



Baltic Cities Bulletin

PUBLISHED BY THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

*Sustain the world
use culture*



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COVER PICTURE
Photo: Annina Cerón
The Experiential
Colour Workshops for Babies
in Pori

Baltic Cities Bulletin

Dear UBC Friends,

The XIII General Conference devoted to "Building Smart Cities in the Baltic Sea Region", took place in Gdynia on 27–30 October. I want to thank everyone for their active participation and contribution to the success of the conference.

During the three day conference we had a possibility to discuss the future of the UBC, but also to learn concrete actions how to foster sustainable, smart and safe cities around the Baltic Sea Region through high level sessions, panels and workshops.

The biennial General Conference, as the UBC's highest authority, elected the President, 3 Vice-Presidents and approved the Executive Board members for the next 2-year period.

The UBC's current strategy is coming to an end soon. Therefore, the Strategic Framework 2016–2021 has been on the agenda during the last months. The Framework was discussed at the General Conference. In addition, the UBC Sustainability Action Programme was adopted as an annex to it. Both are seeking more goal orientated and efficient UBC. You can read more about the Strategy on page 20.

We are ending the year 2015 with 7 renewed commissions. The visual facelift is underway. The next two years will be a valuable showcase for us – how efficiently we can build up the "new" UBC?

The next General Conference will be organized in Växjö, Sweden, in 2017. The Conference will be a place to evaluate our work. Meanwhile, I encourage everyone to take the initiative and join the UBC on a daily basis.

The bulletin's main theme is related to culture. This issue presents culture related activities in the UBC member cities. UBC's Cultural Cities Commission calls for professionalization of the cultural field and strategic partnerships. Culture should be understood broadly from single cultural activities to a professional cultural field and even more – culture is a cross-cutting theme in every area of life. It is one of the pillars of the sustainable development and its inevitable element. Moreover, culture contributes to the well-being. Therefore, today, when the Baltic Sea Region is facing various challenges, such as environmental, economic and political, the importance of culture is also highlighted by the UBC. What kind of cultural activities and policies do you wish us to promote in the UBC?

Wish you all happy holidays and waiting to work with you in the future!

Per Bødker Andersen
President of UBC



Kolding, November 2015



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Culture brings people together making the city centres alive.



Over 200 participants joined the XIII UBC General Conference in Gdynia.

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Sustain the world - use culture!

By Jaana Simula, City of Pori,
Chair of the Cultural Cities Commission

Photo: www.sxc.hu



Photo: Marit Kaartinen

Culture can be in the core of policies dealing with economics, education, tourism, research, cultural diplomacy, social policies, and city planning. Culture is much more than meets the eye!

It was on 29 April 2013 when I first met with Dr. Karriina Soini from University of Jyväskylä, Department of Social Science and Philosophy. The Nordic Council of Ministers together with Ministries for Culture in Schleswig-Holstein and Poland hosted the seminar on "Culture and Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region".

The seminar was organised within the context of the Action Plan for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and more specifically the Priority Area for Culture and the Flagship Project Baltic Sea Region cooperation with a focus on culture as a part of sustainable development.

The roots of sustainability lead to culture

As it is usual when speaking about sustainability, the year 1987 and Brundtland Report is mentioned. The report defines sustainable development in this way: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Simply put, this means that we should leave the Earth to future generations in as good or rather in better shape that we found it for ourselves. After the report, it has been broadly agreed that sustainability consist of tree pillars: ecological, economic and social. Recent years have brought culture in the picture as the forth pillar.

It seems to be a bit hard to get a grip how culture works in, for and as sustainable development. We all agree that it is culture, that has made us sustainable. It shapes our standards, ways of living and behaviour. When Katriina Soini gave her key note speech at the seminar, I knew that we would have in the coming years tools to work with cultural sustainability.

Soini, Chair of the COST Action "Investigating Cultural Sustainability" spoke about "Culture as a driver for sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region". She stressed that the biggest challenge of all is to make culture impacts on sustainability visible. The available indicators to measure culture's impact on sustainability are not good. We lack

proof of concepts and proof of practices. The sectoral ways in which policies are developed and implemented allows little scope for cross-cutting cultural contributions. Also, the narrow understanding of culture, reducing culture to “arts and heritage” brings us trouble. Culture is in fact much more and more fundamental for sustainable development. The broad scope of culture enables cultural stakeholders to tap into and influence a large number of regional cooperation efforts. Culture also adds some refreshment to the (old) discussion on economic, environmental and social sustainability.

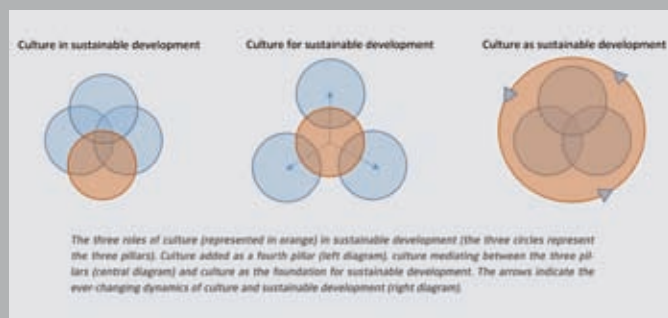
The roles of culture in a sustainable world

The researcher Soini was trying to build a frame work for sustainable culture. She and her fellow researcher in the COST Action IS 2007 luckily have reached their goal in investigating cultural sustainability. These findings were presented by Soini on the 23 September this year at the seminar “The Role of Culture in a Sustainable Society – Sustainability in Art and Cultural Projects” arranged by Nordic Culture Point in Helsinki. We now have possibilities to recognize the role of culture when it comes to sustainable development.

The conclusions bring us to the finding that culture has three different roles:

Culture in sustainable development - means that culture can have a supportive and self-promoting role. This makes culture the fourth pillar along with ecological, economical and social pillars.

Culture for sustainable development – offers culture as a more influential force that can operate beyond itself. This role moves culture into a framing, contextualizing and mediating mode that can balance all three of the existing pillars and guide sustainable development between economic, social, and ecological pressures and needs.



A diagram from the “Culture in, for and as Sustainable Development. Conclusions of the COST IS1007 Action Investigating Cultural Sustainability”.

Culture as sustainable development – in this role culture is – in my mind – put in its true place. Culture is the necessary overall foundation and structure for achieving the aims of sustainable development.

The researchers argue that in all three roles, the recognition that culture is at the root of all human decisions and actions and an overarching concern (even a new paradigm) in sustainable development thinking, causes culture and sustainability to become mutually intertwined; the distinctions between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability thus begin to fade.

Culture *in*, for and as Sustainable Development

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE COST ACTION IS1007
INVESTIGATING CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY



EDITED BY Joost Dessein, Katriona Soini, Graham Fairclough and Lumina Horlings

► Not yet convinced? To learn more, please see:

Culture in, for and as Sustainable Development. Conclusions of the COST IS1007 Action Investigating Cultural Sustainability".

<http://www.culturalsustainability.eu/outputs/conclusions.pdf>

Nordic Culture Point’s publication Culture and Sustainability <http://www.kulturkontakt nord.org/en/content/new-publication-culture-and-sustainability#sthash.mWVaXvj4.dpuf>

What does all this mean to us in the UBC cities?

It means that culture is not just a topic of cultural policy. It must be integrated with all other policies. Culture can be in the core of policies dealing with economics, education, tourism, research, cultural diplomacy, social policies, and city planning. Culture is much more than meets the eye!

MORE

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Culture-led City Development



by Vilde Andrea Brun

Art and culture are seen as essential from the perspectives of Bergen's city planning, identity and image. As such, social and cultural objectives are integrated in Bergen's strategic planning, as outlined in the 2011-2015 Kulturarenplan (Plan for developing cultural arenas in Bergen). The motivation behind the Kulturarenplan is to strengthen culture in the development of Bergen, to make it an appealing and vital city both to live in and to visit. The main objective of this plan is directly connected to Bergen's cultural strategy: "The city of Bergen is going to be a Nordic focal point for cultural enterprises, built on innovation, courage, openness and creativity".

Møhlenpris and the Corner Theatre

One concrete example of culture-led city development in Bergen is the renewal of the district Møhlenpris, situated in the area of Damsgårdssundet (the Damsgårds Strait). While the initial push for redeveloping the area came from the city council, the development of a new cultural arena, the Corner Theatre, is a result of a shared commitment between cultural institutions and organizations, citizens and private companies.

When the professional field within performing arts needed a new scene for experimental independent groups in 2011, they joined forces with Vestlandske Teatersenter (theatre for children, youngsters, and amateurs), and Proscen, a network for performing arts, to find a suitable location for their activities. They found an old industrial building owned by GC Rieber Shipbuilding Company in the multicultural district Møhlenpris, now called Cornerteateret (The Corner Theatre).

The theatre opened up in September 2013 and has already become an important cultural focal point, with a broad range of users and the rich program that ranges from children's theatre to experimental and innovative theatre and workshops for performing artists. The building has three floors with two blackboxes, three rehearsal halls/studios and office facilities for a large open space.



The Corner Theatre at Møhlenpris shows how art and culture often are connected to a broader specter of functions and qualities in the city.

Next to the theatre, there is the "Nygårdsparken", a beautiful historic park in the process of renewal, and a local coffee-roaster and café. From being a shabby and silent site in the city, the area is now considered as an active and stimulating place for those who live nearby, and also attract people from other parts of the city. A relevant issue, however, is how the new attractiveness of the area will affect the further development of this part of the city.

MORE

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Chojnice Cultural Centre Full of Work

by Łukasz Sajnaj

Chojnice is the biggest city and the cultural centre of the south part of Pomerania region. All year long, cultural events of a wide range take place. They earned a good name and have a long tradition. The Street Festival Theater, Night of Poets, Nights with Opera and the Tournament of Knights evoke high interest among the spectators from all over Poland.

Chojnice's Culture Centre is the main cultural institution in the region. It concentrates on such forms of art as dance, music, visual arts, exhibitions, and theatre.

The Centre is mainly famous for its theatrical activities of the Rhapsodic Studio. The theatrical group has existed since 2004. Director Grzegorz Szlanga, thanks to ambitious goals and hard work, has come a long way to transform his theatre from a local amateur theatre to a professional "Off" theatre winning main awards at national festivals. For 11 years, Studio has taught hundreds of young talented actors, mainly high school and university students. Some of them have joined the Studio's professional group, others are continuing their education in national academies of dramatic arts.

The theatre has produced 29 performances which have been shown all over the country. The performances have been inspired by world



Photo: Daniel Frymark

renowned classical literature, as well as by local artists' works. The Studio operates with an interesting and diversified array of stylistic means.

Apart from performing, the Studio shows big interest in education of children and teenagers. The theatre conducts a series of undertakings which aim at popularizing the theatre. The projects are the following: "Theatrical Lessons" for children and teenagers which give the young a chance

to meet with actors face to face and learn the process of creating a performance; the project "You read and I read, too" is to encourage children to read books; and the project "Rehabilitation through theatre" allows convicts to have access to art.

The Studio wants to develop and expand, that is why it is preparing an English version of the performances. The chance to show them and confront other theatres beyond the Polish border is the next step. The Studio is open to any sort of cooperation guaranteeing professionalism, determination and enthusiasm.

MORE

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European Heritage Days in Elbląg

By Sylwia Bięga-Waring

On 11-13 September 2015 Elbląg celebrated its 10th Bread Festival, a fun market linked to the legend of Piekarczyk, a baker who in 1521 saved Elbląg from the invasion of the Teutonic Knights.



For the whole weekend the Old Town was buzzing with local residents and visitors who had an opportunity not only to taste and buy regional products, but also take part in live demonstrations from some of Poland's best bakers. There

were various arts and craft stalls, performances of historical enactment groups as well as entertainment provided by musicians and folk groups including artists from partner towns of Kaliningrad, Ternopil and Navahradak. It was a fun family event offering an insight into living history and local traditions.

The Festival became a scenery for the nationwide launch of the 23rd European Heritage Days organised around the main theme: The Lost Heritage. The theme is particularly significant to Elbląg, because as a result its turbulent history, the town experienced enormous losses of the cultural and material assets.

