



Baltic Cities Bulletin

3 / 1997

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Cooperation around the Baltic Sea

UBC
who is who
gallery

Merry Christmas
and a Happy
New Year
1998

AALBORG • AARHUS • BALTIJSK • BERGEN • CĒSIS • COPENHAGEN • ELBLĄG • ELVA • GDAŃSK • GDYNIA • GÖTEBORG • HAAPSALU • HELSINKI • HORSENS • KALININGRAD
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• TALLINN • TAMPERE • TARTU • TURKU • UMEÅ • UPPSALA • VAASA • VÄSTERÅS • VÄSTERVIK • VÄXJÖ • VENTSPILS • VILJANDI • VILNIUS • VISBY • WISMAR • YSTAD

Baltic Cities Bulletin



CHIEF EDITOR
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*

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Esko Sorakunnas
Sonja Hilavuo
Juhan Janusson

*

EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE

Antonia Sucksdorff-Selkämaa

*

PUBLISHER

Union of the Baltic Cities
Długi Targ 24
PL-80-828 Gdańsk
POLAND
tel./fax +48 58 3017637
e-mail: ubc@itnet.com.pl
www.ubc.net

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NEXT ISSUE

Material for the next issue must be sent by 10 March 1998

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COVER PICTURE

Turku, the Christmas City of Finland



Dear Friends!

In September we held our fourth General Conference in Gdańsk. It was a great success, with 250 participants from 63 member cities. Also the major Baltic Sea networks and organisations were present, as well as Ministers from Sweden and Poland and from the EU Commission.

The title of the Conference was Baltic Sea Cooperation Forum. At the UBC initiative, all major networks in our region met to discuss future cooperation and strategy. One important result was that the presidencies of the leading networks and organisations decided to meet and coordinate their efforts for the benefit of our region.

As in all large conferences, for many participants the most interesting meetings and discussions occurred during lunches, coffee breaks and during free time. I am certain you enjoyed your stay in beautiful Gdańsk.

The UBC-EU Information Project has also had a successful conference in Tallinn lately, with over 200 participants. The Conference was honoured with the presence of the Prime Minister of Estonia, and was a great step forward in our strategic work of preparing the cities of our region for the enlargement of the European Union.

Several project applications have been submitted for UBC projects. Altogether ten different project applications have been submitted by the Commissions of Environment and Social Affairs and by various cities, co-ordinated by the UBC Project Manager. They involve almost 40 partnerships. Since some cities are participating in more than one application, altogether about 30 cities are involved in UBC Project Applications as partners. We can only hope on a good result from the EU evaluation process so all the applications will be approved.

I had the opportunity to visit Brussels together with the Vice-President of our Union, Mr Sochański. We had very fruitful discussions with representatives of the Commission. One main lesson to learn is that the UBC lacks an EU-policy. The commission's view of the UBC is that we are an organisation in a very strong development, but the directions and purposes are unclear for an outsider. The work of shaping this had already begun.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I am convinced that the UBC will continue its positive development also in the year 1998.

With Baltic Sea Greetings

Anders Engström
President

Kalmar, December 1997

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President Anders Engström welcomed over 250 delegates to the UBC General Conference.

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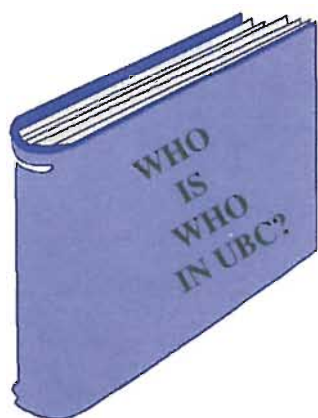
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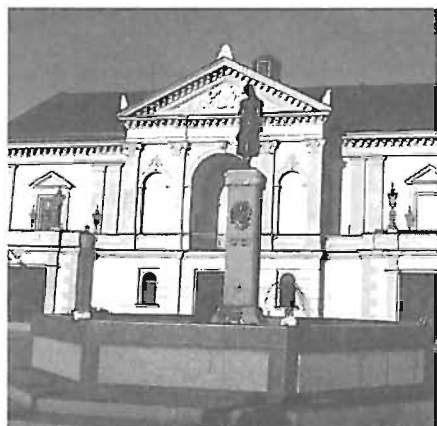
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Here are some of the faces behind the UBC work.



Simon Dach House is a new German-Lithuanian meeting place in Klaipeda.



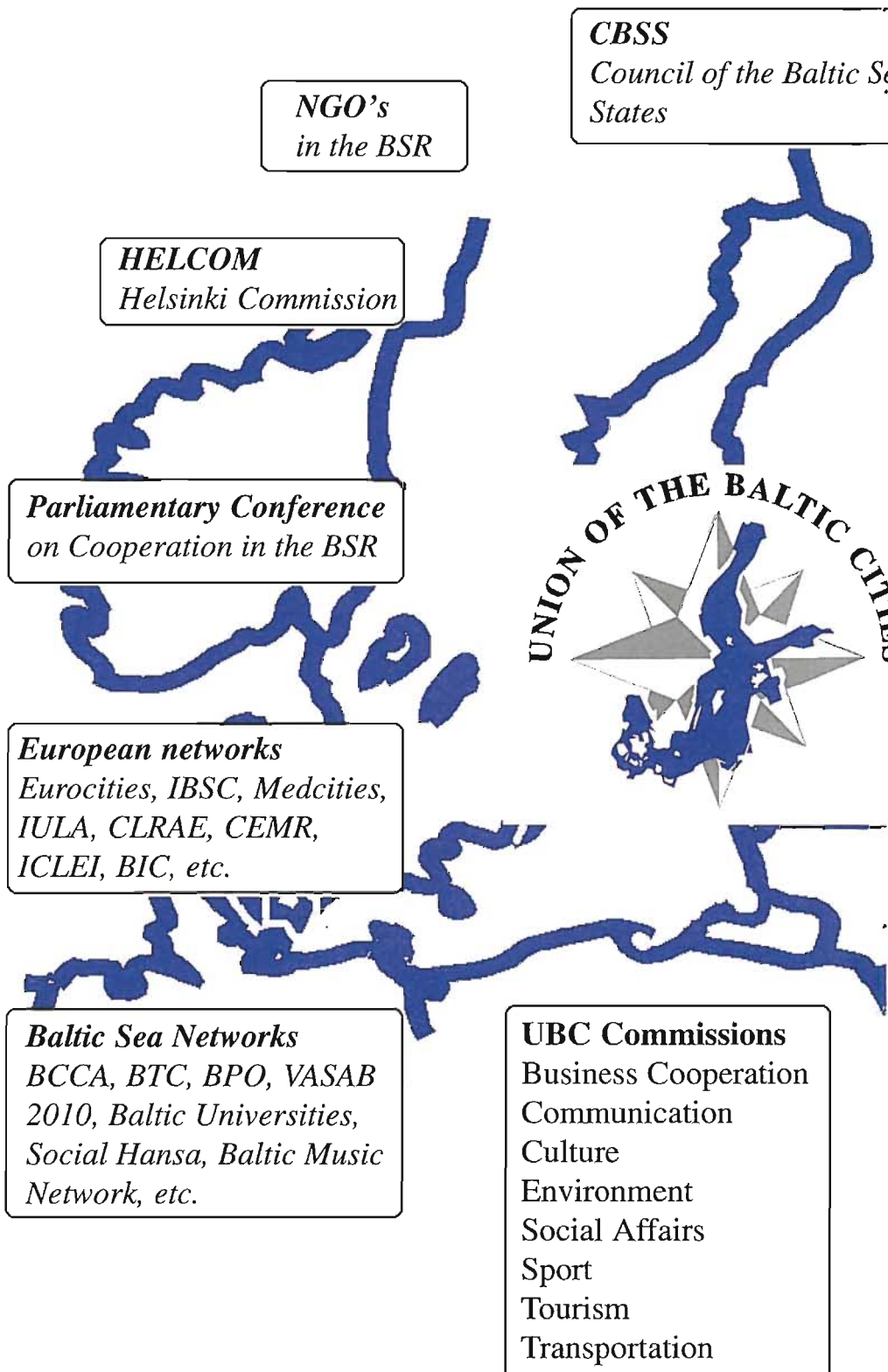
I. Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region

