the local authorities that co-operation between the municipality, the police and citizens is necessary to promote safety in the city and the suburbs.

The present Mayor has given crime prevention work high priority, which means that the chief of police, the deputy chief of police, the CEO of the city and the crime prevention unit meet once or twice a year to exchange information, discuss and to draw up the strategies and action plans for future work. The city crime prevention coordinator is responsible for the work in the group. The coordinator meets regularly in the Executive Council Committee to inform the politicians on the status of the crime situation in the city. The crime group which is a broader group, meets once a month. This group is constituted by

heads of the police and the municipal sectors of health and social services, education, culture and technical services, as well as representatives from the probation office and trade and industry. The purpose of the crime group is to monitor and assess the local crime-situation in Kristiansand, and is coordinating the work between the different members.

Another interagency crime-prevention group, originally established to coordinate information on the young neo-nazi groups, has today a broader crime-prevention purpose. The members come from the schools, the child care services, youth clubs, from three local police-stations in Kristiansand and the suburbs, the preventive police unit and from two important NGO's. The group consists of people who know the youths and the crime-situation very well. Their task is to collect and to coordinate information on the current situation, assess the situation and propose measures for both intervention and prevention. They are, of course, still monitoring the neo-nazi scene. The cooperation between six municipalities surrounding Kristiansand has been established. Working together is a key priority in Kristiansand to reduce crime especially among children and youth.



photo: Anders Malmsten

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Prevention is better than cure

by Aleksandra Rezunkova

In Narva almost 18% of the population is young people under 19. What they do, affects the life in the city. Among the many organizations dealing with the issues of youths, there is the local police department. Narva police has a special unit, whose target is juvenile delinquency.



The reasons for the youngsters' disruptive behaviour are tried to be found. One reason that comes up fairly often is the youths' inability to pass their free time in a meaningful and useful way. Some young people are unable to attend sport clubs or hobby centers because their families simply cannot afford it. As part of

the solution, the city supports the NGOs whose activities are tailored to the needs and interests of youngsters. Such organizations let the kids participate in their activities without any fee; besides, the specialists in the organizations offer psychological counseling. A city-funded open youth center has plenty to offer to the young Narvians: meaningful pass-time opportunities, information on education, career planning

and development, writing and carrying out the youth projects. Also, the commission on juvenile issues was established in Narva. It acts under the auspices of the city government and consists of specialists representing different areas of youth work: social department, educational department, NGOs dealing with youths, as well as the police, the prosecutor, and the criminal supervision. The diversity of representation allows to find an operative and appropriate way of solving the problem for children who break the law, which leads to diminishing the chances for recurrence of the crime. Together with the parents the specialists examine the causes of the child's unlawful behaviour and decide on the measures to be taken and specialists to be assigned for work with the child. As our experience reveals, one of the best methods for correcting juvenile delinquent behaviour is community service. It gives a young person a chance to remedy the consequences of bad behaviour and realize the amount of responsibility. However, this is not the only way of crime prevention. The city supports and organizes projects involving young people doing good for the benefits of the city. After all, it is not for nothing that the city of Narva has received the title of the "child-friendly city".

MORE

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UEFA EURO CUP IN GDAŃSK

Goals towards safety



by Miłosz Jurgielewicz

Gdańsk will be hosting UEFA EURO 2012 Cup in June 2012. There will be three group matches and one quarterfinal played in Gdańsk. The city PGE Arena stadium provides the seats for 40 000 spectators. Outside the stadium, especially in the fan zones another dozens thousands fans could gather at the same time. Prognosis suggests an arrival of more than 100,000 people to the city. Such a large amount of guests requires a well-organized system of transportation, medical care, as well as security system.

Providing professional structure and efficient organizational framework will be essential for a successful event. One of the most important challenges for the organizers is to assure safety for all: players, UEFA representatives, commentators, citizens and of course football supporters. It has to be done according to the idea 'Have fun – feel safe'. The security system will be managed on four levels: international, national, municipal and stadium's. The coordination between all institutions will be ensured by the Central Security Management System. All undertaken activities have been categorized into three fields: security, service and safety. The security level guarantees physical security to the event's participants and citizens. The service concerns all activities that support running the event smoothly. The safety is meant as all efficient and discreet actions which assure participants that there is no danger. Additionally, there is more detailed operational strategy for the police (e.g. National Police, Municipal Guard) based on three priorities: care, tolerance, suppression. Its first task is to provide the information on transport, facilitations and current difficulties. The second priority is tolerant attitude towards even slightly undisciplined football fans and establishing a dialogue, rather than strict punishing. The last one is a rapid and professional suppression of aggressive and dangerous supporters connected with a quick withdrawal of forces after intervention. The efficient implementation of this strategy requires one more element – spotter system, which means effective



PGE Arena in Gdansk

football fans monitoring from inside. The police officers working as spotters assigned to risky groups of supporter will identify any potential danger and pass over gathered information to the operational forces.

Finally, the safety measures of PGE Arena are fundamental. It is equipped with the hi-tech sound and monitoring system, consisting of 456 cameras, situated both inside and outside of the stadium. The evacuation of spectators to the safety zones takes just 8 minutes. One can never say that security will be guaranteed in 100%, but Gdansk Municipal Guard, together with several other law enforcement forces, will do the best to unfold UEFA EURO 2012 Cup in safe and secure environment. However, this event cannot succeed without footballers. Hopefully, they will score lots of goals and provide an unforgettable show.

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The Tall Ships Races 2011 in Halmstad

- the Safety Handbook

by Helen Stened

All the precautionary measures made for the Tall Ships Races 2011 in Halmstad have been put together in a single document - the Safety Handbook. A risk- and vulnerability analysis is the foundation of the document. Set out in the fall 2010, it is a result of cooperation between the Police, Region Halland, Emergency Services, Technical Department of Halmstad Municipality, Halmstad Harbour, etc. During the fall 2011 the Safety Handbook will be completed with an evaluation of the safety work.

In the risk- and vulnerability analysis a number of undesired events were identified. Starting with these events as foundation, measurements were drawn up to prevent accidents and to relieve damage. The process of identifying undesired events was marked off by including events on dry land and in the harbour within Halmstad municipality's responsibility. An exception was 'Man overboard on open water', where the municipality did not have any responsibility, but would be of assistance, if the event took place close to the land.

All undesired events were graded on the basis of probability and consequence. In the risk matrix, the scale 1-4 combined with colors, rising from green to black was used. Among 35 undesired events 8 were graded red, high probability and consequence. For those events specific measurements were worked out and presented widely in the Safety Handbook.

The meetings preceding the event contributed to the knowledge of the authorities and organizations participating in the safety work, as well as to the knowledge of the people behind. The meetings resulted in finding the areas of collaboration, possibilities and development. During the Tall Ships Races on 4-8 August 2011, the daily meetings took place to go over eventual security matters. The Police, the Emergency Services, Region Halland and the Swedish Maritime Administration were during the whole event located together in the Rescue Area.

MORE

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RIGA – A CITY WITH A HIGH SAFETY COEFFICIENT

by Andrejs Aronovs

Ever since Latvia was opened up to foreign nations, Riga has also become a popular tourist destination. Along with the influx of tourists to the city and the wide range of entertainment opportunities the municipality faced problems and disturbances that disrupted peace of the local residents and threatened safety of the city guests. The problems required a solution and radical decisions to improve the public safety and order in the city.

The solution was found. Within less than two years the problems of the tourism industry have been being solved successfully by setting up a municipal police unit available to public, communicative and largely preventive.

All travelers can find something interesting and exciting in the city. However, there are also a lot of visitors who come for entertainment exclusively and with a single aim – comparatively cheap liquor and crazy binge weekend and all that it entails. A conduct of this tourist category – treating historical and cultural monuments significant to the Latvian people with disrespect and profaning them, disturbing the peace in the city – offended and upset the local residents. Effective laws and regulations did not restrict disturbers and the shameless conduct of ‘weekend tourists’ become a kind of sport for certain foreigners.

The tourists’ lack of awareness of the safety matters often resulted in becoming the victims. The police had been receiving information on tourists who were cheated in taxis and nightclubs, robbed or mugged in the street on a regular basis. The victims did not trust the local law enforcement bodies and complained about the problems in their home countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia received notes informing of those incidents. Thus Riga had earned itself a bad reputation as a tourist destination ruled by judicial chaos, unfair commercial practice, fraud, and theft. It reached its culmination in the summer of 2008-2009.

The municipality reacted by taking full responsibility for solving the



The Tourism Unit of the Municipal Police in Riga helps in communication between tourists and the local authorities, prevents the crime and violations against tourists, fights against unfair businesses.

problem and in late 2009 after causal analysis it made a decision to improve public safety and order both for the local residents and foreign visitors. A separate police unit was set up under the wing of Riga Municipal Police with a certain focus area – tourism. The tasks of the newly made unit include fast and easy communication between tourists and the local authorities, prevention of crime and violations against tourists, fight against unfair businesses, tourists’ and local residents’ safety guarantee on the streets of Riga. During the first days of work the Tourism Unit began active communication with the concerned parties of the tourism industry – representatives of diplomatic missions, tour operators, representatives of hotels, restaurants and entertainment places, foreign safety and law enforcement bodies. Jointly developed recommendations for tourist safety, latest information on the order and regulations effective in Riga, possibilities of receiving help from the police and contacts were distributed among foreign tourists. Help provided by the Municipal Police ensures fast proceedings in communication with the foreigners.