Elbląg has always been a cultural melting pot. Over the centuries it was ruled and inhabited by the Teutonic Knights, multinational

merchants, Germans and Poles. Its location near the Vistula Lagoon and the proximity of the Baltic Sea decided that Elbląg became a thriving port town, a member of the medieval Hanseatic League. When the role of Elbląg as a port town diminished, the town had to be made-up anew. In the 19th century thanks to German industrialists it was a prospering industrial centre, renown for the shipyards and manufacturing of cars and locomotives. Then came the year 1945 and the German Elbing was captured by the Red Army. The historic center turned into a pile of rubble and those who survived hurriedly left the town.

A new chapter in Elbląg's history opened when new residents from various parts of the country arrived to the post-war Elbląg, a town on the so-called recovered lands. Recovering of heritage started from scratch. The rebuilding of the historical centre, which was initiated in the 1980s, was preceded by extensive archaeological research. The pattern of medieval streets and old foundations serve as the base for the construction of new house that freely refer to the original design. This way the lost heritage is being interpreted and adapted to modern life.

Today Elbląg has a young Old Town, the rebuilding of which is still ongoing. Bread Festival is a perfect opportunity to creatively reflect upon the bygone times and pass on to next generations the value of heritage - lost and gained.

MORE

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Culture – a Key to Success or just a Hobby?

By Merili Aasma

Culture has always been important in Elva. Nowadays around 14% of the city budget goes to culture. The funds are allocated among events, culture centre and projects of local groups.

There are many active cultural groups of different ages in the field of dance, music, theatre, etc. They can apply for the financial support from the city budget and other resources. This enlivens the cultural event calendar and entrepreneurship.

The quality of the facilities seems to be the weakest link. Even though there are plenty of different places for events, a modern culture centre or a concert hall have been the topic for at least 10 years. The City Council has decided to renovate the current building investing one million EUR from the next year's city budget. This should help to raise the quality of the events and hopefully also the number of participants.

The key element has been the collaboration. Since Elva is quite small community there are always different organizations, NGOs and groups of people involved. One of the biggest rally events in Estonia - Rally Estonia - city stage took place in Elva with Suzi Quatro's concert. This experience proved the experts and their contacts



Smilers on Elva Song Festival Stage

Photo: Kayyo Kroon

are important. The lesson was learned and now we will try to be better next year.

In the capitalist world everything has a price tag. The term "creative economy" is getting more and more popular when it comes to culture. Aiming at creativity expands into products or services. Since this is quite new field and requires knowledge, our culture groups consisting of

older generation or creative people who lack those skills may not succeed. There is a need for an exchange between entrepreneurs, experts and amateurs.

In our opinion UBC has a great opportunity in this matter considering the variety of cultures, specialists, and international level network to help culture groups be more innovative and obtain a deserved value for their efforts.

MORE

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Library Without Boundaries



by Jolita Latakiene

The fast pace of life, mobility and technology achievements destroy the conception of time and space. As every other sphere of life, culture needs innovations as well to make knowledge and information available for every person.

One of Cultural Cities Commission members – Gargzdai (Klaipeda district, Lithuania) actively participates in international and local projects through which it develops network based on cultural cooperation with professionals, exchanges of knowledge and experiences, strengthens ties between cultural service providers and various social groups.



An internet access to the cultural life increases the sense of belonging to the community.

One of cultural centres of Gargzdai – Jonas Lankutis Public Library always participates in the activities where culture meets and mixes with social innovations, entrepreneurship and education. This October the Library started the implementation of the project “Library Without Boundaries”. It aims to develop target groups (the senior people and youths)

new competences, feeling of citizenship and adaptation in community. Main project objective is to create an opportunity for Internet users even in distant Klaipeda district locations to observe events that take place in the Library. This also lets them participate in discussions and get feedback. This opportunity is offered in 9 library departments in the Klaipeda district that are distant from the Jonas Lankutis Library.

On 6 October in the Department of Children Literature Library there was a presentation of the project and project partners – Klaipeda District Municipality and Klaipeda District Education Center together with Third Age University. On 7 October everyone was invited to take part in the first broadcast for youths dedicated to the Day of Defense. During the lecture the professional and volunteer soldiers introduced their everyday activities, presented their full equipment and answered lots of questions.

On the schedule for the next year there are 32 events, such as a psychologist's lecture for seniors or movies for young people, etc. We truly believe that this innovative exchange of knowledge and experience can be adapted in other UBC member cities.

MORE

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Installations and Interventions in the Public Space in Gdańsk

by Natalia Cyrzan

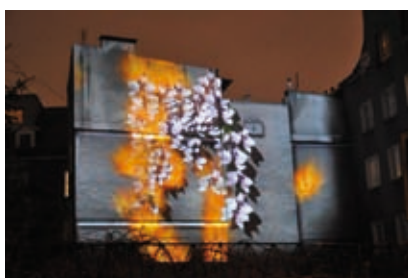
Created in 2009, NARRACJE is a festival of artistic installations and interventions whose main aim is to discover the less known parts of the Gdańsk districts after dusk and long after the holiday season.

Until 2011 the Festival programme was created by a German curator, Bettina Pelz. Later, various curators from all over the world were chosen in the international competitions. The curator of this year's edition is Anna Smolak from Cracow, Poland.

After exploring the main city of Gdańsk, as well as its neighbouring districts (Dolne Miasto, Długie Ogrody, Wrzeszcz Górny), this year the festival is held in a more remote part of the city, i.e. Nowy Port. The eponymous Smugglers - the title of this year's edition of NARRACJE - are artists and residents of the district; their private stories overlay the historical meta-narratives of the region. The formula of the festival - artistic actions and events that take place at night-time, a time-constricted but intense experience of art - evokes in a way the specific flavour of the night activities of port cities.

Today, the Baltic Sea Region is a barometer of the political and economic mood in Europe. This is where local experience and global trends intersect. Along with the gradual expansion of the European

Union to include the ex-Soviet Baltic republics, the significance and impact of borders in this area has also been shifting. Today, the border with Russia demarcates – both physically and symbolically – the boundary between the new Europe and the past. In transferring the phenomenon of smuggling into the arena of cultural activity, NARRACJE 2015 Festival seeks connections between what is visible and what is hidden, communal and individual, material and ephemeral.



NARRACJE explores urban contexts and plots and build new tales of Gdańsk.

Photo: Dominik Werner

This year NARRACJE became a part of the international project called BALTIC LIGHT CHAIN whose main idea is to encourage cooperation between institutions organizing the so-called light festivals in the Baltic Sea Region and to create a long-term network of festivals. Apart from Poland the partners in the project are: Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. The project is funded from the EU Creative Europe grant and will end in February 2016 with an international conference on light design. Several light-based installations prepared by artists from the Baltic States and Poland will be presented during NARRACJE in Nowy Port in November.

MORE

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Gdynia Literary Prize

by Małgorzata Kraszewska

Popularisation of culture also means recognition of culture creators. For 10 years now, our city has been granting the prestigious Gdynia Literary Prize. Not only is it considered as an independent and objective distinction, but it is also claimed to be one of the most important prizes granted to representatives of the literary profession.

Last year, preparing for the next edition, we asked ourselves how we could get the recipients involved in such an event. What can be done to avoid limiting the event to the prize ceremony? How can we involve people? We decided to use the Prize as an excuse to start an extensive campaign for promoting reading. The programme has been called "Miasto Słowa" (The city of the word). We established cooperation, among others, with Gdynia Główna Theatre that proposed projects involving the readers – "Chór czytelników" (Readers choir) and "Słowo do kontroli" (A word to be checked).

The first one is a performance the aim of which is to engage persons who so far have been the culture recipients only, to be the creators. The group has worked on prose changing it, under the guidance of a director, into a dramatic text. With no special stage design it was presented in the Museum of the City of Gdynia. Engaging the recipients in the work on text and placing them in the role of an actor enabled us to confront two perspectives – of the creator and the recipient, whereas the reader was able to understand the director's intentions and motivations. "Słowo do kontroli" was a project promoting literature in urban space, in particular in the means of public transport. Actors of Gdynia Główna Theatre recited literary

Railway station reading room at Gdynia Central railway station.

The furniture and bookshelves in the main hall of the station encourage passengers to read while waiting for their transport.



Photo: Bogna Koculmbas

texts in front of an unsuspecting audience composed of passengers. Making use of the element of surprise, they confronted passengers with literature.

Moreover, literary weekends offered meetings with the authors and poetry workshops, teaching the use of word in any form. This year's experience related to the intense involvement of a recipient in Gdynia Literary Prize, and most of all the enthusiastic reception of the idea, inspired us to even deeper reflection on inter-relation between the creator and the recipient. We do not want to see the problem of building the cultural events audience from the perspective of artists only.

MORE

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Turning Empty Building Windows into Art Galleries

by Ieva Rozlapa

There are places in Jekābpils that are being deserted due to economic changes and other conditions. It is not a very innovative idea to cover the windows of the desolated houses with pieces of art. It is done in many parts of the world. Mostly the works of art contrast with the declined facades, launching a public debate as well as a discussion among urban planning specialists. Such kind of initiative is often private, even illegal. Its aim is to focus on the existing problem, to solve it.



The pieces of art were created by professional artists as well as art students and pupils living in Jekābpils.

In Jekābpils, the project has acquired a different aspect. Originally it was intended as contrastive, but now the shabby facades do not play the key role. The works of art are bright enough, so the facades build the backgrounds for them. Art prevails. The initiator of the project is the Culture Department of Jekābpils City Council. The local enterprises and the society also took part in the realization of the project. During the first round, several local businessmen sponsored the materials for the 16 works of art which were placed on 4 buildings on Pasta Street. Also, the project was implemented in a close cooperation with another local government body. The second round of the project was financed thanks to

the joint contest "Span for better life" which was organized by the newspaper "Latvijas Avīze" and the Charity fund of Rietumu Bank. During the second round, 17 paintings were created. The Culture Department gained the funding by winning the vote. 1700 people voted for the project, and it is considered to be a large public participation.

The paintings located in the windows of Pasta Street interpret the history of the buildings. One can see both historical and fictional events. On the basis of the street history and the present actuality, the exhibition on Brīvības Street has got the name „Movement in time”.

What have we achieved? A wonderful open-air gallery which claims to be the largest in Latvia. Two new tourism attractions that join together the cracked old town and that are excellent clues for walks along the town not only for guests but also for the local inhabitants.

Of course, the project does not solve the slum problem. It is not even an interim solution. But it makes the local inhabitants and the town guests smile. And it is already a step towards the solution.

MORE

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Jelgava – the Culture Intersection Point



by Sandis Kalniņš

Jelgava has reached its 750th anniversary and became important culture and history intersection point.

By courtesy of international festivals held in Jelgava, the name of the city took sustainable, admired and competitive place on the world's cultural map. One of ten most popular international ice sculpture festivals in the world will be held in Jelgava for the 18th time, whereas the International Sand Sculpture Festival "Summer signs", which is the largest sand sculpture festival in Baltics, will celebrate its 10th anniversary next year. Every year both festivals get together artists from all around the world.

Also, other festivals in Jelgava attract the attention of foreign media. Already 13 years Europe's largest milk package boat race takes place in Jelgava and attracts tourists. The city is proud of other cultural events, which involve and educate inhabitants as well as use innovations and technologies – Metal and Engineering festival, Baltic Wood Sculpture symposium and plein-air. The inhabitants are proud of local cultural events, which offer opportunities for tourism and business. Cultural values both inherited from previous generations and newly created, can unite the so-



This year, during the celebration of 750th anniversary, more than 20500 inhabitants took part in the solemn parade, which reached the length of 4.5 kilometers and lasted almost 2 hours.

ciety and create new values. The future of the city is based on the sustainable values. Taking into consideration that Jelgava is multinational city, a lot of attention is paid to inhabitants who actively take part in cultural processes and at the same time want to preserve their national identity. Jelgava does not hide its responsibility – under the stress of globalization preserve and develop its cultural identity with respect to other cultures, providing interaction between different cultures.

Jelgava has a long lasting and fruitful collaboration with the UBC member cities Pärnu and Šiauliai, but it is not enough for the development of international cultural events. Nowadays, when economic, political and pop culture events all over the world overfill our minds, it is very important to develop cooperation network for the promotion of cultural processes among the UBC member cities.