The Baltic Sea Region is unique in the world in terms of cooperation across the borders. Nowhere else network cooperation at all levels has emerged so fast, with such a wide scope and in such a good cooperation climate as in the Baltic Sea region.

Now it is important to coordinate the efforts of the networks, and one main objective of the UBC General Conference in Gdańsk was to create a forum for the general, larger networks of our region for cooperation. The cooperation should aim at carrying out common projects, of which the Baltic Sea Alliance is the first. Other purposes are to enhance the Baltic Sea Region as such in Europe, and to exchange experiences and views on the development in our region.

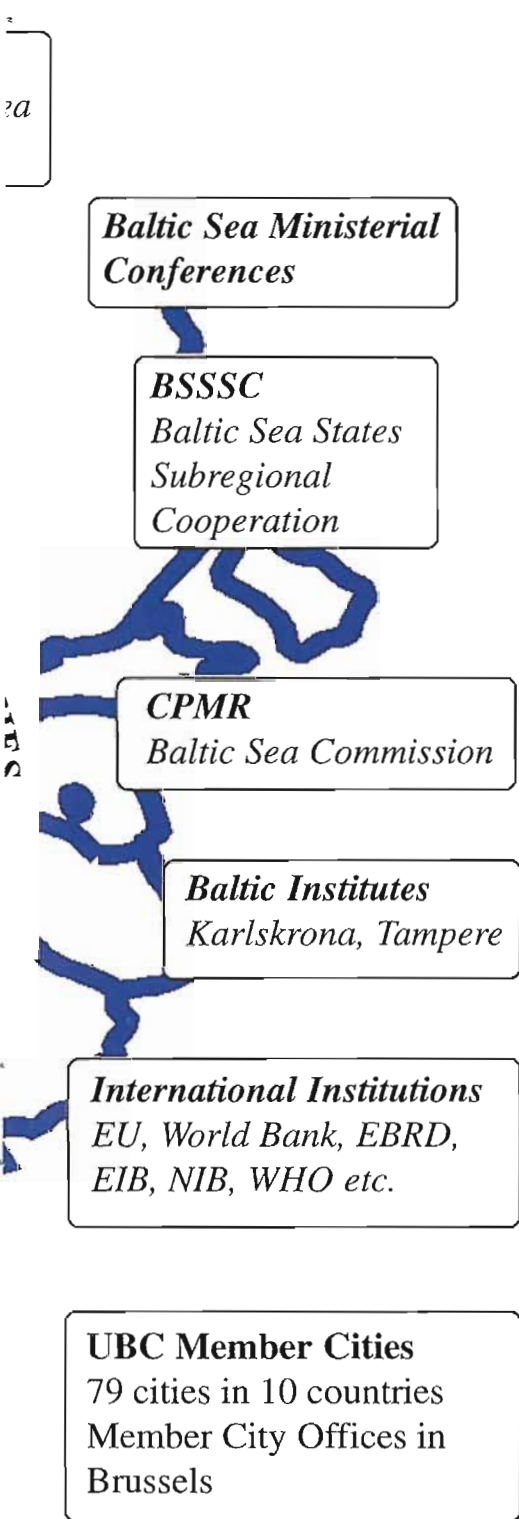
Cooperation with Baltic Organisations

The UBC has contacts with many networks, as seen at the outline above. Specially worth of mentioning are the CBSS, which is the cooperation between the nations, and BSSSC, which is a forum for regions. We also have a very close cooperation with the Helsinki Commission, which is the governmental network for protection of the Baltic Sea, and





Region



also is the oldest of the networks, created already in the seventies.

The ministers of the governments often meet once a year, and the UBC is regularly invited to the meetings of the Planning, Environmental and Transportation ministers of the countries of our region.

The Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conferences meet once a year. There parliamentarians of all parliaments meet, and the UBC has always been invited.

There are many special or sectoral BSR networks. We keep close contact with the Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association with the tourist network, the Baltic Sea Tourism Commission. Apart from these, we have numerous networks, from Baltic Ports and Baltic Universities to Baltic Music Network.

We must enhance our relations with the EU, which until now have been too weak, with only minor personal contacts with the Commission. A strategy of this is at present worked out by the UBC board.

Of course, our main network is our member cities and the UBC Commissions. Our 79 cities constitute a great resource of devoted, skilled specialists at all thinkable fields of interest, to be utilised in common strategies and projects. Many of our cities have special resources, like an office in Brussels, or special contacts or experiences that can be useful for the UBC network.

All networks in our region have a great combined strength and makes our region very special, compared to other regions in the world, where cross-border cooperation often mainly takes place on national level.