Along with the preventive measures Riga Municipal Police has also opened a hotline for tourists - 67181818 - that in case of trouble ensures the contact with the police, explains the problem in English, and offers competent help immediately all the time.

Riga Municipal Police applies various strategies to fight unfair businesses effectively. The work done has already produced certain positive results – the number of conflict situations at entertainment places in Riga has shrunk to a minimum. In 2010 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Riga City Council did not receive a single complaint on unfair practice at entertainment place in the old town.

The contribution of the municipality and the police to improving general public safety and order in Riga has borne fruit. The city attracts people who are interested in cultural and historical values, rich architecture and great opportunities for cultural entertainment. Riga is reknown all over the world as an interesting city that is rich in traditions and unique cultural opportunities combined with a high safety coefficient. In two years’ time the city will regain its stable position as a leader on the Baltic tourism market.



All the precautionary measures made for the Tall Ships Races 2011 in Halmstad are put together in a single document - the Safety Handbook.

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UMEÅ CENTRAL

- where safety and accessibility set the agenda



by Helene Brewer

Umeå Municipality and the Traffic Authority have been working with the station area Umeå Central while creating a new district link between Haga and the centre. The work will be completed by the end of 2012. The new Umeå Central means a better and safer station area. At the same time, it is also suitable for the new regional train traffic on the Bothnia Line.

The Umeå C Link is a ten-meter wide pedestrian and bicycle tunnel with a ceiling height of three meters. It is being prepared for a new travel centre, which is planned in the future for both bus and train services. A great care has been put into designing the tunnel so that it could be accessible, bright and secure.

The research shows that women feel insecure in public places to a greater extent than men. Both women and men experience anxiety of being robbed or assaulted, but women account in particular the risk of being exposed to sexual violence in the form of rape or sexual harassment. One effect of this is that more women than men, limit their life outside their own neighborhood at night staying at home. Insecurity is the factor that limits the ability of women to move in the cities and urban environment at most.

The planning of the new station area and the link gives a valuable experience on issues of safe & secure planning. The working group has consisted of builders, project managers, engineers, traffic planners, bus-company, gender expert.

One reason why the municipality of Umeå has been focusing on security work for many years in the city, is building an accessible city for all people, both women and men, young children and the elderly.

The work in the public spaces, light installations, tunnels & passages (lighting, maintenance, etc), public events in the centre for the citizens, for instance the Light Festival and the Cultural Night are the examples of security efforts. Many people of all ages meet and take part in these events. The city becomes alive and more people feel that it is ok to move late at night.

The local safety and feeling secure in one's own town is an important part of the urban sustainable development and is closely connected with the quality of life in our cities around the region.

MORE

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Safe Harbour Programme in Gdynia

by Dorota Podhorecka – Kłós

Gdynia faces a number of diverse challenges connected with the local safety. As the city continues to change and expand, it is confronted with responsibilities and complexities of any fast-developing city. Major obstacles are ranging from inadequate capacity of the road network, a growing number of cars and insufficient parking spaces to growing social stratification that deepens the differences in the citizens' quality of life and therefore triggers pathological behaviours, homelessness or littering. The police reports show that the crime rate in Gdynia is decreasing but the number of such criminal offences as thefts, car thefts or damages is increasing. Accordingly, the city authorities and uniformed services like Gdynia City Guard or the police are determined to reduce the crimes that affect our community.

The police have introduced a 3-year prevention programme "Safe Harbour". It is divided into thematic areas such as safety in public places and places of residence and safety of the passengers using public transport. The police intensify patrols in the city centre and all means of public transport. Other problems are domestic violence, alcoholism, drug addiction and other signs of social pathology. To prevent these problems there operate interdisciplinary teams of policemen, city guards and psychologists. Other thematic areas are improvement of the road traffic safety, safety in business and protection of the national heritage.

The city makes all effort to enhance public safety and reduce the incidence of crime by implementing a number of educational and prevention programmes. They are addressed to school children and they are



Gdynia Final of the Program
- The police seal teaches safety rules.

adjusted to particular age groups. The police implement the fourth edition of a programme for children from private and state schools - 'The police seal teaches safety rules'. Another programme coordinated by Gdynia City Guard is 'Be safe'. Both programmes are aimed at preparing primary school students to cope with threatening situations

like how to respond to meeting a stranger or how to behave as a pedestrian. Moreover, starting from the first grade of primary school, children are taught how they can help the environment and therefore influence their communities. Other programmes worth noticing are the campaign against addictions and a programme about aggression and peer violence that are introduced in primary schools. For junior high school students the police realize "Small Theatrical Forms" during which the students present short performances on such problems as drug addiction, alcoholism and violence.

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A BEAR CITY TACKLES VIOLENCE

by Pasi Vainio

Pori is known as the events capital of Finland and as “Bear City”, from its Swedish name Björneborg. The bear symbolizes strength, which is a quality drawn upon in local safety work. Pori is tackling safety collectively as cooperation is a key success factor for the events capital. However, even more efforts need to be put into safety, since according to 2009 survey, the inhabitants of Pori have a weaker image of their city as a safe place compared to the inhabitants of other large cities in Finland.

Like elsewhere, disorder and violence in Pori are linked to excessive use of alcohol. According to the police statistics, violent crime is on the increase, which is a cause for great concern. The joint task is to reduce violence so that safety is improved and the human suffering caused by violence and the ensuing costs are decreased.

A work to reduce alcohol abuse is being tackled with determination and more effective ways to reduce violence are being sought. The city focuses on reducing violence particularly through safety measures that cross administrations, with the aim of improving the safety of public places. Primarily, violence is prevented through co-operation between multiple professional groups. In addition, it is important to make effective use of measures to prevent violent incidents, whereby situational violence can be deterred, etc. It is equally important to combat the factors leading to violence. Furthermore, harm caused by violence can be reduced for instance through victim support.

At the beginning of the violence reduction programme the partners made an assessment of the current situation and analyse the local operating environment. A comprehensive local operating environment analysis helps to clarify the key threats to safety. In this way, the subjects and issues are specified, which enables the targeting of customized measures. It is crucial to take the local conditions into account because there is no single solution for the reduction of violence. It must be decided locally how to carry out the work and which meth-



Crimes and disorder are concentrated in very small areas within cities.

In Pori the “Hot spot” method would operate as a common tool in multi-professional collaboration.

It would be used for gathering information for the partners involved and locating as precisely as possible the points on a joint map where crimes, disorder and accidents have occurred and the reasons behind them.

ods to use. Pori’s core concept is that influencing the consumption and availability of alcohol is one of the key means of reducing violence. According to the international criminology “Hot Spots” study, only 3.5% of the addresses in a city account for 50% of the crimes. Another significant result of the study was that disturbances were not merely moved around the corner by intervention, but eliminated. The same phenomenon can also be seen in Finland. Use of the “Hot spot” method makes it possible to find the areas and places where problems accumulate. It promotes recognition of the phenomena and widens the knowledge of the various authorities about the situation, such as the background reasons that affect the build-up of violence. In Pori, better awareness of the situation is a part of the efforts required in the local safety work at the current time.

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A beautiful piece of Rostock

by Karin Wohlgemuth



For the fourth time the four town quarters Groß Klein, Schmarl, Dierkow and Toitenwinkel in the North West of Rostock celebrated their programme days ‘A beautiful piece of Rostock’. With the help of local financing and regional programmes like ‘The Social City’ these quarters have developed into attractive areas for living. Green yards, renewed sidewalks, new playgrounds are the visit card of these areas.

On 23 September - 9 October a lot of activities took place. The exhibition ‘The Social City’ of the Ministry of Construction of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern was shown in the city hall. The organizers offered guided

bus-trips for interested citizens. During the sport festival ‘Stadtteile in Bewegung’ (City Quarters in Motion) teams and individuals were fighting for the WIRO Cup donated by the local housing company ‘Wohnen in Rostock’ (WIRO). Autumn festivals, book bazaars, discussion rounds, children’s educational parcours, flower planting, cinema evenings, contest for self-made paper boats, ‘The North East Sings’, Kite Festival and much more brought together the citizens and showed them all beautiful places of their living environment through this funny, peaceful and beautiful action.

The city quarter managers play a key role in these activities – they explain the city’s policy, they know very well all what has been done in their areas and their promote the wishes and concerns of the citizens to the right place. This resulted to be a very successful system. The experience shows that a friendly environment and a friendly neighbourhood contribute substantially to a safe living in the cities.

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SPECIAL ATTENTION TO SECURITY



by Jurgita Vanagė

Palanga is the largest resort in the country, attracting hundreds of thousands holidaymakers to the seaside on summer days. To make the town visitors feel safe, the officers of special services have to keep up with a considerably increased workload. In summer the police officers must react to approximately 56 calls every day – it is four times more than during the cold season. Firemen also receive approximately three times more requests for help during the holiday season than usual.

To make the holidaymakers and local residents feel safe, 15 video cameras have been installed in the town. In all cases, reaction to the events is attempted to be as expeditious as possible. Since the police workload increases multiple times during the hot season, the local officers are helped by colleagues from other towns in the country. In summer every day peace was supervised by approximately 8 officers on detached service, prepared on the principal of universal police officers, in addition to about 20 Public Safety Service officers and Palanga Police Commissariat officers



from Patrol Squad and Prevention Unit. The extended police force ensured that comparing to the situation last summer, the level of criminal activity in the public spaces has decreased this year.