MORE

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Jyväskylä Loves Art

by Mari Aholainen

Kangas is the most significant local development project in Jyväskylä, combining ambitious urban planning, an intelligent urban environment and state-of-the-art infrastructure to create a unique urban setting.

The City of Jyväskylä purchased the old "paper mill district", the Kangas area, in 2011. From day one, the intention was to incorporate culture and art into the development ideology of this area, located almost in the very centre of the city. It is significant that this strong initiative came from the world of traditional engineering, and it was easy for the cultural field to respond this call. The "percent for art" operating model dates back almost the century. This union between art and construction is also known in other parts of Europe and the English-speaking world: 0.5%–2% of construction costs is allocated to public art.

The development of the Kangas area is a long process that will continue until 2040. The targets are ambitious. Events related to the percent for art culture and art are at the core of development. New aspects of urban development are screened via percent for art processes: involvement, the meaning of art, the vitality of the area, and business and trade policies. An international perspective and examples are also sought through collaborative networks around the world.



Children's painting wall during summer festival event organized in the Jyväskylä's Kangas area in June 2015.

What does "percent for art" mean?

The aim is to create new operating models in the Kangas area. Event production and art forms connected to events are to be included alongside the more conventional concept of percent for art. Jyväskylä has been acquiring art in connection with construction projects for years, but percent for art provides a fresh, new perspective alongside the more conventional model of purchasing works of art.

Involvement and participation are key themes of percent for art. A significant number of open workshops were organised at the beginning of planning the Kangas area. The citizens

themselves could define the values and matters they considered important for the future of Kangas. Other planning in the area also supports the sense of community. Common yards, transport, waste management, etc. will be planned to serve the common goal.

The City of Jyväskylä has almost always acquired art in connection with major construction projects.

The percent for art culture in Kangas has spread the understanding of the significance of art even more extensively throughout the city and given the phenomenon a unique face.

MORE

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KARLSTADS KOMMUN

A Vibrant Cultural Life and a Creative Centre



by Karin Karlsson

Karlstad was chosen as the Swedish cultural municipality of the year in 2010 which proved the city had been on the right way to create a vibrant cultural life.

Culture Night - for people and by people.

One of the reasons of awarding Karlstad a cultural municipality of the year was that the city tried to involve more people in cultural events, which required broader organisational participation and better accessibility. One of the key activities here is Culture Night that has been arranged for 13 years. The whole centre of the city, both indoors and outdoors, is full of life pulsing with culture.

Culture Night begins on a Friday afternoon in September and continues until midnight. What makes it unique, is that professionals, semi-professionals, amateurs and young people take the stage to show a variety of cultural activities performed in Karlstad. Afghan, Kurdish and Russian cultural groups share space with local poets or young people dancing to funk music. Wernland Opera performs concerts, amateur dramatic societies put on plays and young people show films they have produced, perform dance shows and display art. In the joint theatre-cinema, Arenan, a dance performance is arranged at each Culture Night for professional and young amateur dancers. The municipality coordinates these events, inviting participants, organising public spaces

and buildings, and producing a programme that markets Culture Night.

Meeting places

Another key factor behind a vibrant cultural life is the availability of forums where creative people can meet. In 2015 Karlstad was given an exciting assignment to investigate whether the library building in Karlstad could be developed into a full-scale building of culture. The aim of it is to be an attractive meeting place for the people of Karlstad. The consultations have been initiated between inhabitants, public institutions and cultural associations to define the expectations. This work has only just started but the meeting places are already a part of the process!



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European Heritage Label to Kaunas

by Andrijana Filinaitė

Famous for its unique interwar architecture of 1919–1940, Kaunas was officially awarded the European Heritage Label (EHL) by the European Commission on 15 April 2015. It was the time when Kaunas was a provisional capital of a young European independent Republic of Lithuania and the period marked by a very dynamic economic growth and overall creation of the statehood including original Lithuanian architecture.

“The EHL is a valuable opportunity for heritage site, offering increased prestige and visibility across all Europe. The EHL brings together outstanding heritage sites with a symbolic European value. All the labelled sites have played a significant role in the history and culture of Europe or in the development of European integration. Among them – Kaunas of 1919-1940, which has a urban landscape exuberantly reflecting European interwar architecture. It represents today the outstanding heritage of a flourishing golden period when the city of Kaunas was the temporary capital of Lithuania”, – said Andrijana Filinaitė, the tutor of the European Heritage Label programme, Chief Specialist of Cultural Heritage Division of Kaunas City Municipal Administration.

The labelled objects will be allowed to use the EHL plaque. They will also be included in the publicity and promotion strategy of the EU, dedicated for the EHL to increase its nobility.

In 2014, the international group of experts have valued 36 applications for the national level, selected by the European Commission and the EU Member States that joined the EHL. After long



Photo: Gintaras Cesornis

considerations, the prepared report recommended European Commission to award 16 places and objects, among which was "Kaunas of 1919–1940", prepared by Kaunas City Municipality. On this occasion, the flag of the European EHL is waving above the City Hall of Kaunas.

The European Heritage Label is a new European Union initiative, which follows the added value and other initiatives, such as the UNESCO World Heritage List, the UNESCO Conventions on Intangible Cultural Heritage or the Council of “Europe’s Cultural Routes”. Its added value

should be based on the contribution made by the selected sites to European history and culture, including the building of the Union, on a clear educational dimension reaching out to citizens, especially young people, and on networking between the sites to share experiences and best practices. The main focus of the action should be on the promotion of and access to the sites, as well as on the quality of the information and activities offered, as opposed to the preservation of the sites, which should be guaranteed by existing protection regimes.

MORE

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Kemi - the Northern Culture City



by Hilka Heikkinen

Kemi is an active industrial city ashore of Gulf of Bothnia. Lapland, the Swedish border and the sea make the city of 22 000 citizens very unique. The culture has always been highly appreciated by the citizens of Kemi. Every year hundreds of thousands people visit the Culture Center of Kemi. In one place you can enjoy concerts, movies, the theatre, museums and library services, or do your studies. The Culture



Not only is Kemi known for its tourist attractions like Snowcastle or Icebreaker Sampo, but also for its vibrant cultural life.

Centre of Kemi is also famous for seminars and conferences.

For self-imposed studying the Kivalo Institute offers many different possibilities. You can study languages, music, art, handcraft, information technology or sports.

Länsi-Pohja Music Institute offers music classes for kids and the youth. The Kemi City Orchestra and Länsi-Pohja String Quartet mount many high-class concerts during the year, played by local musicians and complemented by musicians from other Finnish cities or foreign countries.

The Kemi City Theatre is one of the most famous theatres in Finland. It launches six first night shows every year and many visiting shows in addition. The Kemi City Theatre gathers people not only from the city of Kemi, but from the neighbouring cities, too.

Kemi Art Museum is a high-class regional art museum co-operating for example with art museums of the Barents Region and Canada. Kemi Historical Museum opened its permanent exhibition in 2015 presenting the history of Kemi and the regions around the city.

The library is one of the most famous free of charge cultural services in the city. Free wifi, computers, e-books and e-magazines, as well as music, movies, magazines, newspapers and books tempt over 200.000 visitors to visit the library every year.

Events are organized together with local entrepreneurs and different civil groups. Night of the Arts aggregates every year local artists to perform together in the Culture Centre of Kemi.

The Comics Centre presents comics widely from different decades. Kemi is well-known for the Comics festivals, Kitacon-manga and anime - events, as well as for lively culture of music and sports.

MORE

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Ambitious Projects – Stimulators of Change

by Karolina Paškevičienė

Tendencies of contemporary cultural policy in the European, national and local context are oriented towards the concept of all-inclusive culture, treating it not only as a measure of people's occupation, self-expression in art, protection of heritage values, and dissemination of professional art, but also as a factor of city image formation, tourism attraction and stimulation of economy.

In 2015 "Klaipėda City Municipality Guidelines for Cultural Change 2015-2020" have been adopted. The priority trends indicated in the document are promotion of inter-disciplinary cooperation, consolidation of cultural identity, improvement of cultural accessibility, communication, supervision and improvement of budget sector services and infrastructure.

Opened up in 2014, the Klaipėda Art Incubator called Factory of Culture, will hopefully provide an inspiration for artists' creative and commercial activities. Klaipėda has offered grants for the incubator's tenants to settle in with representatives of arts. Closer cooperation ties among sectors of culture and business in the city would be also stimulated by implementing ambitious national and international projects that promote tourism and the city's renown.

To promote interdisciplinary cooperation in the city, various cul-



Klaipėda will become the Lithuanian Capital of Culture 2017 and currently is also intensely preparing for national selection to be candidate for the award of European Capital of Culture 2022.

tural projects are implemented co-financed from the city budget. Among the most successful ones is the "Design Manufacture" project, implemented by Klaipėda Culture Communications Centre. It is devoted to creation of new, innovation and IT based cultural products and services enhancing accessibility of art and culture. It promotes professional skills of young creators of design, stimulates creative and educational development of design and its interplay with traditional arts and handicrafts in Klaipėda. The project applies manufacture operation principle, when separate idea creation and production stages are performed by participants specializing in different work fields - designers, craftsmen,

marketing specialists, etc. In each stage a professional artist and a young designer, with a higher education in arts or still a student, work together. The result of the project is a product created by the start-up artist – a piece of clothes, glass sculpture or a packaging – produced by businessmen and circulated. The project is based on the popular in North Europe tendency "craft and design".

MORE

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Christiansfeld on UNESCO World Heritage List

by Cathrine Reinert

Christiansfeld was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List on 4 July 2015. The nomination of unique places in the world is based upon UNESCO's World Heritage Convention. The purpose is to preserve the world's unique nature and cultural heritage for posterity.



The heart of Christiansfeld is the Church Square

Christiansfeld is on UNESCO's list as an ideal town that fulfils two criteria as a "unique evidence of a cultural tradition still existing" and as "a unique example of architecture illustrating a specific time in human history". Its unique town plan and architecture reflects the Moravian Church's understanding of a society built on the basis of a Christian background. When Christiansfeld was founded in 1773 it was also a free-town, and it was the only town in Denmark that was allowed religious freedom.

The Moravian Community works together with the Danish Agency for Culture, relevant professionals and the Municipality of Kolding to preserve this site of outstanding universal value. Recently, many

of the historic houses of the town centre have been renovated. During the renovation process it has been important to let Christiansfeld remain a living town.

The UN Organisation, UNESCO have totally 1,031 unique places world wide on their World Heritage List. In Denmark there are 7 places on it:

- The Jelling Stones (Monuments)
- Roskilde Domkirke (Roskilde Cathedral)
- Kronborg Castle in Elsinore
- Stevns Klint (The Cliff of Stevns)
- Vadehavet "the Wadden Sea"
- Parforce hunting landscape in North Sealand
- Christiansfeld

Furthermore the Ilulissat Ice Fiord in Greenland is also on Unesco's World Heritage List.

The World Heritage works beyond borders, religions and ethnicities. The election of places worthy of becoming part of the World Heritage List is based upon UNESCO's Convention of World Heritage. The purpose is to preserve unique nature and cultural heritage for generations to come.

MORE

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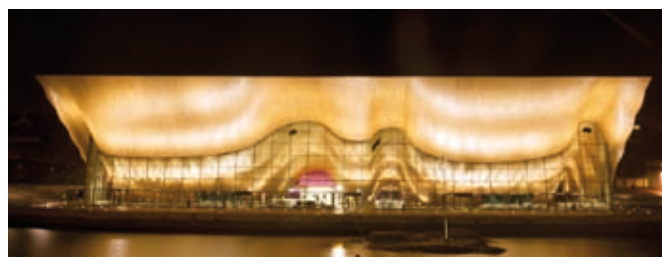
Kristiansand – a Prime Mover

by Marianne Laukvik

Kristiansand seems quiet when you enter it on a normal winter day. But don't get fooled by the first impression. The whole place is buzzing with cultural initiative, small to large venues brimming with happenings and energy.

Several initiatives within the cultural field have brought colour to Kristiansand in the course of the last twenty years. As an example, the music scene has been a very powerful source of mixing culture with social innovations and entrepreneurship. Music festivals have during the twenty-year period been invading the city in the summer. Since summers became too short, the festivals moved on to the winter time as well. Now the city is being served with professional music festivals the whole year round, and the audience never seems to get enough.