BALTIC SEA NETWORKS IN NEW COOPERATION

On the initiative of Anders Engström, the President of the Union of the Baltic Cities, the leaders of the major networks in the Baltic Sea Region met to decide about closer cooperation. Together with the UBC also the BSSSC, the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission and the BCCA were represented in the meeting on October 27, 1997. The meeting was held in connection with the Baltic Sea Subregional Conference in Gdańsk.

The cooperation between these large Baltic Sea networks has two aims: to start

joint projects and to enhance the Baltic Sea Region as an important region in Europe and in the world.

Two examples of important fields for cooperation are the preparation of the local and regional authorities for the future enlargement of the European Union as well as the local implementation of the Agenda 21. The emphasis is on concrete and practical projects and issues. The next meeting of the presidents of these networks will take place in February 1998.



HOW TO USE THE BSA IN YOUR DAILY WORK

The three Baltic Sea networks of cities (UBC), chambers of commerce (BCCA) and subregions (BSSSC) have joined forces in information management and are now offering a new tool for your practical work regarding cooperation, contacts and projects in the Baltic Sea Region.

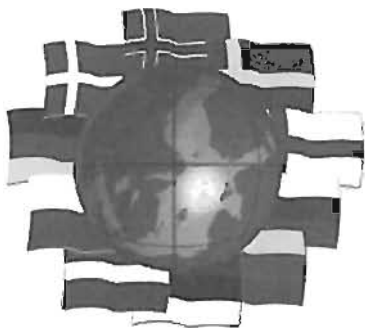
The main goal of the Baltic Sea Alliance is to provide an information network for the daily use of its altogether hundreds of member offices around the region. All other interested organisations and persons are also welcome to utilize this non-profit www-based system in their practical work.

Tool for UBC cities

All UBC member cities are now strongly encouraged to use this BSA system. It presents you with the following useful features for assisting project management and communication in your Baltic operations:

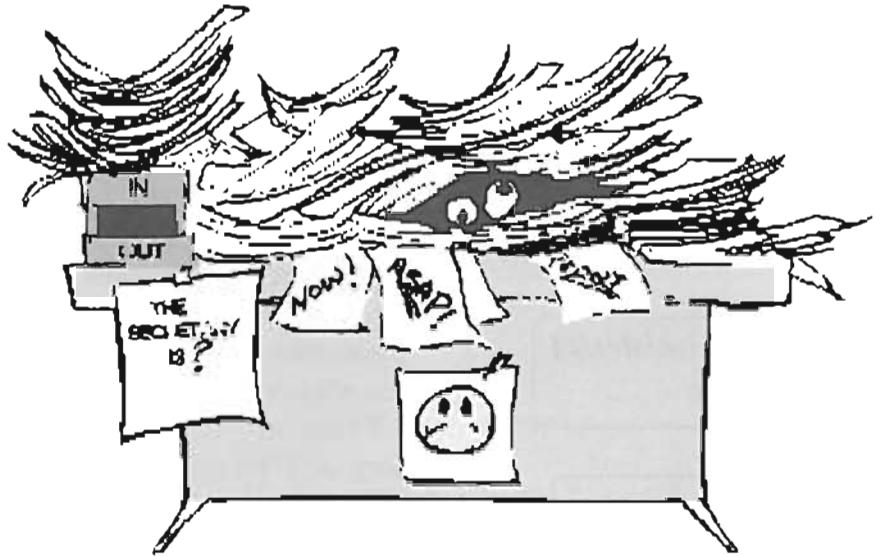
Events Calendar

For giving and receiving information about different events and conferences in the region. Remember to update your events here!



Project Gallery

For search of partners for new projects and for informing others about important activities. We want to hear about your projects. Please present them here!



BE SURE TO VISIT THIS SITE!

WWW.BALTICSEA.NET

E-mail Engine

For organisational enlistment allowing direct mail-back contacts. Be sure to enlist your e-mail address here so that people can get in touch with you!

BSA TalkBack

For open discussion and debate. This is a great place for exchanging short messages and announcements!

Speakers Corner

For data retrieval and storage of multiple presentation material, statistics, documents and speeches. Use this for your next presentation and share also your material with us!

Information sources

For viewing different organisations and information sources, e.g., in the Baltic Sea Region and the European Union. Use these links to check out what the others are doing!

WWW-search

For using web-wide search engines in general information search. Just a helpful thing to have!

Question of the Month

For rapid survey of opinions about different matters. Be sure to let your voice be heard in this Gallup!

Sonja Hilavuo
BSA-Coordinator General
City of Tampere, Box 487
33101 Tampere, FINLAND

Tel. +358 50 516 9111
Fax +358 3 219 6252
E-mail:sonja.hilavuo@tt.tampere.fi

Important www-sites for all UBC member cities

www.balticsea.net
www.ubc.net



RELIABLE MAP DATA BASE FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Important areas where geographic information technology is providing new opportunities include critical trans-national areas, such as the Baltic Sea region, which require different kinds of information to be brought together.

Essential for the joint use of information in the Baltic Sea Region is a reliable base map. The National Mapping Agencies of the countries around the Baltic Sea have recognised this need and therefore launched the MapBSR Project.

The aim of the project is to provide basic map data sets for the Baltic Sea drainage area and the countries in its sphere of influence in the nominal scale of 1:1 million. The elements included in the database are administrative boundaries, hydrography, transport,

settlements, geographical names, elevation, nature and land use.

GIS database being formed

When completed, the MapBSR database will form a base map for geographic information systems (GIS), in which any kind of data item can be located and represented, as long its coordinates are known.

The database enables the user to do many kinds of analysis for the whole Baltic Sea Region or for smaller areas. Different kinds of thematic information can be added to the database, such as statistics on population density or data on water quality.

The participants of the project are the National Mapping Agencies of the 14 countries around the Baltic Sea (The

Russian Federation, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland). The coordinator of the project is National Land Survey of Finland. Each of the participating countries will produce the map elements for the areas of their respective countries.

More information:

<http://www.nls.fi/maa/projektit/neargis/>

Heli Ursin-Iivanainen
National Land Survey of Finland
Tel. +358 205 41 5564
Fax. +358 205 41 5454
E-mail: heli.ursin@nls.fi

EUROCITIES ANNUAL MEETING

80 Mayors, leaders and political representatives from major metropolitan cities gathered in Rotterdam on 24 October 1997 at the EUROCITIES Annual General Meeting and Conference to call for an integrated approach to European urban policy.

In the conclusions, EUROCITIES members welcomed the Commission's Communication "Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union", the proposals for European regional policy for 1999-2006 put forward in AGENDA 2000, and the Commission's initiative to hold a European Urban Forum in 1998.