In summer 38 lifeguards were watching the beach range of twenty-four kilometers. Their vigilance ensured that bathing in the Baltic Sea did not end with a tragedy for 68 families. The medical help was given to almost 200 people who were hurt or sick on the beach.

Immense workload and special responsibility in summer also falls on local medics – the resources available tend a considerably increased number of patients. Over three months of summer the surgery–emergency department tended the same number of patients as the remaining nine months altogether – 3 604. The emergency rushed to 2 612 calls during the summer. Out of season, this number of people looking for help is only registered over a half year period.

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Fighting for a change

by Eva Hjalmered

The boxing club of Oskarshamn and the Mixed Martial Arts club LocXter MMA have joined forces with BRIS (Children's Rights in Society) and taken stand for all children and youths' right to a save upbringing. Several boxing galas have been arranged during the years in Oskarshamn and this time it will be joined by MMA (Mixed Martial Arts), which is a sport in the rise worldwide. Fighting for Change is not just only a sport event, it is also standpoint for the clubs for all children and youths' right to a save upbringing.

We have a very strong social direction in our activities and we work actively to support vulnerable and troubled children and youth. This

commitment is found in the name of the gala "Fighting for Change", which symbolizes a will to make a positive change, says Kristoffer Malm, one of the organizers. We have decided to donate 10 % of our surplus to BRIS (Children's Rights in Society). BRIS will be present and take active part in a fundraising during the event.

The MMA and boxing gala Fighting for Change took place on 29 October in Oskarshamn and will hopefully become a yearly event.



MORE

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MODERN CITY IS A SAFE CITY

by Vladimir Abramov

Kaliningrad municipal authorities pay special attention to the activities aimed at safety of the citizens and guests. These measures contain several aspects.

The first aspect lies in law and order maintenance in the streets of Kaliningrad. Though this sphere is closely connected with activity of the law enforcement authorities the city actively participates in establishment of favorable conditions for development of this field. In particular the program "Bright City" which provides installation of traffic lights in the streets and yards of Kaliningrad has been implemented for the last four years. This undertaking contributes to the decrease in level of street crime. Installation of 2000 lamps resulted in reduction of total amount of crimes to 1/6 during the last 1,5 year.

The second aspect is connected with the high level of auto mobilization in the region. The city with population of 450,000 people daily accounts more than 250,000 cars and lorries. In order to centralize the transport streams the city undertakes installation of traffic lights. The speed bumps are installed in the streets near schools. The activities on construction of the first over ground cross-walk are being implemented now.

The third aspect is environmental protection. 80 small boiler



Making Jūrmala a safe place

by Pavels Dunajs

Every summer in Jūrmala not only a number of guests is rising, but also a number of cars which drive into the city causing traffic jams. The City Council is actively working on these issues in collaboration with the Municipal Police.

As a resort city Jūrmala offers its guests and residents an alternative way of transportation, i.e. bicycles and public transport. From 2010 airBaltic offers the 'BalticBike' to rent in Riga and leave in Jūrmala in one of three access points. As reported by airBaltic commercial director Tero Taskila 'BalticBike' bikes are equally popular among foreign tourists and residents of Riga and Jūrmala. A decreased rental fee for bicycles is only 0.70 LVL per hour, which is no more than a single ticket for the public transport.

Jūrmala participates in the annual Mobility Week. The aim of the European Mobility Week campaign is to encourage the use of energy-efficient forms of transport (cycling, walking). It will help to decrease atmosphere pollution, to slow down the global warming, and to improve the quality of life in the cities.

Jūrmala also tries to guarantee the homes for local people in difficult situation. On 22 September there were ridgepole celebrations in the Līču Street 2, where three storey blocks of flats are located. They guarantee home for 65 families who are waiting for government assistance in solving the housing issues. The project was re-aligned in a very short time, by cooperating municipalities "Jurmala Development



The last season 'BalticBike' users spent 20,000 hours on the bikes which is equivalent to more than 2 years of non-stop cycling. 'BalticBike' has 100 bicycles easily available in 11 places in Riga and Jūrmala.

Projects" Ltd. and the planning department of Jūrmala City Council. Currently about 500 families are waiting for the municipal assistance in solving housing issues.

MORE

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Facing the forces of the nature

by Laura Afanasjeva

Each spring comes with uncertainty for the inhabitants of Jēkabpils. Life on the banks of Latvia's largest river Daugava has always been a kind of test of the locals' endurance.

In 1931 and 1981 Jēkabpils suffered from two major floods. In April 1981 it took only one day for water to cover a half of the city. Water reached the level of 8,7 m - the critical level is 6,3 m. Four thousand people were evacuated; hundreds of homes required a renovation. These tragic events confirmed that the city needs to face the destructive force of melted water and to protect inhabitants, their households and cultural values of the city. The first dam was built in 1982.

In 2010 the Project of Daugava Dam reconstruction was approved and its implementation started. After a year, the project has been officially completed. 3,8 km of the dam on the left side and 1,1 km on the right side of river were reconstructed. Height of dam is six to eight meters. And now it is not only a functional structure, but also an esthetic element of a city landscape. There are 13 rest areas, sidewalk, access to Daugava and on the left side of the river - platform for resonant songs of choir.

The project was applied by Jēkabpils City Council, with a share of 15%. 85% of the project was financed by European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Total implementation amount of the project is more than 2 million EUR.



houses operating on coal and oil-fuel were shut down during the last 4 years. The municipality plans to continue these activities aimed at total elimination of this source of pollution. Besides the activities on purification of the city's hydrographic system including 120 km of rivers, brooks and flows are being fulfilled. The city pursues a policy of removal of large industrial objects outside the city's borders. Thus, the influence of long term factors generating negative impact is diminished. The city is a living body and the constant construction and modernization works are carried out.

Also, it is planned to complete the process of resettlement of the citizens from rundown accommodation into the buildings of better quality. Hundreds of Kaliningrad families have already left their shabby accommodations.

The above mentioned actions will contribute to creation of high safety level in Kaliningrad.

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UBC today

XI UBC General Conference successfully carried out in Liepāja

Building the future together

The notes of the UBC anthem performed by the Bell Choir opened XI UBC General Conference in Liepāja. Over 200 participants from 76 member cities, including mayors, council members, city officials, experts and representatives of other organizations, gathered on 5-6 October 2011 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Union's foundation in Gdańsk on 20 September 1991.



photo: Edgars Pohevičs

For about 45 years Baltic Sea region had been separated by invisible and visible border, so called 'iron curtain' that did not allow us to meet each other, to develop our Baltic Sea region, our infra-structure, and

our business, said Mr Uldis Sesks, Mayor of Liepāja welcoming the participants. Today, we are able to build our future together and we are very grateful to many cities that are represented here today for sharing with us your experience.

The first plenary session brought an outlook on what happened during the last 20 years from the Cold War to the present cooperation and what can happen during the next 10-20 years.

Ms Catharina Sørensen, representing European Commission DG Regio, presented the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region: A New Framework for Joint Action.

A historical perspective of the BSR development was in focus in the speech of Mr Jerzy Marek Nowakowski, Ambassador of Poland to the Republic of Latvia, entitled "Baltic Sea Region: From Cold War to Arena of Cooperation".

Mr Igor Lonsky, Deputy Chairman - Head of the International Cooperation Department of the Committee for External Relations of Saint-Petersburg, was speaking about the future prospects for the Baltic Sea cooperation.

Challenges and possibilities for economic cooperation in the BSR was presented by Mr Martti Kohtanen, CEO of Siemens Finland, a strategic partner of the Baltic Development Forum.

The second plenary session highlighted the cities' role, their expectations, interests, etc. Ms Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor of Umeå,

The new **Executive Board** was elected and now Gdańsk (Poland), Jyväskylä (Finland), Keila (Estonia), Kristiansand (Norway), Liepāja (Latvia), Næstved (Denmark), Šiauliai (Lithuania), Rostock (Germany), St. Petersburg (Russia), Växjö (Sweden) are the Board members during the next period.

Mr Per Bødker Andersen was re-elected as the President. **Ms Marie-Louise Rönmark**, Umeå, will hold the position of the 1st UBC Vice-President, whereas **Mr Jarkko Virtanen**, Turku, and **Mr Andres Jaadla**, Rakvere will be the Vice-Presidents. **Gdańsk** will serve as a host city of the UBC Secretariat.

1st Vice-President of UBC and Ms Urve Tiidus, City of Kuressaare, former Mayor, Member of the Parliament of Estonia, delivered interesting speeches presenting the cities' point of view.

The youth representative, Mr Pavels Jurs, Director of Liepāja Youth Centre, listed several ideas on how to involve young people in the work.

The second conference day started with the inspiring workshops covering three crucial issues our societies are facing:

- How to strengthen economic attractiveness of cities;
- How to master climate change; success factors in local integrated climate management;
- How to meet the demographic challenge; the ageing society.

The competent experienced speakers stimulated interactive discussions with the cities' delegates.

The second day was devoted to the internal UBC matters, such as reports, elections, finances, etc. Additionally, the Conference approved the creation of the UBC Commission on Local Safety.