Fine art has during the same time period made an enormous jump from the general salon shows of the local art association to a more city like presentation of visual art on all levels. The regional art museum SKMU was brought to life twenty years ago and is the leading mover on the art scene when it comes to preserving and presenting the local collection. The art association has slowly merged into the Kunsthall. This venue has taken the lead when it comes to showing the latest on the Norwegian art scene. Its yearly cooperation with the Punkt-festival has also lifted organisations to a higher level when it comes to organization, innovation, internationalization and entrepreneurship. The younger artists have different venues as well as the museum and the Kunsthall. The Odderøya island has become a magnificent brooding place for both new talent and for those who have come much further in their artistic develop-



Kilden is to bring much enthusiasm but also to be a challenging part of our lives in Kristiansand, like art tends to be.

ment. Initiatives and cooperation just seem to sprout out from the mere fact that artist have their working space close to one another. This is what we call true entrepreneurship.

Finally, Kilden is the one organisation, bastion and monumental change which we can boast of here in Kristiansand. This brand new marvellously designed concert hall with several smaller venues for more intimate concerts or plays has made cultural life in Kristiansand something one would only fantasize about twenty years ago. Born out of a bold vision from several entrepreneurial actors in the city and co-funded by Cultiva, Kilden carries the possibility of growing into the greatest and boldest presenter of scenic art in the south region of Norway.

MORE

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Cultural, Urban and Literary Events in Linköping



by Elisabeth Asp

Providing temporary public open space with cultural and creative contents makes a diverse festival for one day for the citizens and the local artists.

Since 2007 the cultural festival of City Art Link has been arranged in the central area of Linköping. The festival started among creative and cultural entrepreneurs, institutions and cultural associations. City Art Link (CAL) is divided in two parts, an annual autumn festival and a cultural and creative network. Members of CAL meet every six weeks during the year over a breakfast meeting to make plans in the cultural hub of Linköping.

In the start-up phase the festival was held during two days, on Fridays and Saturdays. Different artistic expressions were exposed, such as music concerts, art exhibitions and open studios and work ateliers. The city of Linköping and the Region of Östergötland are the main funders of the event.

Marketing is made through the local newspaper, radio and TV. In 2014 the festival merged with a street festival PARK(ing) Day also



The mission of PARK(ing) Day is to call attention to the need for more urban open space.

arranged by the city. PARK(ing) Day is an annual open-source global event where citizens, artists and activists collaborate to temporarily transform metered parking spaces into "PARK(ing)" spaces, temporary public places.

PARK(ing) Day in Linköping contains of bicycle basket flea, pop-up scenes, street art recycling crafts, cargo bikes, charity lunch, barefoot dancing. This year the festival focused on the Main Square. A part of the street that usually slumbers was through "Parking lot day" brought into life. The entire street was buzzing.

In 2014 CAL also started to cooperation with the regional book fair at the city library. Even during 2015 it was a successful cooperation. This year's edition

of the book fair was really a festival. More than 3,700 visitors of all ages got a full day in the literary characters. Lovely meetings in an exhibition hall filled with businesses, organizations and author of the book industry in Östergötland was interspersed with interesting lectures, theaters and exciting book releases.

MORE

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Strands of Culture in Mariehamn and Åland

by Tom Eckerman

Åland's cultural life is centered on a large number of societies, whereas responsibility for public cultural initiatives is shared by the regional and local authorities.

Language is very central to the culture of the islands. Swedish is by law the only official language in the otherwise bilingual Finland. Thus literature and libraries play an important role in culture and in education. The Town Library of Mariehamn is the hub of the municipal cultural and educational administration, and it also functions as the Central Library of the islands.

Mariehamn Town is supporting culture and sports by awarding grants to associations up to a sum of 230 000 EUR, coming to about 20 EUR per inhabitant. In addition to that, the associations are supported through lowering the rent for facilities used mainly for sports.

Lately the production of films has been widely discussed and Åland has teamed up with authorities in the Stockholm Region to persuade film-makers to choose Åland as the location for their projects.

Co-operation on an international level is mainly focused on the Nordic countries. The Nordic Institute in Åland plays an important role in importing and exchanging ideas on a wider scale. The Institute operates under the aegis of the Nordic Council of Ministers, but is also supported by the governmental authorities. It has played a vital role in the development of Åland's cultural life.

Apart from activities mainly funded by the municipalities for education and local libraries and culture on a small scale, a substantial deal of financial support for culture comes from betting. About 50

societies receive funding from returns generated by Ålands penningautomatförening (PAF), a publicly owned gaming company. Money from this organization is mainly channelled into social activities, sports and culture. Another supporter of culture, Svenska kulturfonden, SKF (The Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland), also plays an important role for individual artists and projects.

The building of Alandica, a hall for congresses and culture in 2008, and the 2012 extension and renovation of the Åland Maritime Museum were partly financed with great grants from PAF.

To enliven the cultural experience of the town, the museum took part in the first Baltic Shanty Festival with some of the most prominent shanty singers of the world. The festival took place at the museum, aboard the four-masted barque Pommern, in local restaurants and on the pier with the sea as backdrop. The next festival is planned to take place on 1-3 July 2016.



The Polish a capella quintet North Cape shows the way to a broader Baltic shanty participation in the future.

MORE

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A New Ground for Creative Ideas

by Juliana Janno

Supported by the European Regional Development Fund, a kilometre-long Narva River Promenade was constructed under the walls of the medieval Narva Castle and Bastions. On 5 November 2014 Promenade was officially opened as a walking path, a cycling road, a café, benches to enjoy picturesque views, a children's playground, and a stage with spectators' seats – a perfect setting for many cultural events.



The Promenade has become a popular and well-loved site, and so did a solid bridge in cooperation between the local authorities, NGOs and activity groups.

From May until September the Promenade turned into an area for creative ideas. Local NGOs, cultural societies, Narva Youth Centre and active youngsters had worked out a programme of events, when every weekend there would be concerts, dancing

shows, theatrical performances, sport contests, handicraft workshops and other activities. More importantly, the Narvonians are to be engaged in every single event of the programme, and not just

as spectators but active participants.

For instance, International Children's Day saw many joyful and fascinating events, including hip-hop and break-dance contest "Summer Cypher 2015". The dance battle attracted participants not only from different regions of Estonia but also neighbouring Russia. In collaboration with St.Petersburg partners, during Days of Narva in June, the locals thoroughly enjoyed a two-day theatrical programme, where actors from leading Petersburg theatres and prominent musicians took part. Sport events - "Promenade Run" and "Festival of Movement" - were organized with support from NGO "Motus" and the Local Initiative Programme (KÜSK). Both events advocated for healthy and active lifestyle, demonstrating the potential of Promenade for doing sports. On 4 July the Promenade was swarmed by drawers and painters, who on the Arts Day exhibited their works in the open air, giving everyone a chance to try their hand in creating pictures. Finally, every third Saturday in the summer, the Promenade turned into the concert ground, where old romances, songs from favourite films and other "oldies but goodies" were heard as Narva national cultural societies performed to and with the public at the Evenings of Music and Dance.

The work done together has strengthened the ties, trust, and feeling of pride for the native city.

MORE

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There is no Place for Boredom in Palanga

by Jurgita Vanagė

The calendar of cultural events is as rich and intense as never before. Palanga is able to impress its guests in the spring time – the Jurginių Festival reminds of folk traditions and, when Easter comes closer, the most popular Basanavičiaus street in Palanga spruces up with enormous Easter eggs reaching two metres. In May the seaside is showered with amber: it falls from the hands of the maritime god, Bangpūtys, who reminds everyone that the summer is approaching.

The summer in Palanga is full of traditional events. One of such events is the Voices of Classics - concert performances that attract the listeners' attention throughout the summer. The Summer of the Brasses concerts can boast no smaller group of fans: the sounds of the Palanga Orchestra enrich the Birutė Park by giving unforgettable popular and original brass music concerts in the surroundings of nature. This is a tradition that has been kept alive in the resort for more than a century.

The summer time in Palanga would lose half of its charm without the pleasures of classical music melodies. The Night Serenades classical music concerts series invite listeners to the terrace of Tiškevičiai Palace in Birutė Park every year. The series of events create a very special atmosphere that brings together classical music artists and listeners. The Ave Maria sacred music and poetry festival is another event high-

lighting cosy summer evenings dedicated to music and poetry.

In the autumn Palanga is inundated with yet another impressive art wave: in September the resort invites to the already traditional Birutė Park Day and the Palanga Table celebration that definitely does not lack good mood.



Once the savoury smelt has been tasted, the scent of spring can be felt in Palanga.

In December the country's largest resort brightens up with the most vivid lights, thus inviting to the Christmas Light City festival. The end of the year is crowned with the final event – the New Year's Eve celebration with a spectacular concert and fireworks.

When farewell is bidden to the Old Year, the pleasant scent of smelt can be felt in Palanga: almost all of Lithuania

and the closest neighbours from abroad crowd together in Basanavičiaus street where the one and only Smelt Festival in the country is buzzing. The festival offers not only various tastes of differently prepared smelt but also the joys of cultural program and a good time among friends.

MORE

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Let's Meet on Fridays!



by Loreta Krasauskienė

A city centre can be transformed into any object: a gallery, a theatre, a concert hall, a market square or a sporting facility. It is part of the city characterised by activities of city dwellers and its guests. Unfortunately, nowadays, a number of city centres cannot boast large flows of visitors. The city centres need a critical mass of people with their energy and creativity.

Modern city centres have been emptying since the institutions influencing city economy (shopping, entertainment centres) moved out to the outskirts. Incapability of city communities to react to spontaneous processes on time and in a proper way has resulted in degradation of the city centres. It is like a vicious circle – an empty, not safe physical environment does not encourage successful economic activities and attracts businesses with low added value. Thus, it continues to fade, crimes increase, etc. How could a city community change this situation? Can a municipality, various institutions and organisations contribute to the revival of the city centre? These were the questions asked by Panevėžys several years ago.

Consequently, it was decided to establish an active, full of energy space in the central square with the help of the local community. As a result of this cooperation, the summer festival "Let's meet on Fridays" appeared to revive the city centre, to encourage people to feel the members of the community, to foster creativity and mu-



The festival became the meeting place for people.

tual communication between entrepreneurs, NGOs, culture, sports, educational institutions. The Culture Centre has united all wishing to play, sing, dance and create. A platform for various city community groups to present themselves and their activities has been initiated.

"Let's meet on Fridays" festival has been organized for six years. It takes place on summer Friday evenings. The programme is very diverse and targeted at spectators of different

age groups. Here, the music of wind orchestras, folk art, pop, rock, jazz music concerts can be listened to. Also, the performances for children, films under the open sky, healthy life style activities, prevention programmes, discussions, lectures, physical training exercises, presentations of NGOs, etc. can be organised. Sightseeing excursions in the city, food tasting, auctions, advertising campaigns and many other activities make the life more vivid.

Three main factors influenced the success of the project: the same place, the same time and an active community.

Active communities mean live public spirit. Thus, we have the society of citizens – a base and content of a democratic state.

MORE

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Experience the World of Art!

by Päivi Setälä

The Experiential Colour Workshop for Babies is developed by the Pori Centre for Children's Culture and designed for families with babies. The central working principles of the workshop are the multi-sensorial experientiality and experimentality of colours and materials, an interactive way of working, being in the moment. The workshops progress from observing colours and touching different materials to self-producing traces. The traces left by babies, as well as their visual gestures and activity, are considered significant and important.



Photo: Päivi Setälä

The main aim of the workshop is not achievement or efficiency, but sensing and experiencing.

In the Experiential Colour Workshop for Babies the main point is not about making a picture or picturing the world, but rather about existing in it. Existence appears as a pictorial, visual or picturesque trace. The work or trace appearing is the baby's existence making itself visible.

It is about visual enjoyment and delight. Not all things that stimulate the senses leave permanent traces, sometimes they create momentary sensations and memories. The Expe-

riential Colour Workshop for Babies offers possibilities of multifaceted interaction between a baby and an adult.