They reiterate the need for the acknowledgement of cities as growth poles for regional development and call upon European, national, regional and local authorities to work towards a balanced urban system in Europe.



Particular attention, they say, should be given to the urban dimension in the reform of European regional policies and the Structural Funds.

Commitment to urban development

EUROCITIES, the major association of European cities representing 40 to 50 million citizens, has reiterated its commitment to play an active role in this process by:

- maximising the potential of its member cities, committees, networks, and academic and economic partners in the pursuit of urban policy objectives;
- further developing and urban environment with a better quality of life for citizens;
- organising seminars on urban issues;
- intensifying co-operation with the European Parliament, the Committee of the Region and the Economic and Social Committee;
- contributing to the European Urban Forum, to be organised by the Commission in 1998, by providing expertise and case-studies.

Mr Tomasz Posadzki, Mayor of Gdańsk and member of the UBC Executive Board participated in the EUROCITIES conference as a speaker at the working session „Cities as regional centres: an East-West perspective” presenting Gdańsk as a case study.



BRIDGES FROM ELBLĄG ACROSS THE BALTIC SEA

During a meeting in Elbląg in October 1997, cooperation between Region Blekinge in Sweden and Elbląg Voivodeship was committed.

An agreement for cooperation was signed already in 1990. The cooperation has had different forms, like exchange of municipal governments representatives, sportsmen, youth, Local Agenda 21 and cultural exchange.

Blekinge Days in Elbląg

Region Blekinge is interested in cooperation in many fields, among others assistance in ecological track construction with picturesque tower around Drużno Lake (water birds sanctuary of 1500 ha area), and in construction of standard closed water circle in one of Elbląg Voivodeship Communes. Blekinge will also assist when creating Euroregion Jantar (Amber), connected with INTERREG IIC and tourism.

Next year Region Blekinge Days will be organised in Elbląg Voivodeship, and Elbląg Voivodeship Days will be organised in Blekinge in order to better acquaint inhabitants from the South of Sweden with inhabitants from the Elbląg Region.

Business cooperation between Liepāja and Elbląg

Businessmen from Liepāja have negotiated with partners from Elbląg on cooperation, commodity exchange and establishment of joint venture companies in the following fields: dairy industry, food-agrarian industry, leather industry, clothing industry and trade. In the end of October some businessmen from Elbląg visited Liepāja in order to continue the negotiations, recognize

market and partners possibilities as well as to conclude the first agreements.

Border Crossing at Vistula Sandbar

The Authorities of the City of Baltijsk have made efforts concerning Border Crossing opening in the neighbourhood of Piaski, near Krynica Morska, assigned to tourists, cyclists and mini-buses. After leaving the Russian part of Vistula Sandbar by shorted detachments, about 22 km of seaside beaches are waiting for management.



BALTIC RING OF GDYNIA

Gdynia is closely connected with the Baltic Sea. It is even said that this town grew up from the sea and dreams. The Baltic Sea has always been noticed in Gdynia as the main reason for creation of ties between Gdynia and other Baltic cities.

Currently Gdynia cooperates in the Baltic Sea region in several fields. The city is a member of such Baltic organisations as Union of the Baltic Cities, Baltic Tourism Cooperation and Baltic Ports Organisation. The city is also involved in many projects,

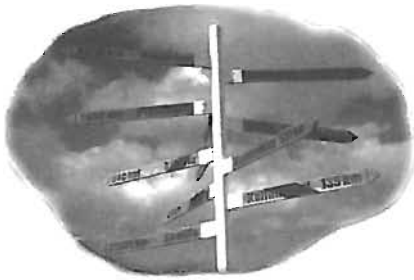
in which it often plays a role of initiator and coordinator.

Project examples

- creation of The Amber Motorway Towns' Association - a part of the Trans European Motorway (TEM) from Gdynia/Gdańsk to Athens and its connection with TEM - Scandinavia through the Baltic Sea. Gdynia and Karlskrona have established the Union of TEM Cities as a coordinating body to advance the work on building the TEM

- the "Baltic Bridge" programme as a result of very intensive cooperation between Gdynia and Karlskrona within tourist, economic and social contacts aimed at strengthening and development of the ferry connection linking the cities as well as both North and Central Europe

- cooperation with south-east Sweden, Kaliningrad Region, Latvia, Lithuania and north-east Poland to set up the Euroregion as a common platform for developing our integration in the Baltic region.



In order to complete the "Baltic Ring" of sister cities, Gdynia is looking for new partnership from Latvia and Estonia.

Gdynia actively cooperates with its sister cities in almost every state in the Baltic Sea region (Aalborg, Karlskrona, Kaliningrad, Kiel, Klaipėda and Kotka). The cooperation is of both bilateral and multilateral character. The goal is to close a so called "Baltic Ring" of sister cities. In order to do this the city is looking for new partners in Latvia and Estonia, which are the two missing countries in the ring. Interested cities from Latvia and Estonia are welcome contact the Foreign Relations Division for more information.

Further information:

Ms Ewa Depka
City Hall of Gdynia
Foreign Relations Division
Tel. +48 58 20 83 12
Fax +48 58 20 09 17
E-mail: umgdyfor@miasto.gdynia.pl

HELSINKI CENTERS IN ST. PETERSBURG AND TALLINN

The Baltic Sea Region is a natural cooperation area for the City of Helsinki and an integral part of its international strategy. Of cities around the Baltic Rim, closest to Helsinki in geographical terms are Tallinn and St Petersburg. In both of these cities Helsinki has recently opened Helsinki Centers.

In St Petersburg the official opening of the Center was held in June this year, but the Center has been operating for a couple of years already. Its main functions are to facilitate business contacts between SMEs and to give information and marketing services to finnish and russian SMEs. In the same building is also located the office of the City of Stockholm and Helsinki is looking forward to developing

joint EU funded projects with partners from the three cities.

In Tallinn, activities are just about to start in the newly renovated Helsinki House. In the same building will be located the City of Helsinki's Tallinn project, the Finnish school, Finnish Tourism Development Agency and the Small Enterprise Development Project with the aim of furthering cooperation between Tallinn and Helsinki based SMEs.

Further information:

Helsinki Metropolitan Development Company
Tel. +358 9 61 31 212
Fax +358 9 2250
E-mail: hmhc@hmhc.fi

Baltic Sea Region Development and Urban Management Conference in December

This Baltic Sea conference takes place in Helsinki on 11-12 December 1997. The event brings together all regions around the Baltic Sea to discuss topics such as trade and industry, spatial planning, tourism and energy and environmental issues. The Conference is arranged by the City of Helsinki and Helsinki Region together with some other nordic regions.