The Mediaeval Week on Gotland and the Punk Song Festival in Rakvere shared the UBC Cultural Prize 2011.

The XII UBC General Conference will be held in Mariehamn in 2013.



photos: Edgars Pohevičs



Towards more effective UBC

This year, UBC embarked on a mission to create a new communication and marketing strategy, scheduled to be ready for implementation in the beginning of 2012. The overall goal is to raise the public profile and visibility of UBC in the Baltic Sea Region.

Indeed, UBC is in communication intensive business. Its mission, as outlined in the UBC 2010-2015 strategy is to support its member cities in their development to achieve a high quality of life for their inhabitants, promote the Baltic Sea Region as a dynamic, competitive and prosperous region and to further the interests of the Baltic Sea Region and its cities in national and European decision-making.

Based on its mission, the UBC wants to be:

- a platform and meeting place for exchange of ideas
- a source for inspiration, increased awareness, dialogue, networking,
- a strong voice on regional and European affairs, and
- a respected and recognised partner in the Baltic Sea Region

The UBC communication needs to be effective, efficient and well-organised in order to achieve all this. The strategy, however, concludes that the UBC communication and marketing is not entirely up to par and speed, claiming that despite its successful activities since 1991, UBC is still relatively little known both among cities, decision makers and among the general public.

This calls for more action to raise the profile and visibility of the organisation and its achievements. UBC needs a clearer and stronger brand, including a marketing slogan.

Against this background, the objective of the strategy process and the ensuing report is to define and describe the future marketing

and communication strategy of the Union of the Baltic Cities and associated actions in an action plan (goals, target groups, main stakeholders, messages to be communicated and channels to be used). It will also take into account possibilities offered by the Internet and the new electronic media, co-operation with member cities and other partners, possible high-profile events and initiatives, joint initiatives with other organisations, etc.

The strategy work includes steps to determine how UBC is seen today, internally and externally, and to create inclusiveness in and support for the strategy process by asking as many people as possible for their opinion. Concretely, surveys, telephone interviews and workshops have been used to achieve this. Fundamental questions that help to get a picture of the UBC today has been asked, such as 'who are we and what do we stand for and what are our core values and our role?'

The strategy was decided on at the Executive Board in Lathi in February, giving the city of Kiel and the city of Kristiansand the task to make sure that the project is implemented. Swedish branding and strategy consultancy Tendensor has been hired to assist in this work.

MORE

Overall questions about the project:

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Questions about the practicalities of the project:

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UBC in Brussels

One of the most important issues taken up in the UBC Strategy is the organisation's presence in Brussels and lobbying towards the European institutions. As the Strategy says, "formulation of integrated development strategies - such as the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region - and UBC's emerging role as the spokesman of the BSR cities open possibilities for us to get the voice of Baltic local authorities heard. However, this requires greater policy formulation capacity and more effective lobbying, especially on national, regional and European levels".

The burden of responsibility lies on the Executive Board, Secretariat, as well as on the Commissions. Also, the effectiveness of the UBC lobbying in Brussels should be re-evaluated.

On 29 July 2011 the enquiry was sent out to all member cities concerning their representation in Brussels.

Almost half of the members responded, out of those 4 reported they have their



own Brussels office, namely: Helsinki, Malmö, Tallinn and Turku. The majority of the cities who responded referred to the contacts with either the EU regional representations or the EU offices of the national cities associations, e.g. Tampere Region EU Office, Central Denmark EU Office, West Finland European Office, Schleswig-Holstein, Hanse-Office, North Sweden European Office, Pomorskie Regional EU Office, Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments in Brussels, EU Office of Association of Local Authorities of Lithuania, and others.

The Union would like to utilize the knowledge and potential of these offices. On 15 February 2012 the UBC Executive Board intends to hold the meeting in Brussels with the cities' EU offices to discuss how to lobby for the benefit of cities from the BSR.



REVIEW OF WORKING PRACTICE IN TAMPERE



Zane Skrūzkalne is an urban planner of Tukums Region Council, who worked for the city of Tampere for 4 weeks in April and May 2011.

In 2009 Tukums became a region with 10 more rural municipalities. The City Planning Department has been working on master plan for this newly made region. Ms Skrūzkalne thought it would be very useful to have a possibility to see how other countries deal with the planning problems. She was especially interested to find a chance for professional exchange in some Scandinavian city because of its rich experience in urban planning.

During the UBC Commission of Urban Planning seminar in Šiaulai in October 2010, Ms Skrūzkalne met the urban planners from Tampere, i.e. Mrs Eija Muttonen-Mattila who did not refuse her a chance to work as a professional exchange staff in Tampere.

Also Tampere, i.e. Mrs Hanna Montonen (Head of City Planning Services, Architect M.Sc) and Mrs Ritva Kangasniemi (Strategic Planning Architect) had an open attitude to employing a foreign urban planning professional in the city planning office for a limited period. As the yearly budget of the Tukums municipality is limited, and sending an employee for a long business trip could be a financial problem, Ms

Skrūzkalne decided to take four weeks of holidays and in that way also to take the responsibility for all the expenses. Tampere municipality offered Ms Skrūzkalne salary for the work she would do for the city.

A Nordic Council of Ministers' programme offers civil servants, also from Latvia, exchange trips to the Scandinavia. One has to go to at least to two different Scandinavian countries and the maximum time one could spend on the trip is 20 working days (10 in each country). Ms Skrūzkalne thought that during such a short period it would be difficult to discover all advantages of the Finnish planning system and to acquire good experience of local planning work organization.

Ms Skrūzkalne was especially interested in some of the projects Tampere deals with, such as the new Arena project of the famous architect Liebeskind or the housing exhibition in the Vuores area in 2012.

Staying and working for four weeks in a foreign organization gave Ms Skrūzkalne a clear image of the whole planning process and system in Finland. Also, she got a chance to compare the technical tools and equipment of Latvian and Finnish municipalities. The IT tools and solutions in the Tampere Planning Department are more advanced as the ones that are in use in Tukums, e.g. the Intranet system. It makes it very easy to communicate with one's workmates and also lightens the work of the planning process.

Last, but not least, Ms Skrūzkalne was very happy to discover that the city environment and its architectural values are important for the employees in Finland. Tampere is doing a lot to save its historical architecture and green public areas for the next generations.

MORE

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Youth Seminar in Liepāja

Your Lifestyle: Your Choice!

For the fifth time in parallel with UBC General Conference the youth event was organized by the Commission on Youth Issues. On 4-7 October 2011 60 active participants from 18 cities were discussing lifestyle and other youth issues in Liepāja. The main topic of the Seminar - "Your Lifestyle: Your Choice for Happy Life in Our World..." - was first of all meant to open minds for many differences and changes faced in everyday life.

Different workshops in format of games, brain storming and discussions touched upon topics of values, lifestyles and subcultures. New knowledge was gained and hopefully also tolerant attitudes. In the last part of the seminar the posters with different messages on the main topics were made by using *Loesje* method. The posters can be further used: printed out by participants and exhibited.

Is ecological lifestyle connected to the values you cherish? What to do when people around you or your family, do not share the same values? Is social media as form of communication a threat or rather the possibility these days? How to organize an interesting and educational multicultural event? These and many other questions were discussed. The feedback was positive, new knowledge and new contacts and ideas were appreciated by all the participants.

More traditional solutions, like exhibiting posters at schools, youth centres, city halls, bus stops, parks, web-pages were presented. At the same time there were many very innovative ideas, e.g. using

A practical part of making *Loesje* posters: brain storming about the messages on them, creating the plan for each city how to exhibit them – was the culmination of the seminar.



messages from posters on big ear rings, condom packages, T-shirts, underwear, on the walls of restaurant toilets or ferries.

Now all those interesting and thoughtful messages from the youth, such as "Motivation under construction" or "Run – for your life" or "Throw smile on me and I will throw one right back to you!" can be expected at least in 18 UBC cities.

Join the Commission on Youth Issues at its next meeting in Kemi, Finland, in February 2012.

MORE

www.ubc-youth.org



Seniors in the City

The meeting of the Commission on Health and Social Affairs under the leading subject : "Seniors in the city – municipal policy for the elderly" was held in Elbląg on 15-16 September. Elbląg has been projecting and implementing long-term municipal plans concerning the seniors for many years. The meeting was an excellent forum to share this experience and to learn more. It was also meant as an introduction to the discussion held later in Liepāja at the GC workshop on ageing society.

Thirteen cities' representatives from four countries participated, i.e. from Estonia – Narva, Tallinn, Tartu, Finland – Helsinki, Turku, Vaasa, Latvia – Riga and Polish cities – Gdańsk, Gdynia, Koszalin, Malbork and Ustka. Mr Marek Maciejowski, a representative of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) presented the NDPHS and submitted a proposal of co-operation between both organizations regarding projects the NDPHS experts groups are working on. This offer gives a possibility to gain additional funds for the activities. Moreover, the UBC Commission on Health and Social Affairs has been invited to contribute to drafting and, when adopted, promoting the NDPHS position paper on raising the profile of health and social well-being in the post 2013 European Territorial Cooperation.



The Chairman of the Commission was invited to the 19th Meeting of the NDPHS Committee of Senior Representatives held in October in Brussels.