According to many parents the workshops have been a dream come true since they provide an activity related to fine arts, and for having their own, very special atmosphere. In the Experiential Colour Workshop for Babies, every single baby is seen as someone who knows and who can, as a person who is capable of developing many different kinds of talents and expressing unique ways of communication and expression.

The method of the Experiential Colour Workshop for Babies can be adapted to people of different ages and operational environments. For example, the Pori Centre for Children's Culture has developed a new kind activity called Kultane in co-operation with the group child and maternity health clinic of Pori. In the Kultane activity the 6-month old babies get the chance to experience the world of art, as well as to paint and explore different materials as part of the group child health clinic meetings for families.

In October 2015 Pori Centre for Children's Culture released a book about the Experiential Colour Workshop for Babies in English as well as in Swedish. The original publication in Finnish (Vauvojen värikyly) was released in 2011.

MORE

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International Art in Rostock

by Dr. Katrin Arrieta

In 1969, within a picturesque park around the swan lake, in the middle of a beautiful recreational idyll of the city quarter Reuter-shagen, there was opened a spectacular new building – the Kunsthalle Rostock. It was the first modern and new-built exhibition house for modern arts in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), and, until today it is unique in the region of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

This building stood for the culture-political idea and the corresponding programme: to bring international art to a place within the closed society of the GDR which was called the 'Gate towards the World', and to present it clearly and visibly. So from the beginning the Kunsthalle was a place of economic and cultural progress.

Built in 1957, the biggest seaport of the country, developing ship building industry and attractive University rich in traditions let Rostock's population grow: young families settled here since the 60's in the new emerging living quarters in the city's North-West. They were the target group of the new museum.

The Kunsthalle Rostock remained to be the only new built art museum within the period of the GDR. Especially the biennials of the Baltic Sea countries, artistic positions from the socialist and the

The recent exhibitions in the Kunsthalle Rostock presented the works of Marc Chagall / 2014, Werner Tübke, Michael Triegel / 2015, Norbert Bisky / 2015, Sean Scully / 2015, Arno Rink / 2015



Photo: Bernd Borchardt

non-socialist areas within the Baltic Sea Region, received its renown outside the borders of the GDR, especially as an innovative institution dedicated to the contemporary arts. And, happily, in the silent background of its well-visible activities, even an own collection could be built up.

MORE

www.kunsthallerostock.de



Szczecin Philharmonic Hall Wins Mies van der Rohe Award 2015

by Ewa Kurjata

The Szczecin Philharmonic Hall in Poland by Spanish studio Barozzi Veiga has won the European Union's architecture prize, the Mies van der Rohe Award 2015.

Named after German-American architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the biennial award is the most prestigious accolade in European architecture and is awarded to a building completed in the last two years by a European architect.

The new Philharmonic Hall of Szczecin is located on the historical site of "Konzerthaus", and recomposes an urban corner in a neighbourhood to the historic city centre. In its form, the hall refers to European and local traditions of concert houses, connecting history and modernity, drawing on inspiration from former location and surrounding historic housing.

The building houses a symphony hall for 1000 spectators, a hall for chamber music for 200 spectators, a multi-functional space for exhibitions and conferences, and a wide foyer, which can also serve to host artistic events. Its most spectacular scene, an ornamental space, reminds of the classical tradition through its gold-leaf covering.



The ice-like shape of the building was hailed the new icon of the city already in the first stage of the works

Photo: Hultén&Crow

This new cultural edifice in Szczecin features a zigzagging roof profile and a translucent ribbed-glass facade. According to the jury the series of pitched gables which crowns the rectangular complex of the new building dialogues well with the silhouette of the nearby castle.

The jury also praised the Szczecin Philharmonic Hall for taking on "a new symbolic role" in its replacement of an auditorium that was destroyed during the second world war, and recognised the building's potential to offer "new chances for cultural and leisure events".

It will serve as the centre of cross-border cooperation and international exchanges, with an ambitious mission to create unique space for contact with vivid music and other related forms of art.

The concert hall finds a convincing formal and spatial strategy for Szczecin which strives for a better future in a fast-changing economy and social patterns, delivering a dignity to urban life and the same time enhancing the city's specific historical identity with a contemporary monument. As one of the most modern and innovative buildings in Poland, Szczecin philharmonic hall has already been recognized in numerous contests, winning prestigious rewards.

MORE

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Open Stage Prompts Free Events



by Jaakko Laurila

Tampere built an open stage in the heart of the city for events and soon discovered how effective it is to animate the urban area. Since the opening in the summer 2012 Laikunlava outdoor stage has hosted over 500 events – all free of charge.



The open stage can be seen as an empty space that people want to fill in. It is an inspiration.

Laikunlava stage offers impressive settings for various outdoor happenings on the banks of the Tammerkoski right next to the Central Square. There is seating for 300 persons and wide green and park space around the stage. The basic principle of the stage is that it is owned by the citizens of Tampere. The city takes care of the infrastructure and timetables, but anyone can use the venue. The range of events goes from small poetry moments and morning yoga's to opening ceremonies of festivals.

Special support for local performers

Local amateur bands, orchestras and choirs have adapted the stage from the start. Tampere has annually arranged series of Summer Park

Concerts taking place around the city. Laikunlava became the main venue for the concerts. The main idea of the Summer Park Concert cycles is very down to earth: people of Tampere performing to people of Tampere with a little help from the city. The groups send their application at the beginning of the year and the producer pairs up the groups so that there are two bands playing per evening, and creates the concert schedule. The timetable is sent to every home in Tampere already in May. Annually, the concerts gather 20 000 people.

Fighting vandalism with ice cream and circus equipment

The open stage soon became a place for drug dealing, graffiti vandalism and heavy alcohol usage. The situation did not improve after installing security cameras and increasing police patrolling. In the summer of 2014 alternative methods were introduced to make the area more peaceful. The city hired a group of young people to sell ice cream in the park and bought a bunch of circus supplies and park games for people to use free of charge. The results have been promising. Families and children have taken over the park from drug users in the day time as the evenings are occupied by concerts and events.

MORE

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VIII Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival in Tukums

by Anda Andžāne

This year on 25-28 June VIII Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival took place in several towns of Latvia, organized by the Latvian National Centre for Culture (Latvijas Nacionālais kultūras centrs) in association with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other partners. This celebration was one of the most important closing events of the cultural programme of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The festival's tradition was established in 1995 by the chief conductor of the Latvian Song and Dance Festival Imants Kokars with the aim of bringing together amateur choirs of the Baltic and Nordic countries, and thus updating and refining the community singing that is characteristic to song and dance festival tradition, as well as with the aim of promoting European cross-cultural exchange. Since the first festival held in 1995, it has taken place in all the Baltic and Nordic countries, and this year, once again, it was Latvia's turn to organise it.

During Regional Day of VIII Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival, on 27 June, celebrations took place also in Tukums town and the municipality's rural territories. Guest choirs „Helmi” (Finland), „Gavlekören” (Sweden), „International Tagore Choir” (Sweden) and women's choir „Irlava” of Irlava Culture Centre performed at Sāti Church. Guest choirs „Atzalynas” (Lithuania), Estonian Latvians' choir „Ziemeļu Balsis” and the Copenhagen Latvians' choir (Denmark) gave a concert at Pūre Culture Centre. Yet, guest choir „Aarhus Chamberchoir” (Denmark) performed a concert at Tukums Evangelical Lutheran Church.



The Festival brings together various cultures and traditions thus contributing to the better mutual understanding.

In its turn, a heralding concert of VIII Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival took place in the evening finale at Durbe open-air stage and it brought together around 900 choir singers and 500 dancers. 16 foreign choirs from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden, 2 Latvian diaspora choirs from Estonia and Denmark, as well as 16 Latvian choirs and 28 Latvian dance groups performed at the concert.

VIII Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival brought unforgettable emotions and a sense of unity to both the participants and the visitors.

MORE

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Turku and St. Petersburg to Strengthen Museum Co-operation

by Anna Kotaviita

In October 2015 the cultural cooperation gets stronger after signing the museum exhibition agreement between the Turku Museum Centre and the State Museum of the History of the Religion in St. Petersburg.

The co-operation agreement was signed during the Turku Days in St. Petersburg in late October by the Mayor of City of Turku Aleksi Randell and the Director of the State Museum of the History of the Religion Liubov Musienko.

The State Museum of the History of the Religion was opened in 1932. Today, it has exhibitions about the history of the world's religions and collections number about 250 000. During the Soviet times it was the Museum of Atheism.

The cooperation brings the exhibition of the Museum of the History of the Religion's to Turku in autumn 2016. It consists of various religious artefacts from all over the world.

At the signing ceremony, Mayor Aleksi Randell stressed in his speech that it is important to have the exhibition that presents



Mayor of City of Turku Aleksi Randell and the Director of the State Museum of the History of the Religion Liubov Musienko.

various religions from all over the world to the public audience especially during this global era when religions take again more important role.

According to Mayor Randell and Director Liubov Musienko the exhibition exchange is a continuation of close co-operation between the cities.

The City of Turku and St. Petersburg are known for the close co-operation especially in the fields

of education, culture, business economics and science. The cities celebrated their 60 anniversary of the twin-city relations in 2013.

MORE

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The Art of Co-creation – A Legacy for Umeå2014

by Fredrik Lindegren

Umeå has recently finished the year as European Capital of Culture and is evaluated by the EU, the Swedish Government and PWC. The main conclusion from the evaluations is that the method for the creative process, open source, has been one of the keys to the Umeå2014 success.

In fact, the open source and co-creation approach is considered to be so innovative that the EU-Panel (who originally appointed Umeå) encourages Umeå to disseminate and share their practical experiences of these methods by organizing conferences and seminars, as this form of co-creation could be an interesting legacy of Umeå 2014 for future European Capitals of Culture and cities using culture as part of their long term development."

But how does the open source approach really work and operate? The independent EU evaluation describes it, as follows:

"In essence, the open source approach involved setting broad themes and criteria for the programme as a whole and then inviting cultural operators to fill the programme themselves. The objective of the open source approach was, in part, to facilitate capacity building in the local cultural sector, thus providing long-term benefit."

"The open source also allowed cultural sector to shape the programme in a way that was authentic, reflecting Umeå, its context and its character."

The process to reach a powerful programme by using co-creation and open source has been demanding. Not only does the method promise a lot in a democratic context, but it also requires a huge quantity of meetings, dialogues, feedback and support to reach a program agreement with the stakeholders.

A more usual way to produce a program would be to use the open call scheme that is common for most of the European Capitals of Culture. It is built on a fixed deadlines for a couple of years ahead and has an approval rate on approximately 10%. In the case of Umeå, there was no other way to organize the European Capital of Culture except for using co-creation since the cultural sector is strong and highly developed.

Finally, the evaluation from the EU made the following conclusion about the method:

"We might suggest that the open source approach is not appropriate for all cities: perhaps only for those open for co-creation and with capacity for international collaboration, and where there is also a context of trust and a tradition of consensus."

The legacy of Umeå2014 will be recognized as a paradigm shift in the way a cultural programme can be built and adopted.



The opening event of Umeå2014 Capital of Culture.

MORE

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Rich and Diverse Cultural Supply is Vaasa's Hallmark



by Mia Wiik

Vaasa has many municipal institutions working to provide its citizens with cultural experiences: two professional theatres, museums, a city orchestra and a string of libraries. Another establishment that brings culture close to residents in an accessible way is the Cultural Centre of Vaasa. Its aim is to make art easily available and to organise forums where people can meet, such as events, art education, international exchanges and diverse cultural activities. As a general player in the field, the Cultural Centre creates a wide range of opportunities for cooperation between the city's cultural institutions, cultural associations and artists and coordinates this cooperation.

Since 2009, the Cultural Centre has collaborated with Ikäkeskus, the centre for elderly people, on an operations model that allows the city to offer its elderly citizens a diverse range of cultural services. The activities of the Culture Carousel K-65 are coordinated jointly by the Cultural Centre and the Ikäkeskus, and various art institutions, associations, educational establishments. Representatives of different art forms are involved in them. This operations model has brought to the elderly people a huge array of expertise to make use of and enjoy, and the artists and service providers have gained many new customers and target groups for their activities.