Further information:

Conference Secretariat
Tel. +358 9 4767 4349
Fax. + 358 9 4767 4300



The City of Helsinki has recently opened Helsinki Centres in Tallinn (on the picture) and in St. Petersburg.



THE BALTIC INITIATIVE OF SAINT PETERSBURG

In order to aid the process of integrating Russia and Western Europe, a number of regional structural programs have been developed.

They are based on projects and proposals which seek solutions to the task of developing the North-West region of Russia, and many of them are being carried out jointly with partners in European states and organizations. The main projects are:

“St. Petersburg 2003 – Gate to Europe.” This program is directed towards the creation of an integrated, transnational space (market for products, services and technologies, exchange and cooperation in social and cultural programs) and will serve in the process of integrating Russia and the European Union. With these goals in mind, it will maximize the potential of St. Petersburg as the largest Russian center on the Baltic Sea and Russia’s gateway to Europe, as well as Europe’s route to Russia and central-east and south-east Asia.

“St. Petersburg – the Cultural Capital of 2003” depends on UNESCO declaring St. Petersburg the cultural capital of Europe in the year 2003, the 300th anniversary of the city’s founding. As part of the celebration of Petersburg’s

300th birthday a series of cultural programs are planned, such as “The International Music Academy - Music Without Borders,” and an exhibition of world masterpieces entitled “Results of the Millennium”.

“The Baltic Bridge” is a project for a combined transport corridor “Hamburg-Schlesweig-Holstein-St. Petersburg-Leningrad Region-Moscow” including a considerable part of the sea route.

“The League of Peace and Consent” The urgent need to perfect economic and cultural cooperation, carry out projects for development of infrastructure and economic revival is considered in the form of a long-term European regional development program intended to unite the forces of the main port cities of the North and Baltic seas.

“The Ecological Armies” - the development of civilization demands that sufficiently serious measures be taken to avoid the consequences of natural and technogenic disasters and the familiar, but no less dangerous pollution of the environment. The special feature of the ecological armies is that they will serve as an “ecological ambulance,” humanity’s last resort under conditions of increasing contamination of the environment. Such armies could be made

up of small, compact professional sub-units, the company or battalion. On the basis of this sub-unit national reserve formations would be trained. This would be a good alternative to military service. For example, young men called up for alternative military service could be used to help clean up bodies of water after large oil-spills. St. Petersburg could use its scientific, technical and industrial potential to host a scientific and educational center of the UN “green helmets.”

“Baltic Humanitarian University” includes the creation in countries of the Baltic Sea region of a network of humanities departments specializing in such fields as literary theory, linguistics, art history, history, archeology, etc. and enabling the cooperation of the peoples of these countries.

“Clean City” - a program intended to create a regional system for the improvement of the environmental situation in cities of the Baltic Sea region.

“Circular Highway” - a project for the construction of an auto beltway around St. Petersburg as a component part of the European road system connecting Tallinn, St. Petersburg, Moscow and from Moscow to Helsinki through St. Petersburg and back to Moscow.



Skyline of St. Petersburg behind the River Neva.



THE CITY OF VAASA AND THE BALTIC SEA COOPERATION

With the motto "Think globally, act locally", the City of Vaasa has already for several years purposefully been developing the internationalization in the city.

Internationalization is considered to be a far-reaching and many-sided process that, as far as the city's own organization is concerned, involves all the employees, no matter what tasks they accomplish or what positions they hold.

At the same time as Finland was preparing itself for its EU-membership, the City of Vaasa made efforts to prepare the knowledge level within its own administration for the new situation in the beginning of 1995.

Strategy for international work

A report about Vaasa and the internationalization was handled to the city council in the autumn of 1994. The city council decided that a strategy of internationalization should be made for Vaasa. This report, "The Internationalization Development in Vaasa - a Strategy

for the 21st Century", is about to be presented for political discussion.

In accordance with the above mentioned motto the city has adopted, e.g., the following models of action:

- membership in organizations
- participation in projects
- international and European events
- creation of new activity networks
- supporting of internationalization within enterprises

The City of Vaasa is a member of the Baltic Ports Organization BPO, which has its secretariat in Copenhagen. As a rather new member of the UBC the City of Vaasa has not yet got properly started. Vaasa considers the fields traffic, environment and tourism to be especially interesting, because all these fields are mentioned as main focus areas in the Baltic Sea initiative of the European Commission.

Projects on their way

Vaasa takes part in many projects, for example in Project Botnia, a three-year cooperation project between Umeå, Vaasa

and Örnsköldsvik and some industrial companies. The project has emphasized on the environmental profile to market these municipalities in order to strengthen their business life, research and education and to increase tourism in these areas. Vaasa is also actively marketing itself as a place where international events can be arranged. Such an event was for example the IV cooperation conference of BSSSC in the autumn of 1996. The CMPR-conference is planned to be arranged in Vaasa in 1999. Furthermore, Vaasa aims at arranging EU-meetings, when Finland holds the chairmanship of the EU during the second half of 1999.

Business cooperation

Two offices that mainly serve small and middle-sized companies, Euro Info Centre (EIC) and Business and Innovation Centre (BIC), have been established in Vaasa and the surrounding province. The Interreg-programme concerning cross-border co-operation in the Kvarken region will be of great importance for the City of Vaasa as well.

HANSEATIC DAYS IN VISBY ON 11-14 JUNE 1998

The Hanseatic Days of 1998 will be held in the Town of Visby.

A more appropriate location could hardly be found; in 1995 the UNESCO placed the Hanseatic Town of Visby on its World Heritage List as a cultural site of "exceptional and universal value." The Municipality of Gotland will host the meeting.

Introducing the Youth Forum

All visitors from other Hanseatic



Towns are welcome to the meeting in Visby. The days are planned to be days of enjoyment, celebrating the transformation of the Medieval Hanseatic League into a modern organisation for the

implementation of a common future.

The youth is a part of the future. Therefore, the Hanseatic Days in Visby will be days devoted to the young with a special Youth Forum in addition to other themes, such as information technology, environmental protection and ecology.

International Culture Projects in Visby

The work of the Commission on Culture is lead by the cultural offices for the Cities of Visby and Szczecin. The cities are planning the third Session of



the Commission in collaboration with the City of Kaliningrad that will be the host for this conference on 24 - 26 April 1998. The session will focus on cultural education.