Encouraged with these results the Commission intends to organize in the future two meetings annually, each of them devoted to a specific topic. A representative of Vaasa has declared a will to host the next meeting in spring 2012 devoted to the life style and civilization related dis-

eases. The autumn meeting 2012 will be related to the health care systems and practical solutions in this field. Also, the launch of the Commission's website is planned next year in order to facilitate an access to information about its present activities and contacts.

All presentations and other materials delivered for the meeting in Elbląg are now available at the UBC website:

<http://www.ubc.net/commissions,29.html>

MORE

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Commission on Urban Planning met in Tartu

Planning the history and the future in consonance

In September 2011 the Commission on Urban Planning held a successful seminar in Tartu. More than 60 planners found their way to Tartu.

Tartu is the second largest city in Estonia. It is often considered to be the intellectual and cultural hub of Estonia, because it hosts the oldest university in the country. The city is located almost 200 km south east of Tallinn on the main road between Riga and St. Petersburg.

The history of Tartu is long and full of turbulence. But the last 20 years is probably the time when the most dynamic changes have taken place. Modernization of the university, many new buildings in the city centre and in the suburbs, new roads, heavy traffic and big changes in the retail structure made their significant marks. Today, the city centre is in danger of losing its public life.

Tartu invited the planners from the Commission to discuss and to come up with good ideas on how to strengthen the city centre.

The speakers from Sweden and Denmark put the retail structure in focus. But also the quality of buildings, parks and pedestrian areas, the location of cultural facilities and the routes for bicycling, jog-



The seminar was arranged accordingly to the well tested template: relevant local and external speakers and guides, intensive workshops, common visits to workshop areas and socializing in the evening.

ging, etc. were given a considerable attention.

Two workshop areas were appointed by city: the historical centre and the new centre with the central bus station, one of the new shopping centres, The AhHaa Centre and the old flower and vegetable market. The problems were basically identified as a lack of shops and public life in the streets and parks in the old centre, and too many cars and a lack of attractive public space in the new centre. Furthermore, the connections for light traffic between the two centres were insufficient and dominated by heavy traffic.

On Wednesday morning four workshop groups presented their results – all in all approximately 40 slides with analysis, key-values, recommendations and drawings. Now the next steps are up to the local planners and politicians.

No matter how it goes, 60 participants managed to exchange ideas across the Baltic Sea and that alone is a wonderful completion of the UBC mission.

The seminar was also a good-bye to the Commission's chairman through-out the last years, Sirpa Kallio from Helsinki. Niels-Peter Mohr, Århus, will hold this position in her place.

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Museums: Bridging Baltic Past and Future

The conference of the Commission on Culture was devoted to the museums and their role in contemporary society. It was held on 3 - 4 October 2011 in Riga and Tukums. The theme: "Museums: Bridging Baltic Past and Future" was closely tied up with the theme of the UBC General Conference in Liepāja.



photo: Kristīne Ozola, Tukums museum

The CoC's conference met with a great interest. Over 107 participants took part.

The role of the museums has been constantly changing since 1991 when the process of re-union of the Baltic Sea Region became possible. To preserve the heritage the contemporary museums take new responsibilities to become an active social actors working for the sustainability of the society.

The aim of the Commission was to invite the museum professionals to examine developments and tendencies in the museum field and to share good practices. The museum objects and stories, ideas and concepts, contents and forms of artistic expressions, architecture and exhibition design, newly built and renovated museums, as well as new projects were in focus of the conference.

107 participants from Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Russia attended the meeting. 19 reports were given during the conference. The key-note speaker, famous museum designer Jowa Kis Jowak from the Netherlands spoke about the tendencies in the exhibition design and change of the artistic expressions since mid 1980s. The other speakers presented the recent developments in the museum field in the Baltic Sea Region.

The first working session of the conference was dedicated to the Art Museum „Riga Bourse” opened on 19 August 2011, the processes and

results of the restoration of the building and reorganization of the museum of the Foreign Art of Latvia was in the limelight.

Another working session was devoted to the new projects in Estonia and Lithuania. The development of the National Museum of Estonia, the idea and content of the new building, were presented, as well as the reconstructed National Gallery of Art in Lithuania. The third working session was about the museums in castles and manor houses.

The second day of the conference took place in Durbe Manor House in Tukums, which a complex of the Classicism Style buildings and it is the only museum in Latvia presenting the interiors of typical Baltic Germans Manor Houses of the end of the 19th century. To develop the accessibility of the museum collections, the project "Contemporary Museum in the Complex of the Durbe Manor in Tukums" has been launched recently and supported by the European Regional Development Fund. The activities supported by ERDF have been developed also in the Bauska Castle, where the residence of Kurland Duke is under the reconstruction, and in the Cēsis New Castle.

The participants got acquainted with the experience of the N. Roerich Museum House revival in Izvara in Russia and with the development of the museum model in Lolland-Falster in Denmark. The final discussion of the conference led to the conclusion that the museum developments in the BSR are determined by historical, political, economic and social circumstances and each country is looking for its own approaches to the safeguarding of the heritage. All agreed that the accessibility and social inclusion are the most important issues the museums should pay their attention on.

The CoC's conference was organized by the Tukums museum in cooperation with the International Committee of Museums (ICOM), National Committee of Latvia, the Society for Fostering the Museology in Baltics and Art Museum „Riga Bourse”.

MORE

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THE UBC CULTURAL PRIZE 2011

The theme of the UBC Cultural Prize 2011 was "**Building Bridges for the Baltic Future**". 10 applications from Cēsis, Falun, Gdańsk, Jõhvi, Malbork, Rakvere, Stupsk, Turku, Visby and Örebro were submitted.

Trying to make a decision, the board of the Commission referred to the UBC Bulletin headline "Building on the Past Heading for the Future". That is how the bridges for the Baltic future should be constructed -building on a solid knowledge of the past but having in mind a vision of the desired goal in the future.

With this in mind, the board discovered that one candidate was showing how to build the cultural activities very strongly on the past and in that way to have a great influence on cultural life, image and identity of the city. At the same time the board noticed that there was another candidate that was extremely strongly heading for the future as a voice of the present century.

The first one was **the Mediaeval Week on Gotland**. During the week the whole old town of Visby turns into a festival celebrating the mediaeval time, where the history turns real as visitors dress in authentic clothes and wear genuine equipment and accessories with the ruins, cobble stone streets and the town wall as a living background, lurid tournaments with horses and knights, fire shows, theatre and feasts with mediaeval themes, concerts with mediaeval music, market place with tools, food and instruments, a large number of handicraft courses and a lot of lectures in history of this time, are spread all over the town and its surroundings during eight days every summer.

The other candidate was the **Rakvere Punk Song Festival – Anarchy in EU!** The song and dance festivals had helped the Estonians to preserve their own culture and identity under the foreign rule. The Punk Song Festival of Rakvere is trying to combine the traditional and the modern sides of Estonian culture: song festival and punk movement which also played a role in the struggle for independence. The initiative to organize a Punk Song Festival was politically, culturally and musically very risky. The choirs were asked to learn the world known punk classics in order to be able to participate in the festival. The idea turned into a success story with 2000 choir singers, including many choirs from abroad and 8000 spectators. This could be a starting point for development of a modern type of song festival based on long traditions with modern repertoire and innovative musical arrangements.

Thus, the UBC Cultural Prize 2011 was shared between the Mediaeval Week on Gotland and the Punk Song Festival in Rakvere.



News on gender equality issues

The European Institute for Gender Equality has presented its first report. This report links on to issues the UBC Commission on Gender Equality describes in the thematic Bulletin (no. 2/2010) e.g. gender budgeting, the reconciliation of work and family life as a condition of equal participation in the labour market, etc.

Women still remain the main carers of children and the elderly today. In Europe, women aged 25 - 44 spend three times longer than men on childcare per day. The main findings of the first EIGE Report specifically focus on the topic of reconciliation of work and family life as a condition of equal participation in the labour market. Working for a gender equal labour market creates a social and economically sustainable development in our cities and regions.

These findings include the main legislative developments on the EU level concerning maternity, paternity and parental leave. They also present the latest available sex disaggregated data for parental leave, for the time spent in different activities, and for the accessibility and availability of care facilities for elderly persons.

Also, the use of available childcare services in the EU Member States is presented and discussed.

The findings show the progress in legislative frameworks given that a number of EU Member States have already made changes to allow for the increased involvement of fathers in childcare. Improvements have also been made in the availability and access of childcare services to parents from across the Member States.

(Extract from the EIGE newsletter and information)

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www.eige.europa.eu

Commission on Tourism

AGORA 2.0 Project partner meeting



The 3rd AGORA 2.0 project partners meeting took place on 24-26 March 2011 in Tallinn, Estonia. This session was dedicated to the implementation of the AGORA 2.0 project. During the first day of the meeting the Project Co-ordinator – Ms Betina Meliss made a presentation about project work status. Presentations about each Work Package were made afterwards.

Mr Carsten Beyer – Financial Manager presented the overview about financial aspects. Each Project Partner made a short presentation on what has been achieved so far. During the second day three parallel sessions took place. It was agreed that the next Partner Meeting will take place in Autumn 2011, probably in Stockholm. Regional Development Agency of Koszalin was represented by Mr Ryszard Zdrojewski – Chairman of the UBC Commission on Tourism and Ms Joanna Minkiewicz – secretary of CoT. They both took part in the meetings and discussions concerning Work Package 4 - Heritage Scouting. Mr Zdrojewski made a presentation about implementation activities connected with WP 4. During the meeting, the list of proposals to the Six Baltic Sea Region Wonders was presented and discussed.

CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

The Commission on Gender Equality has prepared the campaign to raise awareness of the importance of gender equality and what gender equality means.

The campaign posters have been printed in English, Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian. Hopefully, they will inspire the cities around the Baltic Sea Region. The campaign posters will be sent out to all member cities of the Union of the Baltic Cities this autumn.

MORE

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Highlights from the CoT's meeting in Greifswald



The main subject of the spring meeting held in March in Greifswald was: "Baltic Sea Region identity in the light of the UBC Strategy". There were 17 representatives of UBC member cities from 6 BSR countries. Several presentations referring to the Baltic identity were delivered, e.g. by Ms Elke Ording, State Chancellery Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Mr Christoph Pienkoss, Europäische Route der Backsteingotik e.V., Berlin, Ms Betina Meliss, University of Greifswald, Institute of Geography.

During the second part of the meeting the results of the 1st CoT's competition were presented as well as the announcement of the new edition of the 'Tourist destinations' competition was made.

MORE

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Continuous work for a more sustainable Baltic Sea Region



photo: Eduard Sternak

Times for change in the Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat - this autumn two cooperation projects, coordinated by the UBC Commission on Environment, will be finalized. At the same time several new projects started during the last months and will be implemented during the next years.

The NEW BRIDGES' final conference 'Managing Urban-Rural Interaction for Quality of Life' will take place in Hamburg, Germany on 31 November – 1 December 2011, bringing together practitioners, politicians, researchers and all interested stakeholders to share leading experiences about the current situation and future challenges with-

in the work on quality of life and urban-rural interaction. More information and registration at www.urbanrural.net.

The first ever UBC online-conference 'European Climate Champions – Solutions for integrating climate change into local strategies' will conclude the last 3 years of activities of the CHAMP project on 14 -15 December 2011. All UBC member cities and other actors interested in local climate change work are warmly welcome to take part in it from their desks!

More information: www.climatechampions.eu.

MORE

www.ubc-environment.net

NEW PROJECTS IN UBC ENVCOM

During the last month several new projects started, dealing with a variety of topics. UBC EnvCom is either coordinating or participating as a partner in:

PRESTO (2011-2014) aims at combating eutrophication by improving wastewater treatment with technical studies and concrete investment to decrease nutrient load at the selected waste-water treatment plants from Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania as well as by increasing human competence.

NORDLEAD (2011-2012) will carry out a survey among Nordic local authorities to find out success factors and support needs for cities to become climate leaders.

NET-COM (2011-2013) aims at empowering local authorities to implement successfully their current (or future) Covenant of Mayors engagement and gives resources for developing the work of UBC as a supporting structure. Within the project framework UBC EnvCom will initiate the Baltic Sea Region Covenant Club: targeted at current and future signatories. Thematic workshops will be organized free of charge for the club members. The project is coordinated by Energy Cities.

QUEST (2011-2013) will develop an audit tool to evaluate and improve the quality of urban mobility policies in the European cities. In the end of QUEST, audited cities will receive a certificate which recognizes their efforts in sustainable mobility planning. QUEST has 19 partners and is coordinated by Ligtermoet & Partners from the Netherlands.

Commission on Energy

Making the housing more energy efficient

The UBC Energy Commission is taking part in a new Interreg IVC project called EEMTE (Energy Efficiency in Municipality – Training and Exchange of Experience). The project aims at spreading good ideas and examples when it comes to energy efficiency and housing. Education will be targeted at politicians and civil servants from municipalities and public bodies.

The EU Climate and Energy Package is considered a key to an energy efficient and low-carbon Europe. The three overall objectives have become generally known as the 20-20-20 targets: a 20 % cut in emissions of greenhouse gases by 2020, compared with 1990 levels; a 20 % share of renewable; and a 20 % cut in energy consumption. A lot can be done on the local level, and housing is one clear example.

The project has just started and will last until May 2013.



MORE

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Traffic Safety in the TRISTAR system

Transport systems allow satisfaction of people's basic transport needs. They are the basis for economic development and raising citizens' quality of life.

Society expects authorities to provide convenient transport in their getting to work, school and recreation facilities. Aiming to meet these needs by using a car has resulted in a rapid threat rise to the environment and people's health,

as well as in a constant decrease in the effectiveness of functioning of the transport system.

With this in mind the cities of the Tri-City Agglomeration have undertaken steps to build transport systems which use ITS technology. Currently there is a procurement procedure taking place in the cities for implementation of this system, which includes implementation of a traffic safety improvement system. This will mean faster detection of road incidents and, thanks to introducing a driver information system, avoiding secondary incidents (crashing into a car which had been in a road accident). Implementing traffic management systems and Traffic Management Centers in Gdańsk and Gdynia will allow a quicker restoration of normal traffic conditions (to the state before the road incident) and thus decrease traffic congestion costs caused by road incidents.

The aim of a Road Safety Management System is to supervise road traffic, mold safer behaviour of car drivers on roads by a more effective enforcement of traffic regulations. Molding safer behaviour of drivers will be made possible by the Road Safety Management System interoperating with a Road Incident Detection Module and a Vehicle Identification Module using video detection ANPR

Commission on Transportation

Invitation to Riga

The UBC Commission on Transportation and Riga City Council will organise the seminar: *Traffic safety measures for vulnerable road users - pedestrians and cyclists* connected with the Annual Meeting of the Commission on Transportation. The seminar will be held in Riga on 15-17 November 2011.

The main topics include promoting traffic safety in the city: Infrastructure planning in order to eliminate dangerous junctions/crossings, pedestrian safety, particularly in the dark time of the day, integrating bicycle infrastructure into city transport network, cycling promotion and safety. Other subjects comprise teaching road safety and education programmes for children.

The seminar is addressed to the UBC members, local government, non-governmental organisations, institutions dealing with road safety issues.

MORE

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and modules supporting the process of removal of road incident effects and minimalising their negative impact on traffic on the road network.

A fundamental element in the Road Safety Management System will be the module on automatic driver behaviour surveillance. It will use devices automatically detecting and registering vehicles exceeding the speed limit (momentarily and on average on a monitored distance or the STOP line at crossroads or on pedestrian crossing during red light for cars. The module will allow (in a separate data base) the storage of information on vehicles violating road traffic law together with photos of the violation.

There will also be: 1) a module diverting traffic to alternative or substitute router, assisting drivers in choosing the „safer“ router to their destinations, 2) a module on speed management in dangerous places – the speed limit will be automatically adjusted to i.e. weather conditions, congestion, road incidents, and road works.

MORE

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Safety problems discussed in Nacka



The 4th meeting of the Commission on Local Safety took place on 20 - 21 October 2011 in Nacka, Sweden. The representatives of nine UBC members were present: Botkyrka, Gdańsk, Karlstad, Nacka, Örebro, Riga, Tallinn, Turku and Vilnius.

The report on Commission's activities was presented. Also, the participants became acquainted with the results of XI UBC General Conference in Liepāja which approved the transformation from the working group to the Commission.

Hans-Ivar Swärd, Jan Landström (both Nacka) and Marcus Qvennerstedt (Botkyrka) presented how safety of their local communities was managed. A speech on the crime prevention through environmental design was delivered by professor Bo Grönlund from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. Next, Hans Akerlund from the Swedish Construction Federation spoke on how to keep the building sector clean from criminal activities and unethical behaviour. At the end, Doviļē Šulciēnē, Vilnius, presented topic related to the taxi problems.

Second day focused on the issues selected at the previous meeting. Gdańsk presented the socio-economic aspects of homelessness and the problem of the illegal street trade. Monika Lestberg from Tallinn spoke on environmental protection. The next meeting will take place in Tallinn on 24-25 May 2012.

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NEWS

from member cities

GREEN CORRIDORS

On 21 - 22 September 2011, Szczecin hosted an international conference on 'Green Corridors - Multimodal Sustainable Transport System'. Co-organised and hosted by Mr Cezary Grabarczyk, Minister of Infrastructure, Mr Stanisław Gawłowski, Minister of the Environment and Mr Olgierd Geblewicz, Marshall of the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship, the event grouped representatives of the European Commission, EU member states' regional and national administrations, responsible for transport development, research communities and companies from the transport sector.

Presentations and opinions on green corridors and development directions of Europe's transport sector were in the main focus.

The green corridors concept originated in 2007 at a time when intensive works were in progress on a new transport policy and a revision of the TEN-T network. Currently, the TEN-T will comprise of complementary core and comprehensive networks. Within the core network, the Commission plans to develop those corridors that in their opinion will accelerate the TEN-T network implementation as said Mr Jean-Éric Paquet, Director of B Directorate, DG MOVE. Also, Mr. Zoltan Kazatsay, Deputy Director General, DG MOVE indicated that Europe cannot afford to slow down or limit the level of mobility in the EU. Mobility and freedom of movement are primary freedoms enjoyed by the EU citizens. Certainly, the discussion within the Council and the European Parliament shall determine which elements of the network will ensure territorial, social and economic cohesion for the entire, unified Europe.