Presently, the city is working on improving art and cultural education in collaboration with schools. It creates new opportunities to strengthen



The Vaasa schools' cultural curricula guarantee every child an equal opportunity to participate in cultural and art activities which have been tailored for them.

Photo: Johan Hagström

en the cultural foundation of every child growing up in Vaasa.

Vaasa is also a great event city. The international Vaasa Choir Festival will take place for the 24th time on 4-8 May 2016, offering high-quality choral music and a superb opportunity for choirs to display their skills. The main performers will include, for example, the Real Group from Sweden and the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. The Night of the Arts will take place on 11 August 2016. Every year it transforms the city into one huge cultural living room, providing

opportunities for various forms of culture to present themselves and for artists, young and old, and people from near and far to meet and have fun. The majority of the events and performances are free!

Vaasa is home to people from about 120 different nationalities, which makes it an excitingly multicultural and dynamic city where culture and community become more and more important. Various types of cooperation that break down all kinds of barriers is an evident part of culture, and encounters made working together create new values and bring about interesting new points of view.

MORE

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Visby – a Cultural Gem Stone

by Bertil Klintbom

Gotland is a fantastic island in the middle of the Baltic Sea with its nature, good climate, nice shores, historical sites and much more to offer.



The one of the oldest parts of the ring wall called "Krutttornet".

Photo: Bertil Klintbom

The crown of the island is the capital city of Visby where you can easily feel the breath of history. Narrow streets with cobble stone, market places, old buildings and of course the ring wall around the old part of the city protecting it from the inland.

The cultural life is vital with many types of organizations covering art, theatre and music to mention a few. The old city itself is a very good stage for events such as the medieval week held every year in August that attracts visitors with its medieval market, theatre performances and tournaments where the knights fight each others on horseback.

Gotland and Visby has been successful in implementing activity weeks that attract many visitors and involve local entrepreneurs, organisations and the public. Otherwise they would not happen.

Here are some examples:

- ▶ The Ingmar Bergman week. The famous film director lived for many years on Gotland. During the week you can follow his work on different sites and visit the Bergman Museum.
- ▶ The political week in Almedalen in old Visby with its roots back to 1968 is an exhilarating week with all kind of activities, seminars and debates and it is well worth to blend in with the thousands of visitors that enjoy the event.
- ▶ The medieval week held every year the first week in August since 1984 is full of activities and the city is transformed into a theatre in full scale!
- ▶ Gotland Art week covers many cultural activities not only in the city but over the entire island
- ▶ Crimetime Gotland is a festival held for the first time 2015 and it covers the many thrillers written with Visby and Gotland as scenery. The authors are there and tell you about their books, sites are visited and so on. The first event was a success and you can buy tickets for 2016 already!

MORE

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XIII UBC General Conference promoted smart, sustainable and safe cities

by Anna Kotaviita

The UBC 13th General Conference was held in Gdynia on 27–30 October 2015. The Conference elected 3 Vice-Presidents, Executive Board Cities and current President Per Bødker Andersen to lead the UBC for the next two year period. The Conference was also a place to discuss the UBC's future.



Photo: Piotr Manasterski

Over 200 participants gathered in the Conference's premises - the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park. The 3-day Conference discussed broadly how to develop even more sustainable, smart and safe cities around the Baltic Sea Region in high level sessions,

panels and workshops. The biennial General Conference is the UBC's highest authority and has power to take decisions concerning any activities of the Union.

– The theme of the Conference, smart cities, is a concrete matter. We need to focus more on integration and steady growth as the aftermath of the economic crisis. The real work is done on the municipal level where cities and their partnerships play a big role. The cooperation between Baltic states and the neighbouring regions should be also enhanced, stressed **Dr Iwona Woicka Żuławska**, First Counsellor, Deputy Director of the Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Poland at the Opening Session.

UBC Sustainable Action Programme was adopted, also refugee situation and ship sewages were on the agenda

The Conference discussed the draft of the UBC strategic framework 2016–2021. It adopted the UBC Sustainability Action Programme as part of it. The programme gives the strategic direction to which Sustainable Development topics UBC works in the future in order to create a smart and sustainable Baltic Sea Region.

In addition, the resolutions on Refugee Situation in Europe and Resolution on Dumping Sewage in the Baltic Sea were adopted. The afore-said themes show that there is still a need for city cooperation in order to foster a more prosperous Baltic Sea Region.

The City of Växjö, Sweden was elected to host the next General Conference to be held in 2017.



Photo: UBC Secretariat



Photo: Piotr Manasterski

Per Bødker Andersen was elected the UBC President for the next 2-year period. Gdańsk will host the UBC Secretariat for the next 4 years.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS' RESULTS FOR 2015–2017:

President

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, Councillor, Kolding, Denmark

The Presidium

Marie-Louise Rönnmark (1st Vice-President), Chairman of the City Council, Umeå, Sweden

Jarkko Virtanen, Deputy Mayor, Turku, Finland

Ando Kiviberg, Mayor, Viljandi, Estonia

Executive Board Member Cities

Denmark – Næstved, Estonia – Elva, Finland – Lahti, Germany – Rostock, Latvia – Liepāja, Lithuania – Kaunas, Norway – Kristiansand, Poland – Gdynia, Russia – St. Petersburg, Sweden – Växjö, Observing member - Gdańsk

Increasing the interaction with youth

UBC's Youthful Cities Commission organized a parallel Conference bringing to Gdynia 75 youth participants from 16 UBC cities.

Hasan Habib, the Chair of the Youthful Cities Commission:

Usually youth know more than adults. Our duty as civil servants working for the cities is to take youth in the decision-making and offer them various channels for active participation. On international level youth learn from each other so it is important for us. Participants are very active and also very educated when it comes to the world politics. As an example, 73 participants out of 75 think the refugee situation is not a threat for us. One said that we are responsible for the current situation, not the refugees themselves.

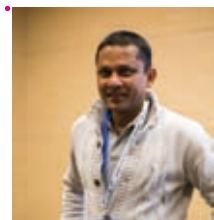


Photo: Piotr Manasterski

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Focus on sustainability and smart cities

The UBC current strategy terminates in the end of 2015. Therefore, drafting and discussion on strategic framework 2016–2021 have been in the agenda at various UBC meetings and in other relations throughout the year. In what kind of UBC would you like to be active in 2021?

The the Strategic framework 2016–2021 was discussed during the General Conference in Gdynia this October. The draft is to be sent to the UBC member cities for comments.

The strategy seeks ways to serve its member cities more and strengthen the UBC administrative bodies as well. The draft suggestions for the strategic priorities for 2016–2021 are as follows:

- ▶ Implementing UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2016–2021
- ▶ Integrating the UBC work more closely to the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) and Blue Growth strategies
- ▶ UBC towards a new Urban Agenda for Cities
- ▶ Promoting Smart Growth and Digitalization
- ▶ Stronger, more proactive and member-driven UBC

In addition, the UBC Commissions are called upon to take note, and to integrate above mentioned policies into their Action Programmes, as relevant.

UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2016–2021 Stairway towards Sustainable Baltic Cities

UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2016–2021 implements UBC Strategy and guides the whole network towards development of a smart and sustainable Baltic Sea Region. It was adopted as an annex to UBC Strategy by the XIII UBC General Conference in October 2015 in Gdynia, Poland.

“UBC cities will be climate smart, providing a good ground for green economy to grow, while being resource efficient and sustainable in all their activities as well as protecting the environment and water bodies in the Baltic Sea Region. They will increasingly be known as global forerunners when it comes to creating inclusive, diverse, democratic, gender equal high quality living environment for their inhabitants.”

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www.ubc-sustainable.net

The UBC Executive Board met in Dolina Charlotty

by UBC Secretariat

The new commissions work and future plans were presented during the meeting. Also, the Strategy 2016–2021 and the programme of the General Conference in Gdynia were on the agenda.

The 63rd meeting of the Executive Board was organized on 11–12 June in Dolina Charlotty resort, Poland.

Restructuring of the UBC Commissions has been one of the most important tasks 2015. The new 7 Commissions presented their action plans, priority areas and budget proposals. The discussion between the Executive Board members and the Commissions' representatives was extensive. The main questions concerned how to promote, coordinate and finance in a more effective way the work of the Commissions and how to attract member cities to get involved. Also, the project preparation, links between the Executive Board, Commissions, communications, and other relevant organizations were taken up.

Mikko Lohikoski, UBC Strategy Coordinator, presented suggestions for guidelines for the Strategy 2016–2021. It is important to take the existing cooperation structures in the BSR and in Europe into account, e.g. EUSBSR and EU Urban Agenda which focuses on the cities' role for economic, social and cultural development. The UBC Commissions were suggested setting their priorities in accordance with the UBC's goals listed in the new Strategy.

It was also agreed that the renewal process of the UBC's visual facelift should continue. It includes among others renewal of the [ubc.net](http://www.ubc.net). Also, other issues were taken up, such as Intranet, bulletin, social media and their role in improving the internal and external communication.

In parallel with the Board meeting, the 1st UBC Charlotta Rock Festival and the UBC BBQ Championships were held.



Participants of the 63rd UBC Board meeting

CENTRAL PRIORITY AREAS OF THE COMMISSIONS:

Jaana Simula, Cultural Cities Commission, Chair: We plan to prioritize the network based cultural cooperation networking, professionalization of the cultural field, strategic partnerships and research.

Jaroslav Józefczyk, Inclusive & Healthy Cities Commission, Co-chair: Our main priorities and actions are open spaces recognition, matching the open space idea partners for exchange, projects and defining financial sources for open space activities.

Kaspars Vārpiņš, Safe Cities Commission, Chair: We intend to continue promoting the safety cities idea e.g. via web-based database, projects and meetings.

Wolfgang Schmidt, Smart and Prospering Cities Commission, Chair: The Commission decided to focus on three areas: Place promotion, talent management and innovation ecosystems.

Björn Grönholm, Sustainable Cities Commission, Head of the Secretariat: Engagement of UBC member cities in the international cross-border cooperation will be one of the main goals of the SCC activities. The SCC is involved in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the BSR.

Hasan Habib, Youthful Cities Commission, Chair: We are to promote youth participation and to combat youth exclusion and other barriers.

Niels-Peter Mohr, Planning Cities Commission, Chair: We focus on the meetings between colleagues across the Baltic Sea and the exchange of ideas that can make our cities more attractive.

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Youth for equality, equity and peace

by Hasan Habib

On 26-30 October 2015 the Youth of the Baltic Sea Region reminded the policy makers that it has a voice and it is important.

The youth, coming from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, gathered in Gdynia for an Erasmus+ funded conference "Youth for equality, equity and peace". The event was held in the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park. Participants, aged 13-20, came from various municipalities, and had different backgrounds and exper-



iences. Their own points of view were fostering educational efforts within non-formal framework.

The event was designed and ran to show the importance of the active youth involvement in the public life both locally and internationally. The chosen main areas of focus – equality, equity and peace – allowed to build upon a wider perspective which led to heated discussions. The group worked far above borders and cultural differences. The conference offered also a friendly environment to practice English skills, so important in the contemporary world.

The active participants were able to learn the importance and mech-

anisms of cooperation in multinational and multicultural teams. Above all, though, they have gained greater understanding of the international political situation in the Baltic Sea Region, how economy, equality and

peace are tied together. This allowed them to come with their own ideas on how to tackle the contemporary issues. Their points will be accessible to any interested party in a form of a declaration. The document, entitled Baltic Youth Declaration, is going to be a living work, changing with the progress of the started dialogue.

Most importantly, the young people were given a possibility to show to policy makers that they have great ideas and even greater potential directly linked to the sustainable future of the Baltic Sea Region. Thus, a base for an inter-generational bridge was created and with an effort from all the stakeholders it might permanently connect seemingly unlikely shores of decision makers and the youth.



Photo: Lukasz Kosowski

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Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being

Good, bad and best practices

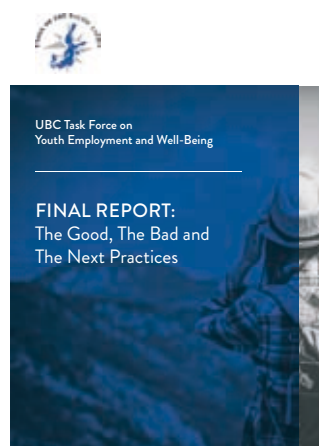
by Matti Mäkelä

The final report called The Good, The Bad and The Next Practices, presented at the XIII UBC General Conference in Gdynia, seeks answers to three basic questions: why?, where?, what?