The department of Culture and Leisure in Visby has also prepared the actualised UBC Catalogue of Cultural Institutions, which can be found on the UBC's homepage www.ubc.net.

The Art Museum of Gotland has during

a year taken part in the production of the first art magazine of the Baltic region, "Mare Articum". The first issue was printed and published in Szczecin in September 1997.

Mr Olov Gibson from the Department of Culture and Leisure took part in meetings in Thessaloniki this autumn, arranged by the cultural networking organisation "Les Rencontres". This relatively new network is stimulating

contacts all over Europe between people involved in cultural administration and cultural projects.

Further information:

monica.formicola@gotland.se
International Secretary, Municipality of Gotland
Tel. +46 498 269034
Fax +46 498 215520

EIB FORUM TO BRIDGE THE NORTHERN SEAS

The European Investment Bank's 1997 Forum on "Bridging the Seas in Northern Europe", held in Stockholm on October 23-24, focused on the considerable advance Northern Europe had achieved in developing inter-regional cooperation in preparation of the historic milestones of Economic and Monetary Union and further enlargement of the European Union.

The Forum speakers examined the progress Northern European countries had made to modernise their economy, strengthen links both within the region and with a wider European continental market. Northern Europe is undergoing fundamental changes, with the impact of Sweden and Finland becoming Members of the European Union only three years ago, and other countries in the region are now preparing for wider European integration.

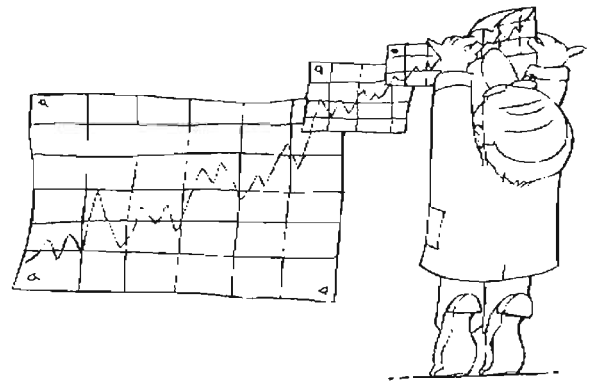
Over 350 participants

The Forum brought together over 350 senior government, business and banking officials, who were addressed by over 30 well-known speakers from the European Union and Central and Eastern Europe.

Opening the Forum, EIB President Sir Brian Unwin said: 'The development of Northern Europe is a priority, particularly the physical infrastructure necessary to inter-link the Northern European countries of the Union and link the Central and Eastern European applicant countries with the rest of Europe'.

Enlargement of the EU

The Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson stated that the Baltic Sea had the potential to become the fastest-growing area in Europe for many years to come. "In this region, there is a combination of rapidly growing young market economies such as Poland, the Baltic states and north-west Russia, and mature economies such as the Nordic countries, which have consolidated their government finances and are now once more on the way up. As I see it, enlargement of the European Union is of crucial importance to Baltic



Sea cooperation. Four more countries in our close neighbourhood are now knocking on the door of the EU, at the same time as the EU's relations with Russia are deepening. That clearly opens new opportunities for cooperation".

Union of the Baltic Cities was represented in the EIB Forum in Stockholm by its Secretary General Mr Pawel Żaboklicki who submitted a presentation titled 'UBC - promoting grass-roots integration' where he described UBC structure and activities to conference participants.

Mr Żaboklicki called the European Investment Bank to establish a project fund eligible for NGOs and local authorities from the Baltic Sea Region. This fund could be used for projects aiming at levelling the development differences between present and future EU parts of the BSR.

Correction

There was an error in the Baltic Cities Bulletin 2/97. Kristianstad's port is in Åhus, not in Aarhus as we wrote. We apologize for the mistake.

Editorial Board



B7 - THE BALTIC SEA SEVEN ISLANDS

Since 1989 the largest islands in the Baltic Sea have formed a common interest group, "The Islands of the Baltic Sea" or B7.

The islands are Bornholm, Gotland, Hiiumaa, Rügen, Saaremaa, Åland and Öland. The collaboration deals mainly with issues of common interest to the islands, with finding solutions to common problems, and cooperating to develop ideas for the future.

The islands meet regularly and once a year the Annual Conference takes place. This year Rügen hosted the conference. In the little town of Sellin politicians, civil



servants and chairmen of the working groups met and decided how to continue the common work. A lot of ongoing and planned projects were presented and acknowledged to continue, for instance projects concerning oilspill in the Baltic Sea, Agenda 21, eco-tourism, marketing of common historical events and culinary heritage.

During the meeting it was decided that a full-time secretariat should be established on Gotland to be responsible for the information and co-ordination. Furthermore, the B7 association is represented in its own office in Brussels.

BALTIC HEALTHY CITIES CENTRE TO BE IN BUSINESS SOON

The Baltic Healthy Cities Centre will be starting from the beginning of 1998.

The Finnish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs have agreed to finance its basic functions together with the City of Turku for three years. The Ministry has also financed the planning for the Centre, and the Planning Office has been working busily since May 1997. What is needed now is the formal agreement with the Ministry, the WHO/Euro Healthy Cities Project Office and the City of Turku, and there will be an established Baltic Centre in Turku.

The planning phase has produced a lot of ideas on how the wishes of the January Turku meeting participants could be fulfilled. The participants agreed on the following high priority areas:

- * Links between health and the environment
- * Partners in Health Promotion
- * Healthy Alliances & Networking
- * Evaluation
- * Health Care
- * Training and Capacity Building.

The WHO Healthy Cities Project Office has defined initiating projects, supporting and facilitating, promoting and strengthening cooperation as the principal functions of the Centre. The overall aim is all the time to support and establish Healthy Cities program implementations in cities around the Baltic Sea.

Fields of activities

In this capacity, the office would be interested to know what kind of projects or project proposals there could be in the Baltic region cities. Some ideas have already been introduced.

The cities who feel called to work with

- information management (primarily information on health and factors influencing health, technical possibilities, building up health profiles),
- developing indicators on health and its determinants, particularly on the link between environment and health,
- using Geographical Information System to present data on health and environment, also accidents,



- "Twenty Steps toward a Healthy City" project establishment and management
- transfer of know-how on specific skills
- an example of oral health and breast-cancer screening, evaluation and Health Profile, building healthy alliances with business sector to promote overall wellbeing in cities
- supporting and linking with Health Promoting Schools and Healthy Universities
- research on different models of welfare - is the Nordic model transferable?

are heartily welcome to contact the:

Baltic Healthy Cities Centre
 Tel. +3582 2514 909 or 2813 861
 Fax. +3582 2515 226
 E-mail: mari.hakkala@turku.fi.