Transport infrastructure, including road infrastructure equipped with appropriate devices to limit the negative impact on the environment, lies at the foundation of sustainable development. S-3

The conference experts unanimously agreed that green corridors require appropriately prepared transport infrastructure, both hubs and routes.



express road, the most up-to-date eco-friendly solution in Europe and a road component of the Central European Transport Corridor may serve as an example.

Additional technologies are required which will allow for better management of cargo, information, modes of transport, and will facilitate the reduction of negative impact on people and the environment. Organizational and legal changes that will allow the carriers to provide their services at a higher standard and are more appropriate as for the customers' expectations, are also significant. Instruments for financing the new transport policy as proposed by the European Commission are such as to support the pragmatism inherent in transport infrastructure planning and not a "one-size jacket that fits all".

MORE

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Freedom for Bicycles in Šiauliai



The traditional public campaign **Freedom for Bicycle** was organized in Šiauliai in September. Over 800 cyclists enthusiastically joined the campaign and over-spread in the city streets according to the designed route in advance. This year the campaign has become an international one as the Latvian city of Jelgava, partner of Šiauliai, keenly joined to the activities. The city youth and elderly willingly supported the campaign. The age of the cyclists has ranged from 1 to 79.

This event aimed to promote the tolerance towards cyclists, environmentally friendly life style, as well to demonstrate the need of the cycling paths within the city. The citizens want Šiauliai to be recognized as a bicycle's city.

The awarding ceremony for the photo and drawings on the asphalt competitions was extremely exciting. The public campaign ended with a lottery of 15 elegant and smart bicycles. One extraordinary prize went to the largest team of cyclists - 80 teachers and schoolchildren from the Salduve school.

The engagement of young citizens and families in the public campaign has demonstrated the importance of education and a public spirit that changes the attitude towards the use of transport means.

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Rent and Share Program in Vilnius

Vilnius has become the first city in Europe to introduce a public electric bike "Rent and Share" system. Electric bicycles are available for renting and sharing by residents or visitors to the capital of Lithuania. The bikes, one of a series of initiatives by Vilnius Mayor Artūras Zuokas, reinforces Vilnius' goal of becoming a world leader in making the latest environment friendly transportation technologies widely available.



photo: Milda Jurenciute

It is good for citizens of Vilnius, it is good for our visitors and it is good for the city. I am pleased that Vilnius has taken the lead in providing a new mode of quality public transportation which addresses urban congestion issues that all cities face. I hope that other cities will follow our lead, stated Mayor Zuokas.

The new "Rent and Share" pilot program has been launched as a joint effort between Vilnius and German and Lithuanian bicycle firms. Similar electric bike rental systems are under consideration in Spain, Italy and Great Britain.

The bikes are called "e-orange" and are detailed with bright orange stripes. They are available for rental at four Tourism Information



photo: Inga Simoniute

Centers located in the downtown and Old Town areas of Vilnius. They cost from 3 Euros for the first hour of rental with increasing hourly costs e.g. a four hour ride costs 26 Euros. A 145 Euro deposit is required by credit card at the time of rental and is refunded to the renter immediately upon return of the bike to the original rental point. A built in GPS system monitors the whereabouts of the bicycles at any given time.

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The colours of autumn

It is the third consecutive year when Narva acquires the title of autumn capital of Estonia. On 23 September the City Secretary of Tallinn handed over the wooden staff symbolizing the possession of the official capital title to the Mayor of Narva.

The day was packed with festivities taking place in different districts of the city. Schoolchildren enjoyed a free day at school and had a possibility to participate in as many activities as they could.

The pedestrianized Pushkin Street had been turned into a temporary workshop street, where everyone could try their hand at creating something original: a beautiful bracelet, or a picture of a friend. The highlight was the opening of the 3D street painting – something that no other city in Estonia has ever seen – which created an illusion of you walking over a cliffy waterfall on a broken wooden bridge.

The stage in the Castle had no rest as the dancers, musicians and singers changed non-stop, making the 8-hour performance a real spectacle! Towards the end of the evening the guest-stars, DJ Slon & Katya, really fired the public up with their catchy tunes and steady beats. The public, who were mostly children from the age of 9 to 15, had a time of their lives, ever demanding more.



photo: Iina Kivimäe

The next day was spent in discussions of the role of youth in European culture, where the members of Narva Youth Parliament met their counterparts from partner-cities of St. Petersburg, Kingisepp, Ivanogorod and Tallinn. Parallel with discussions 15 teams were exploring

Narva in a "city-raid" contest. The weekend was a very good start to what was going to be an eventful season.

In October Narva is hosting an international chess tournament "Stars of the Baltic Sea 2011", where the grandmaster Jaan Ehvest is an invited star. The gala concert in November will gather many internationally recognized names: band "Apelsin", Gerli Padar, and Uku Suviste, to mention just a few; Narva Symphony Orchestra will perform in collaboration with the local band "Avenue". Many traditional events, such as

"Fitness Model" and re-enactment of Narva Battle will take an unusual twist to make them even more attractive to the public. The variety of the events planned for the autumn 2011 in Narva reflects perfectly the multitude of colours with which the season is adorned.

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Palanga surprises

The projects of immense extent are getting materialized in Palanga.

Drowning in flowers. Just after entering Palanga, one's glance is engaged with a ship of flowers, swashing in a sea of blooms. There are two of them decorated by one and a half thousand flowers. J. Basanavičiaus Street is decorated with a set of flowers in a shape of a dolphin jumping through a hoop. A blooming caption "Myliu Palangą" ("I Love Palanga") on the walkway could not be left unnoticed. There are 14 pyramids of flowers, 3 meters in height, and 12 trees of flowers installed in the town.

Fountains in the Ražė. Local residents and the visitors walking along J. Basanavičiaus Street are also attracted by floating fountains in the river of Ražė, each of them reaching 6 meters in height. In order to make the view even more spectacular, the fountains have colorful lighting installed.

Bike path. The reconstruction of a 12 kilometers bike path between Šventoji and Palanga was finished this June. After the reconstruction of Meilės Avenue is finalized, a cycling route between Šventoji and Klaipėda will be set up, providing the fans of active sport with a possibility to do both – exercise and admire the most beautiful places of the Seaside Regional Park. Altogether there are 4 cycling routes in Palanga, reaching the total of 30 kilometers in length.

Novelties in the beach. The famous bridge of Palanga was fundamentally restored: the entire wooden part of the construction was replaced, the metal platforms for the fishermen were changed with galvanized metal, the quays were renewed, and new lighting was assembled.



Palanga has its own ways to surprise the visitors – the resort is boiling with town improvement work.

The Botanical Park. Visited by a vast number of visitors every day, it is also getting improved. During the process of materializing the first stage of the project "The restoration of the historical part of the botanical park in Palanga and its adjustment to public needs" the paths, ways and lawns were managed, a part of the watering plumbing was reconstructed, and the bridges, stairs to Birutė Hill, the fountain and the Small parterre were renovated.

During the second stage, beginning next year, the 3 million litas

committed by the European Union are planned to be spent on supporting the banks of the pond, cleaning its bottom, fixing the paths leading to the pond, restoring the fountain and setting up a gate at the central entrance to the park. If a possibility arises, after the end of priority work the small architecture of the park – benches, sculptures, vases and other ornamental attributes – will be fixed.

Streets are under repair. Meilės Avenue is being renewed unrecognizably. During the repair the paving and rain drainage were restored, new lighting was installed, the bike paths were marked. The avenue will also be decorated by new forms of the small architecture: benches, rubbish bins, clocks, bicycle stands. The colours of the street will be chosen in consideration of the colour scale in J. Basanavičiaus Street. The avenue will be restored by the autumn.

MORE

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Friendship amongst Basketball Passions

Lithuania hosted the European Men's Basketball Championship 2011. On 31 August – 5 September, in a brand new sports complex Svyturys Arena, Klaipėda was the scene for Group D play-offs, where Belgium, Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia, Slovenia and the Ukraine competed.

The Championship was a great fest of sports. But Klaipėda decided to add even more flavour to this European level sports event, and initiated a real celebration of friendship. For the whole week, the international fans and Klaipedians had an exclusive opportunity to communicate and learn more about each others' countries, admire glimpses from the wealth of their histories and national cultures. The countries also introduced peculiar culinary delicacies and their tourist attractions.

Dedicated entertainment concerts of guest countries were given after passionate basketball matches watched on a large screen in the central Theatre Square. A famous Slovenian singer and the author of their national basketball anthem Zoran Predin, "Marka" – a rock group from Belgium, a Russian song group "Volnica", a Ukrainian ensemble "Prosvit" – all those concerts left no one indifferent.

But the temperament of heart-stopping performances of the Georgian State Dance Company of universal fame, simply packed the Theatre Square. The dancers of sensational professionalism put on feet all grandstand, and lavishly answered to numerous encores.

The echo of the Caucasus mountains were heard in the music and songs of a vocal ensemble "Georgian voices". They sounded every evening on the stage and also at the restaurant "Fridricho pasazas". To satisfy both the soul and the

palate, five Georgian cooks were preparing national cuisine dishes which were served to the tables of the overcrowded house.

Thanks to cooperation between the city and the Embassies of the EUROBASKET 2011 draft countries, the Theatre Square of Klaipėda became a splendid international get-together place. Passion for basketball and radiating arts enabled the fans, performers and crowds of local people experience a feeling of unity among European nations representing their different regions.