Why are we doing this? According to the European Commission, the economic loss to Europe due to the disengagement of young people from the labour market is approximately 153 billion EUR per year. Full implementation of the Youth Guarantee would generate annual savings worth a total of 132 billion EUR. In comparison, that is over three times the profit made by Apple Inc., the world's most profitable company, in 2014. Moreover, it's not only about the money: supporting youth employment and well-being is also a part of a just society, which sees supporting disadvantaged people as a value *per se*.

Where are we now? The youth unemployment rate in UBC countries is mostly at or below EU average; the situation is best in Denmark and Germany. The development from 2012 to 2015 has been positive in Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, whereas the situation in Germany, Norway, Sweden and Finland has not seen drastic changes.

An on-line survey about the implementation of the Youth Employment and Well-Being Programme was conducted in early autumn 2015. The total number of respondents was 53. The overall picture that emerged from the survey is mostly positive, but with some important questions. Guidance and support measures and cooperation between different actors received mostly positive marks, and the general consensus is that in both areas things have been



The report was presented in Gdynia and will be distributed to the UBC cities, Baltic and European organisations, etc.

moving in a positive direction. When it comes to special groups such as immigrant youth and youth in need of special support, the picture was much bleaker. The support towards integration and for reaching the educational requirements for modern working life was seen as barely satisfactory.

What's next? Suggested measures include 2-4 thematic workshops per year, study visits and expert visits, new projects and other forms of joint development, follow-up survey on the implementation of the Youth Employment

and Well-Being Programme, and decision about the coordination and funding of these measures.

Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being met six times during the years 2014 and 2015 with 27 experts representing 15 member cities and six countries contributing to the work.

MORE

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Creating stronger UBC communications

by Anna Kotaviita

The "New UBC" has been actively operating from the communications stand point: The Communications Network was established and the UBC's visual outlook and ubc.net are being upgraded.

Communications is everywhere: in your hand shake, the way you speak, look and write emails to your colleagues, etc. We are surrounded by it and are part of it. Generally, communications is not anymore communicating from top to down. It is multilateral and consists of polyphonic voices.

The year 2015 has been particularly important for the UBC since renewing the Commissions. However, this also creates a need for increasing the coordination and cooperation between the Commissions and the UBC organs.

The UBC's communication and marketing needs to be developed and evaluated on a regular basis and adapted to the changing Baltic Sea environment.

Four steps for a more communicative UBC:

► Based on the UBC Communications and Marketing Strategy, the UBC's communications has been re-structured and developed during the recent years. This also includes hiring a Communications Manager in 2014. In addition, new communications channels, such as Facebook, have been opened.

► The Communications Network was established in January 2015. Today, it consists of around 40 cities' communications representatives and the UBC Commissions' Communications Officers.

Besides the ubc.net renewal, the Communications Network aimed at defining added value of the UBC for its member cities. Several slogans were formulated. For example:
► *UBC – 2000 professionals in 100 cities working with/to foster sustainable, smart and safe cities*
► *Need a partner? UBC – the best matchmaker in Europe*
► *Need a boost – Ask your UBC colleagues for it!*



Photo: Piotr Manasterski

Communications workshop during the UBC General Conference in Gdynia focused mainly on the UBC website. The first beta version was presented.

► A major visual facelift is under way, including the renewal of the ubc.net. This process affects both how UBC serves its members and the overall UBC brand. The facelift also includes creating intranet for internal communications and developing the Bulletin.

► The communication plays a strategic role in the new UBC strategic framework 2016–2021, presented during the General Conference in Gdynia. It proposes that the status of communications must be understood as vital dimension of all work and integrate it internally, externally and across all UBC activities on daily basis.

The communications gives us huge potential for creating the new stronger UBC.

Join the Communications Network

www.ubc.net > Organisation > Communications
www.facebook.com/unionofthebalticcities

Planning Cities Commission seminar, Gdańsk, 19-21 October 2015

Developing seacoast

by Maria Magdalena Koprowska

On 19-21 October, the UBC Planning Cities Commission held a seminar in Gdańsk, Poland, to discuss development problems of the city coastal zone, its value in a local and city-wide or even metropolitan perspective.

Over 30 UBC PCC experts from 17 member cities focused on two sites in Brzeźno district, located in the West Coastal Belt, which is a key area for Gdańsk to keep contact with the water. First location was the area close to sea and adjacent to costal promenade, park, forest park and the beach, now with chaotic and low cost commercial development, parking lots and neglected sites. Second location was the area in the vicinity of the first one, currently used by motor centre and bus depot planned for relocation.

Participants working together with planners from Gdańsk Urban Development Agency prepared four presentations (two for each site). Planners focused on "Boulevard site" tried to answer question how to keep balance between slow life in a sleepy village and a vibrant tourist spa and how to create a place offering attractive activities all over the



What functions are required in this area and for whom should it be devoted - tourists, citizens, local communities?

year for everybody. The contact with the water along with existing green areas and sustainability of development was the main issue. Accessibility to the water and functions open to the public were under concern either.

Participants working on "Motor centre site" tried to find the nature of Haller Avenue as a popular recreational and bicycle access to the sea coast and they discussed to what extend the development can be intensified; is it a place for high-rises or spatial-functional dominant.

The seminar in Gdańsk provided a better understanding of importance of the West Coastal Belt for the city identity and the importance of "solidarity" in using the city space. The report from the seminar can be a platform for upcoming debate for space transformation of both sites.

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Feeling **safe** at home

by *Kaspars Vārpiņš*

On 29 September - 1 October in Turku, Finland the UBC Safe Cities Commission held its first working meeting after the reorganization that attracted the safety workers from Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The meeting was hosted by Southwest Finland Emergency Services. It began with an educational meeting at the Turku Firefighters museum, where it was possible to learn about the firefighter history in Finland and the city of Turku.

During the Safe Cities Commission working meeting, the representatives learned about safety for the elderly people, safety card education for home care supervisors and the Rescue act 42 which obligates authorities to change information in safety and security matters, as well about other fire safety issues in Finland. While visiting a special model house at Turku University of Applied Sciences, the commission members learned about how to prevent accidents and make the elderly feel safer, even if they are living alone. Later on Dr. Brita Somerkoski informed about "Fire stop" project - the prevention work with juvenile fire setters.

The UBC Sustainable Cities Commission's Head of Secretariat, Björn Grönholm, presented their work and experience. He proposed a possible collaboration in different issues about safety. During video-conference between Turku and Stockholm, other possible collaboration in the safety field was offered by the representatives from the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

The UBC Safe Cities Commission would like to thank the city of Turku and Southwest Finland Emergency Services for their great hospitality!



The workshops were the last part of the meeting. One of them was about pilot-short movie for the UBC region about various safety issues for feeling safe at home. Other workshop focused on the safety professional experience and exchange database, which would help to share the best safety experience to all UBC members and other interested persons. After the workshops the current UBC and Commission's issues were discussed and future tasks were planned.

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Baltic Sea Cultural Gathering, Gdańsk, 16-17 September 2015

Culture as a driving force for growth

by *Jaana Simula*

The Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage invited all cultural practitioners from the BSR for the Baltic Sea Cultural Gathering held on 15 - 18 September in Gdańsk. The Gathering was organized as a main event of the Polish Presidency in CBSS within the framework of the "Creativity" Priority. The Meeting of Ministers of Culture of the Baltic Sea States was especially important, as it was the first such meeting since 2008.

Many working groups' meetings of key cultural organizations in the region took place in connection with the conference, e.g. Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture, Policy Area Culture Steering Group (EUSBSR), ARS BALTICA Organizing Committee, Union of Baltic Cities Cultural Cities Commission, CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), Joint meeting of National Coordinators of the EUSBSR and coordinators of the Policy Areas working under the strategy goal of „Increasing Prosperity” and Project Support Facility Committee meeting.

UBC Cultural Cities Commission held its board meeting that was open to all member cities and all UBC Commissions. 15 participants from six BSR countries decided that Cultural Cities Commission should work further on the areas of children's culture, cultural producing on the local level, cultural planning and our relations with the Russian cultural institutions. The chairperson of Cultural Cities Commission also took part in the Policy Area Culture Steering Group (EUSBSR) meeting.



Photo: Dariusz Malinowski

The conference aimed to present brave and visionary statements of experts from different fields at the crossroad of culture and other socio-economic sectors.

The conference „Culture as a driving force for social and economic development of the Baltic Sea Region” was held in the premises of the European Solidarity Centre. It focused on showcasing the evidence of impact that culture has on society and economy in the region. During two days filled with discussions and workshops, the participants tried to collect hard data as well as methods for enhanced communication between cultural, financial and administrative sectors that sometimes do not fully grasp the importance of culture for regional growth. Culture was discussed from several points of view – social innovation, education, sustainability, creative cities, successful regional initiatives and was rounded up by the idea of smart cities.

MORE

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Ensuring an open space for ideas

by Jarosław Józefczyk & Katarzyna Stec

Nineteen representatives of eight member cities participated in the first meeting of Inclusive and Healthy Cities Commission which took place on 9-10 June 2015 in the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park in Gdynia, Poland. The Commission is new in the UBC structure. It has been established this year on the basis of former commissions on Health and Social Affairs and Sport. The chairmanship of the Commission is held by Gdynia (Poland) in 2015 and by Trelleborg (Sweden) in 2016.

The aim of the meeting was first to find a general understanding of the terms related to inclusive and healthy cities by all members and then to define the Commission's idea and identify topics to work on, also to draw up an action plan and draft budget for 2015-16.

Participants agreed that the Commission should be well designed and it should manage space which gives possibility for various activities. The Commission will assure a place for those who want to observe and learn by participation, and also for those who want to create a single event or take responsibility for specific topics. There should also be a place for those who are eager to develop complex research, diagnosis and propose solutions. And of course a space for visionaries who will sketch the horizon!



To work on, the Commission has chosen the topic Open Social Spaces idea. Member cities decided to undertake research to deepen the idea locally and then to prepare reports and disseminate widely examples of good practices.

During the kick-off meeting the host city briefly presented Gdynia's social policy. There was also time to make a short tour around Pomeranian Science and Technology Park to see spaces for start-ups and laboratories, conference and exhibition halls, prototype rooms and recreational area - Experiment Science Centre. The participants had also an opportunity to get in touch with one of local social economy enterprises - the study visit with dinner was organized in Gdynia Social Cooperative "Together", which is successful in catering and health food branch and assures jobs for over a dozen of the disabled.

The second Commission meeting was held in October 2015 in Gdynia and the next one will be organized in June 2016 in Trelleborg.

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The launch of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission in Turku

Towards sustainable Baltic Cities

by Björn Grönholm

To officially start the work and cooperation within the new established UBC Sustainable Cities Commission, 27 participants from 10 member cities gathered in Turku in June this year.

The main aim was to meet and discuss the next steps of the common work, to decide on structures within the Commission and to work further on the new UBS Sustainability Action Programme.

UBC SCC co-chair Risto Veivo and UBC Strategy Coordinator Mikko Lohikoski welcomed the participants to Turku and referred to the restructuring of UBC.



Photo: Björn Grönholm

The meeting commenced with the election of the three co-chairs for the Commission: Dace Liepniece from Liepāja, Per-Arne Nilsson from Malmö and Risto Veivo from Turku. As

a new feature in the commission's work, an advisory board was formed, to complement the co-chairs and to enable more active member cities to take part in the commission's work. The advisory board members will also function as the national contact points and experts in different fields within urban sustainability.

Members of the Advisory Board are:

- Andres Jaadla (Rakvere, Estonia), theme: Smart City
- Saara Vauramo (Lahti, Finland), theme: Climate Change
- Olli-Pekka Mäki (Turku, Finland), theme: Biodiversity / Env. Protection
- Rieke Müncheberg (Rostock, Germany), theme: Mobility (SUMP)
- Solvita Lurina (Jelgava, Latvia)
- Indre Buteniene (Klaipėda, Lithuania)
- Dagmara Nagórka-Kmiecik (Gdańsk, Poland)
- Andreas Hedrén (Växjö, Sweden), theme: Water Management
- Annika Kruusem (Malmö, Sweden), theme: Circular economy

The group also discussed and agreed on important points in the UBC Sustainable Action programme 2016-2021.