VENTSPILS PAST AND PRESENT

Ventspils has always been famous for its port which is the biggest port on the Baltic Sea and one of the 15 largest ports in Europe.

It is also called a capital of transit business. The results of the successful port activities can be seen in the life of the town. The town invests in the development of the technical and social infrastructure, arrangement of public places - streets, parks.

GIS coming up

The town is actively working at possibilities of involvement in the Baltic Sea region cooperation in order to become a cultural and educational center. Ventspils in cooperation with the Danish town Esbjerg works at the development of the Geographical Information System. An interesting method of work organisation has been implemented - making a territorial plan on the basis of airphotos.

Hopes for PHARE approval

The Architecture and City Development

department with the participation of the Central Library and councillor in cultural issues has submitted a project application for the PHARE CBC programme 1998-2001 with the title "Involvement of the Ventspils Old Town into the Baltic Sea Countries' Cultural Society". The project provides foundation of the Culture and Information Centre, plan of the Old Town's physical and social renovation, development of passenger transport with Sweden, cooperation with the city of Västervik etc.

Chivalry Castle

One of the most beautiful Ventspils sights is the Chivalry Castle of the Livonian Order, located in the Old Town and the port. This cultural pearl of the medieval period that can be fully admired also nowadays. Each Baltic Sea country is proud of at least one renovated castle - Danes are proud of Kolding, Swedes of Kalmar, Estonians of Kuressaare, Lithuanians of Trakai, Poles of Malbork, Finns of Hämeenlinna.

Ventspils Castle is the oldest convention type castle and the oldest

medieval fortress in Latvia that has remained in its typical structure till our days. The tower of the castle is considered to be the oldest functioning beacon in the Baltics. We have credible evidence about the tower as a beacon at least since the 17th century. The castle is a unique European cultural monument of the 13th century, the significance of which is much wider than that of a fortress only. Together with the port, it is a symbol and evidence of international relations development, as both the Livonian Order and the Hanseatic League are predecessors of the European Union.

At present the renovation works are going on in the castle. After the restoration, the Ventspils Historical Museum will move into the castle. The castle will be equipped with modern conference facilities, art exhibition and chamber music halls. In summer time the "Ventspils Opera Festival", with the participation of young artists from three Baltic states, partners from the Vadsten Opera Summer Academy, Sweden and Reinsberg Castle Opera Festival, Germany, will be held in the castle.



Baltic decision-makers on their way to a closer cooperation in UBC General Conference.

photo: Agnieszka Lendzion



II. UBC Today

IV UBC GENERAL CONFERENCE

The IV General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities titled the "Baltic Sea Cooperation Forum" was held on 12-13 September 1997 in Gdańsk, Poland, at the invitation of the Mayor of Gdańsk. The Conference was an official part of Gdańsk 1000-Anniversary celebrations.

The Conference was attended by over 250 participants - representatives of 63 Member Cities, as well as invited guests from international organisations, ministries and other Baltic cities.

The Conference was opened by Mr Anders Engström, President of the Union of the Baltic Cities and the participants were warmly welcomed to Gdańsk by the Mayor of Gdańsk, Mr Tomasz Posadzki.

Keynote speeches and workshops

The first day of the Conference was devoted to the cooperation between Baltic Sea organisations and institutions.

The following keynote speakers representing governmental level as well as all major Baltic organisations introduced existing cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region on different levels.

During the panel discussion leaders of Baltic organisations and institutions discussed the ways to enhance the multilateral cooperation and presented their views on Baltic Sea Region development prospects in relation with the forthcoming European Union enlargement.

Following the proposal of UBC President Mr Anders Engström the major Baltic organisations agreed to hold annual meetings in order to work out joint projects and discuss Baltic strategic issues.

Panel discussion were followed by workshops: Agenda 21 - Local, Regional and Governmental cooperation, European Union in the Baltic Sea Region today and tomorrow - a challenge for Baltic Cities, Local self-government in the Baltic Sea Region - tendencies and obstacles, and



President Engström, Mayor Posadzki, Minister Rosati and Commissioner Wulf-Mathies on a lively press conference.

photo: Agnieszka Lendzion

Baltic Sea Actors - ways and tools for cooperation and coordination.

Report and Strategy

Mr Anders Engström submitted the Report on UBC activities within the period December'95 - September'97. The Conference adopted the Report. Subsequently Mr Engström presented the Strategy of UBC activities 1998-1999 and informed that the Executive Board recommended the General Conference to adopt the document. After discussion the Conference adopted the document. At the same time the Conference authorised the Executive Board to work out the Policy of the Union of the Baltic Cities, having as a basis the adopted Strategy.

Finances

Mr Pawel Żaboklicki, the Secretary General of the Union, submitted the auditor's report on UBC accounts made by licensed auditing office, stating that all Union's financial transactions and records within the period 1995-1996 have

Guest speakers in Gdańsk

Mr Dariusz Rosati, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

Mr Pierre Schori, Minister for International Development Cooperation of Sweden

Mrs Monika Wulf-Mathies, Commissioner for Regional Policies, European Commission

Mr Dan Nielsen, Chairman of the Committee of Senior Officials, Council of the Baltic Sea States

Mr Olof Salmen, President of the Nordic Council

Mr Knud Andersen, Speaker of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation

Mr Hannu Tapiola, President of the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe.

Mr Wolf-Rüdiger Janzen, President of the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association



been handled properly. Furthermore, the Secretary presented the proposal for UBC budget for the financial period 1998-1999.

UBC incomes are based on membership annual fees depending on the size of member city. The Conference took note of the auditor's report and approved the level of membership fees and the budget for the financial period 1998-1999.

Mr Anders Engström submitted to the General Conference the amendments to UBC Statute proposed by the Executive Board. The Conference decided to accept the proposed amendments.

New Executive Board

The following cities were elected as members of UBC Executive Board for the next two-year period: **Aalborg** (Denmark), **Bergen** (Norway), **Gdańsk** (Poland), **Kaliningrad** (Russia), **Klaipėda** (Lithuania), **Pärnu** (Estonia),

Rēzekne (Latvia), **Rostock** (Germany), **Stockholm** (Sweden), **Turku** (Finland).