MORE

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Our Sea is Your Sea



The Children's Maritime Festival was held in Kotka, Finland, on 29 - 31 July. The Festival is one of the biggest children's events in Finland. During the festive weekend families could enjoy music, theatre, dance and circus performances. Children could also participate in various workshops and handicraft activities - making boats, pirate flags and scarves and sea creatures.

This year the theme was **Our sea is your sea** and it allowed children and their families to look at the Baltic Sea as a place worth taking care of, as a place to have fun in and as a place that helps to travel far. On the main stage performances varied from circus and ballroom dancing to hip hop and rap. At the theatre stage one could find a Danish theatre group 'Batida cooking spaghetti' and a Finnish Teatteri Hevosenkenkä (Theatre Horse shoe) performing their play "Dragon and seven princesses". The Children's Maritime Festival brings together generations. During its 29-year history many parents have enjoyed the festival as they were children and many grandparents have worked at the festival in their early years.



Many non-profit organizations take part in the festival to market their activities to the families in Kotka and the nearby towns.

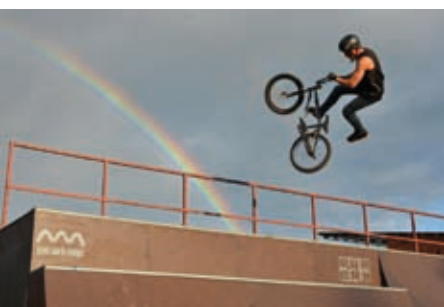
The next summer Children's Maritime Festival will be held on 27 - 29 July 2012. It will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. The visitors from all Baltic cities are welcome to spend a wonderful weekend in Kotka and to take part in all the festivities.

MORE

www.lastenmeripaivat.com

Youth Day 2011 in Jēkabpils

On 3 September 2011 the Youth Day 2011 took place in Jēkabpils. For the second time this event gained a huge interest among the youth - 400 participants took part in various sport activities and even more youngsters attended this event to enjoy musical performances and skills of sportsmen.



The main theme of this year's Youth Day was sports activities. There were competitions of seven activities organized at the stadium "Vārpa" - Ghetto basket, BMX, Inline, skateboard, floor-ball, table hockey, volleyball. These activities gathered not only the

local youngsters. Due to efforts of the Jēkabpils Youth Council it was possible to attract organizers of well-known competitions in Latvia to hold stages of their competitions in Jēkabpils. Along with the sports activities also some other creative events took place.

The Head of Jēkabpils Youth Council Lelde Nitiša says: *We are so satisfied with our accomplishments. Most pleasing is a fact that we - the youth of Jēkabpils - were the ones who created this day for other youngsters only by ourselves. Following the traditions of 2010 this day was spent in active and positive atmosphere. Together we all can be proud about this event - the youth has a power and a future!*

In the framework of the Youth Day an online youth portal www.jekabpils-jauniesi.lv was launched. In the future it will serve as an information platform where youngsters could get the latest information about ongoing activities, youth organizations in Jēkabpils, initiative groups, self-governments of schools and their current actions, on the projects, events, etc.

MORE

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Malbork on the map of the Polish Presidency



Malbork had a double occasion to host the EU representatives during the Polish Presidency in the Council of the European Union. On 8 September 2011, it was visited by the Budgetary Counsellors of the Member States (from the Permanent Representations in Brussels) and experts from the General Secretariat of the EU Council and the European Commission, who took part in an informal meeting of the Budget Committee of the EU Council in Pomerania. On 15 September 2011, Malbork hosted the ambassadors of the EU Member States accredited to Brussels as part of the away sitting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Brussels, the so-called Coreper II Trip. The group was led by Jan Tombiński, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and the Permanent Representative of Poland to the EU.

An indispensable point on the agenda of the two delegations' stay in Malbork was a visit at the Castle Museum. In addition, the ambassadors had the opportunity to participate in a cross-bow tournament. Malbork was not incidentally appointed host of the events during the Polish Presidency. Apart of its historic and architectonic qualities, the town is a good example of how to be open to Europe, which was confirmed by awarding Malbork with the Flag of Honour of the Council of Europe.

MORE

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PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND ACTIVE MOBILITY

On 15 September 2011 Gdynia (Poland) organised, together with the UBC Commission on Transportation, the conference on 'Promoting sustainable transport and active mobility'. The conference was carried out within two EU projects TROLLEY and SEGMENT in which Gdynia is a partner.

The SEGMENT project aims to raise people's awareness of the negative effects our transport habits have on congestion and pollution, as well as use advanced marketing segmentation to motivate them to change their habits and switch to more energy efficient transport modes.

Whereas TROLLEY partners aim to convince that electricity-based mobility is the cleanest and most efficient mobility solution today and considers (electric) trolleybuses as the best and ready-to-use response to the urban mobility challenges in Central Europe.

Among the guests there were officials from Pomorskie Region and representatives of European cities; local and regional authorities, academia, NGOs and transport specialists.

This meeting offered an efficient networking and opportunity to exchange experiences and establish co-operation. Together we will find new ways of supporting and strengthen public transport systems and active mobility in our cities.

During the conference participants had the opportunity to get insight on:

Promoting Sustainable Mobility (SEGMENT project)

- ▶ SUTP in Gdynia - Jacek Oskarbski, Transport Engineering Office, Gdynia
- ▶ Segmentation in marketing sustainable transport - Tim Cordy, SEGMENT secretary, London
- ▶ Marketing campaign for promoting walking and cycling in Gdynia - Tomasz Konkol, Promotion PL
- ▶ Public space - making cities more pedestrian and cyclist friendly - Paulina Szewczyk, City Planning Office, Gdynia
- ▶ "Walking bus" - the smart way to walk to school - Bianca Kaczor, Mobility Management Office, Munich
- ▶ The importance and ways of marketing public transport in schools - Justyna Staszak-Winkler, Aleksandra Mendryk, Public Transport Management in Gdynia
- ▶ Encouraging cycling in companies - Cezary Żrodowski, DNV, Gdynia

Trolleybus marketing and image (TROLLEY project)

- ▶ The future of electric vehicles in public transport - SOLARIS BUS&COACH
- ▶ Development of trolleybus system in Lublin - Bogdan Kolciuk, MPK Lublin
- ▶ Trolleybus: an important element of public transport in Gdynia - Tomasz Labuda, Mikołaj Bartłomiejczyk PKT Gdynia
- ▶ The ebus campaign - Johan Kogler, SALZBURG AG
- ▶ TROLLEY - Innovative ways of promoting trolleybuses across Europe - Wolfgang Backhaus, Rupprecht Consult
- ▶ Image of trolleys among citizens. Results of TROLLEY project - prof. Olgierd Wyszomirski, Marcin Wołek, Gdańsk University

MORE

www.segmentproject.eu
www.trolley-project.eu

International Hanseatic Days 100 Events in 4 Days



On 19 - 22 May 2011 the International Hanseatic Days were held in Kaunas. This festival was the greatest cultural event in the history of the city. The motto of this year celebrations was - **To remember - to preserve - to restore - to be proud of.**

The new Hanseatic City League was established 1980. It unites over 170 economically and politically active towns that have once belonged to the historical Hanseatic League. The purpose of this structure is to contribute to the development of economic, cultural, social and municipal unity in Europe. Kaunas joined "The Hanse" in 1991.

The guests from over 100 European cities were expected to the International Hanseatic Days in Kaunas. 100 events were run on in four days: the Mediaeval fair proceeded with crafts alley, the market of flowers, bread, cheese, meat, fish, vegetables, rummage were opened. The grand tournament of European knights - the duels of warriors organized for the first time in Lithuania, air balloons fiesta, carnival, an international HanseArtWorks project and outdoor exhibition, fire performance above the two rivers, the forum of Economy. One of the world famous Mediaeval music groups, „Corvus Corax“ (Germany) was invited as well.

At the same time the following 7 international festivals represented Kaunas: "Kaunas Jazz", "Music Festival of Pažaislis" (classics), "Operetta in Kaunas Castle" (opera and operetta), folk festival "Suklegos", "Pipe Up To Kaunas" (reed), "Kaunas Canto" (sacral music), as well as choir music festivals. About half a million of visitors visited the International Hanseatic Days in Kaunas.

The City Hall was surrounded by a few rings of tents of the Mediaeval market. The guests sold crafts, cuisine specialities, promoted their cities.

12 information huts helped in orientating festival participants. Leaflets with the event program and the map, as well as other publications about Kaunas were available. The museums worked until 2 a. m. for four days. The safety was ensured by the additional police forces. Public transport means were operating all night long.

The next International Hanseatic Days 2012 will be held in the German Luneburg.

MORE

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photos: Edgars Pohevis

XI UBC General Conference, Liepāja, Latvia, 5-6 October 2011

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Anna Dargiewicz



Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is a network of over 100 cities from all ten Baltic Sea 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 thirteen working Commissions on: Business Cooperation, Culture, Education, Energy, Environment, Gender Equality, Health and Social Affairs, Local Safety, Sport, Tourism, Transportation, Urban Planning, Youth Issues. 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 Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), the Committee of the Regions, the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM). The Union is also a Special Participant in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). The UBC cooperates with numerous Baltic and European organisations.

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