The work on the new action programme has been going on since a while, a first draft was discussed in Malmö in the spring and many member cities have given valuable comments to it.

The document "Stairways towards sustainable Baltic Cities" will form the basis for the commission's work in the coming years and will also be a guiding document for the whole UBC. The action programme was expected to be adopted at the General Conference in Gdynia.

MORE

Sustainable Cities Commission
www.ubc-sustainable.net



NEWS

from member cities

The White Nights in Riga

by Valērija Zirdziņa & Ineta Zalāne

The White Night contemporary art forum, which has become a part of Riga's cultural life, was held in Riga for the 10th time this year. Nuit Blanche – White Night began in Paris in 2002 and, since then, has spread to cities across Europe and the world.

This year Baltā Nakts in Riga started on 5 September and ran through the night ending on 6 September featuring 40 presentations of contemporary art and culture from Latvia, France, Austria, Germany, UK and other countries in various genres, ranging from cinema, circus, performances, exhibitions, music to poetry and interdisciplinary projects. The underlying theme for this year's Baltā Nakts programme was "Light", taking inspiration from the UNESCO's International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies.

Within this one night Baltā Nakts contemporary art forum gives a new meaning to the public space in different parts of the city, including isolated areas of the city, places that are part of our city's history and that are rediscovered by artists in a new and decidedly unusual way. The most active locations this year were in the Spīķeri Quarter, the Old Town, Miera Street, on the left bank of the river Daugava, in the Torņakalns, Mūkusalas and Kalnciema streets. All Baltā Nakts events can be attended free of charge.

German Dundu puppet theatre (Stuttgart) featuring giant light puppets was held in the Dome Square, Austrian United Intimacy music



Photo: Baltā Nakts archives

The theme for this year's BALTĀ NAKTS programme was "Light".

union, international artists and musicians were present at a dozen events. A rich programme of workshops, exhibitions, performances was provided within the framework of the Contemporary Art Festival Survival K(n)it 7 in the former building of the National Library of Latvia.

Baltā Nakts forum is organized by the Riga City Council in cooperation with Latvian cultural organizations, artists and entrepreneurs.

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Opening of modern Concert Hall

By Jurgita Vanagė



Palang, the largest Lithuanian resort, is preparing for an extraordinary cultural event: a new Concert Hall that will welcome visitors all year round will be opened in the town on 12 December.

The Concert Hall has 4 thousand square metres of floor space. The building has a rounded shape and is designed to operate all year round. Popular music concerts, as well as chamber and brass music concerts, musical shows, television projects and other events will be held there.

The Concert Hall is equipped with the amphitheatre that holds 2,200 spectator seats. In strive to ensure the quality of music, the new hall had to meet extremely high quality standards, therefore only special acoustic materials were used for the installation of the premises to prevent the spread of echo and ensure maximum protection against noise propagation.

The value of construction works is 9.34 million euros: 2.89 million EUR have been obtained from the ERDF under the Cohesion Promotion Action Programme for Public Immovable Cultural Heritage Objects Complex Adjustment for

Tourism Purposes, 2 million EUR from the funds of the State Investment Programme and 4.42 million EUR from the Palanga Municipality budget.

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Ice Free Culture

by Karolina Paškevičienė

Klaipėda, an ice-free port of the Baltic sea, cherishes live culture traditions. On 27 November this year, "Klaipėda Festivals", together with the creative association "Fish Eye", organizes an international conference with a metaphoric title "Ice Free Culture 2015: Culture Festival as Regional Catalyst". The conference is supported by Klaipėda City.

The city and region are known for different festivals and cultural events held in public spaces. Sea Festival, International Klaipėda Castle Jazz Festival, International Folk-Lore Festival "Parbėg laivelis", massive Song Festivals are the most popular. The prestigious international festival of marine culture and youth Tall Ships Races in Klaipėda have been hosted three times already and will greet the marvelous fleet of historic sailing vessels carrying young international crews in 2017 again. In 2012 Klaipėda became home for EUROPEADE – the festival of European national cultures with 4000 participants from all corners of our continent.

All those festivals are unique by performance in the open public spaces, attraction of vast auditoriums, by the variety of events and their geographical spreading. The cities are competitors on the global market. City holidays and festivals become a significant device in this competition.

What is a holiday, then? What are the challenges faced by the organizers? How about cultural tourism sector? What is the meaning of the National or European Capital of Culture awarded to a city?



All those questions are faced at the Conference with invited international experts. Its goals are to discuss the importance and impact of cultural festivals on regional development by analyzing a festival as a local or a regional phenomenon and a versatile, lasting all-year-round or even longer, happening. Cultural experts share experience, discuss urgent festival policy, management, organization of the Culture Capital events, etc.

Those questions are important to Klaipėda today, since the city has been awarded the title of the Lithuanian Capital of Culture 2017. Also, Klaipėda prepares for submitting a bid for the European Capital of Culture 2022 award.

The November conference "Ice Free Culture 2015" is also topical because of the developing network of festivals in Lithuania, the hot up regional cultural spreading, but also because of the lack of cooperation among different sectors. The invited Conference guests are leaders of European Association of Festivals, project leaders of European Culture Capitals and Lithuanian Culture Capitals.

MORE

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Concert life in Jūrmala

by Dzintari Concert Hall

Concert life at the Dzintari Concert Hall has begun once again this autumn after the restoration of the Small Auditorium, which offers the people of Jūrmala and their guests to enjoy valuable concerts with an outstanding quality of acoustics all year long. Next year the hall will celebrate its 80th anniversary with a special concert programme and many various events.

There are many concerts to be performed before the end of this year. A new cycle, "Born in Latvia", has just been launched, featuring Latvian musicians who have won vast international recognition. The opera singer Egils Siliņš performed a solo concert on 31 October. He is one of the few bass baritones to be one of the most important performers in the operas of Richard Wagner. He will return to Latvia for a short time to delight audiences in Jūrmala with classics of Latvian vocal chamber music. On 7 November, he was followed by the young and talented pianist Aurēlija Šimkus, who performed works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Alexander Skryabin, and Franz Liszt.

The largest winter event, the "Christmas Festival", begins at the Dzintari Concert Hall on 16 December and continues until 7 January. The Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, which has won the Grammy and is one of the most important instrumental groups in America, will open up the festival, followed by the virtuoso Radio Latvia Choir, the singer Ralfs Eilands with the orchestra of the National Armed Forces, the globally famous double bass performer Gunārs Upatnieks, a member of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Also, the charming accordionist Ksenija Sidorova, the outstanding Rīga Dome Boys' Choir, the string quartet that is led by the first chair of the violin

group at the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, Raimonds Ozols, the legendary Latvian maestro Raimonds Pauls with the radio Latvia Big Band, and the Arsis bell ensemble will perform. The concerts will be accompanied by



The Los Angeles Guitar Quartet will open up the largest winter event of Dzintari Concert Hall the "Christmas Festival" (16 December - 7 January)

light performances, dedicated to Lutheran and Roman Catholic Christmas celebrations, as well as the Orthodox Christmas at the conclusion of the festival.

Also during the new season, the Dzintari Concert Hall will offer a special programme for the youngest members of the audience, delighting them with fairy tale heroes who sing and dance to tell wonderful stories and teach the youngsters about the exciting world of music and its various instruments. There will be three concert performances by the end of the December that feature professional musicians and actors dressed in fairy tale costumes.

MORE

www.dzintarukonzertzale.lv



UBC partners joined in a maritime project

By Nadezhda Petrova

Narva participates in the project "Small port every 30 miles apart - Development of services for lively water tourism in the Eastern Gulf of Finland". The project was supported by INTERREG Central Baltic Programme. The leader project partner is Kotka Maritime Research Association. Altogether 12 partners from 2 countries, Finland and Estonia, participate in the project.



To increase the number of boaters there is a need for suitably equipped ports for within every 30 miles.

The Eastern Gulf of Finland (GoF) needs a network of small ports which have good service level and piers for leisure boaters to come. Because of the difference between the service level of existing ports, a joint effort to increase the overall services of the area is needed. This will increase the attraction of the region and raise the level of general consciousness. The idea of the project is to establish a ring of well-developed small ports as a precondition for lively water tourism in the Eastern GoF. This is a question where cross-border cooperation is essential. The suggested new ring of ports around the Eastern GoF will create an attractive entirety which is known to be in the interest of boaters. The



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

most important element is the fact that any of these small ports alone is too tiny to receive enough visibility. Together the new network will be interesting enough to receive more attention from the potential visitors. The objectives of this project are to focus on ensuring safety on ports, jointly develop sustainable port services targeted to boost business opportunities, increase the general awareness of new services through joint marketing actions, and carefully study sustainability and cost-effectivity of the development decisions.

Through the project Narva will continue the development of the water tourism in the area. First of all, the town will implement activities that will contribute to the further development of the Narva port and water tourism in the GoF on the whole for in the last years there grows an interest to travel by boats. Boat tourism will assist the regional development, attract more tourists and visitors as well as foster regional economic development converting the region into the area with highly developed tourism and tourist services, thus enhancing the creation of new working places and contributing to the economic potential growth.

MORE

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Exchanges for All



As a part of EU-funded Erasmus+ strategic-partnership "Exchanges for All" CultHus, the culture-house of Guldborgsund Municipality is hosting the seminar and the conference on 23 - 26 November addressed to the issues of school-education for ages of 13-15.

"Exchanges for All" wants to export international art-based mobility camps from the youth sector into the school area and to make such an integrated learning tool for 8th graders. The meeting includes:

- a) mini-conference with the results of the university research on the learning outcome from the art-based, one-week international camp,
- b) visit to GBS-school,
- c) the meeting with the working group on education under the UBC Smart and Prospering Cities Commission,
- d) the meeting on coming Nordplus Junior project possibilities,
- e) the meeting on coming South Baltic application from GBS, Rostock, Klaipėda, Kalmar & Reda (PL).

Participants from the following schools have signed up:

- Fjordskolen, Nykøbing F, Guldborgsund, DK
- Stubbekøbing Skole, Stubbekøbing, Guldborgsund, DK
- Kasavuori school, Kauniainen, FI
- Liepājas Valsts 1.ģimnāzija, Liepāja, LV
- Liepājas A.Puškina 2.vidusskola, Liepāja, LV
- Draudzīgā aicinājuma Liepājas pilsētas 5. Vidusskola, Liepāja, LV
- Gargzdu Minijos progimnazija, Garždai, LT
- Klaipėdos Sendvario progimnazija, Klaipėda, LT
- Spółeczna Szkoła Podstawowa I Gimnazjum, Wejherowo, PL
- Zespół Szkół nr 3, Gimnazjum, Wejherowo, PL
- Falkenbergsskolan, Kalmar, SE

MORE

www.exchangesforall.eu



UBC General Conference in Gdynia

Photo highlights



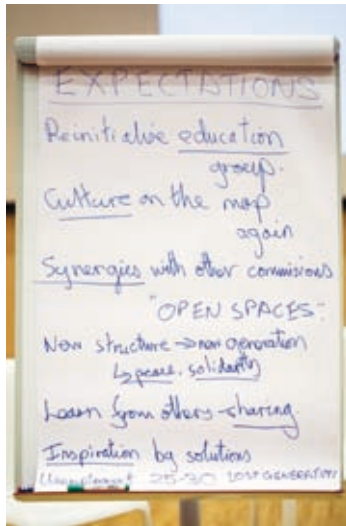
"The Conference allowed a friendly spirit, nice atmosphere and active networking arena".



"The time I had, I fully used and got some useful new contacts that will hopefully contribute to my work".



"Gdynia was a good place for the meeting."



"I am definitely happy to have participated and the presentations were useful and helpful and contributing to my work".



"very good!"



"I enjoyed the networking that I was there for. Sadly I was there as a participant in the youth program so I would have loved more time networking with the politicians".





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Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is a network of 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 the following Commissions: Cultural Cities, Inclusive and Healthy Cities, Planning Cities, Safe Cities, Smart and Prospering Cities, Sustainable Cities and Youthful Cities. 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.