Presidential Elections

The General Conference elected **Mr Anders Engström**, Mayor of Kalmar as President of the Union and **Mr Michael Bouteiller**, Mayor of Lübeck and **Mr Bartłomiej Sochański**, Mayor of Szczecin as Vice-Presidents of the Union for the next two-year period.

UBC Secretariat

Following the offer of the Mayor of Gdańsk the Conference decided to maintain the location of the UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk in the "Green Gate" for the next six-year period 1998-2003.

New Commission

Following the decision of the Executive Board, the General Conference decided to

approve the creation of 8th UBC working Commission on Business Cooperation and encouraged all member cities to actively participate in the Commission work.

Next Conference

Following the proposal of the Mayor of Stockholm, Mr Mats Hulth, the General Conference decided to hold its 5th Meeting in the City of Stockholm, in the year 1999.

Closing the meeting, Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union, expressed his warm thanks to all participants, speakers, guests and hosts in particular, for their outstanding contribution to the success of the IV UBC General Conference.

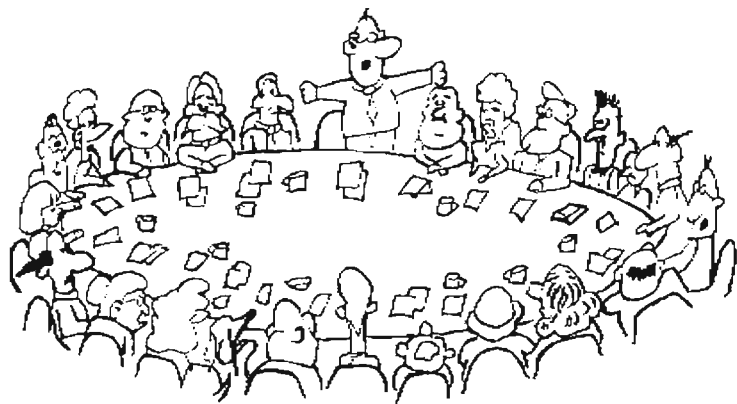
UBC PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO BRUSSELS

The UBC President Mr Anders Engström and Vice-President Mr Bartłomiej Sochański were the heads of a small delegation visiting the EU Commission on October 14 - 15, 1997. The other persons were the UBCEU Project Leader Mr Dominik Górski, and the UBC Project Manager Mr Juhan Janusson.

The main purpose of the visit was to market the UBCEU project, which aims at preparing the UBC member cities for the enlargement of the EU and at marketing the UBC in general.

The program of the visit was made up by the Copenhagen Office and the South Sweden Office. Their officers, Mr Peter Rosenberg and Ms Åse Svensson made a great job to prepare and carry out the visits.

The UBC delegation met Mr Rudolf Niessler of DG XVI. His section is responsible for developing the programs of DGXVI and other cooperating DG's. As he also participated at the UBC General Conference, he is a friend of the UBC inside the Commission. During the meeting, we discussed among others the



UBC's role and the UBC as project implementor.

The delegation also met with Ms Nathalie Vershelde, who is an expert on EU Programs and Program Development, especially the Baltic Sea Region programs. The delegation received from her interesting insights about the processes within the Commission and what is to be expected in a near future.

Ms Ylva Tiveus-Kronlund from the DG X is responsible for some EU information policies to various organisations. She told the delegation that it is difficult to find funding for the UBCEU project for the amounts needed, but as the project is very interesting also for the EU, she would

investigate the matter further.

In the evening there was a reception at the Hanse-Office in Brussels. About 30 persons from various European Institutions, like the European Parliament, and also from various UBC member city offices in Brussels attended the reception.

The next day, the UBC Project Manager paid visits to representatives in Brussels. The offices of Stockholm, South-Sweden, Schlesvig-Holstein, North Sweden, East and South Finland and the Estonian Delegation to the EU were visited.

The custom of having representative offices in Brussels is a fast developing phenomenon. We were informed that there exists 155 various offices,



representing regional and local authorities. It is in a high degree also a north-European custom, since there are very few such offices from the south of Europe. The possibility for the UBC to utilise member city resources in Brussels is a great opportunity.

The main lesson from the Brussels visit is that the UBC needs an EU policy in order to communicate efficiently with the Commission. The number of various interest groups is so great that a strategy is needed. A vague concept will only disappear among all competitors out of the attention of the Commission.

THE NUMBER OF UBC MEMBER CITIES IS 79 !

UBC warmly welcomes the new member cities:

Cesis (Latvia)

Elva, Keila, Kärđla, Narva and Viljandi (Estonia)

Norrtälje, Nyköping and Uppsala (Sweden)

FOCUS ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The UBC Task Force for PR and Communication meeting under the theme "Project Management and Communication" attracted over 30 participants from 25 member cities to Kalmar on October 4-7, 1997. Jointly to this seminar there took also place a smaller UBC Internet training course for the member cities interested in developing their own home pages.

UBC Project CV at your service

A number of topics and initiatives were introduced and discussed in the Task Force meeting. One of the most fruitful sessions was the exchange of practical project experiences among the participants. The Task Force has now prepared a book listing some major international projects in the member cities to be used as a reference for further contacts and cooperation. This booklet will be mailed to all TF members and other cities can order it from the Task Force Office in Tampere.

BSA as a tool for communication

The UBC is one of the founding fathers of the Baltic Sea Alliance, - a www-platform for practical project management. This was introduced also in the meeting and it received quite an enthusiastic response. All UBC member



Task Force members updating the Baltic Sea Alliance data system in Kalmar.

cities are from now on encouraged to report their activities to this site (www.balticsea.net) and to use it as a tool in their daily work. Also an exclusive e-mail list for Task Force members was put up in Kalmar.

Many activities on their way

Additionally there were many other innovative ideas presented by the participants and e.g. the following (to mention only few) were put into action: The Task Force agreed on an internal publicity campaign in the member cities as well as on a primary school driven PR

-project for the whole UBC. The UBC Who is Who Directory is being launched at the beginning of the year and the used equipment marketplace from the UBC Environmental Bulletin will be expanded also to this main Bulletin. The very much requested Task Force project management and EU training sessions will continue also in the future.

And, yes, faithful to the Task Force tradition, the city of Kalmar hosted a great adventure programme including glass blowing, UBC petanq tournament and a medieval dinner in the Castle. Be sure to be in the next meeting in Szczecin in 1998.



MEA DISSEMINATION SEMINARS

During a project lasting one and half years, the Commission on Environment has prepared a model for municipal environmental auditing (MEA) in Baltic cities. The last stage of the project was the dissemination phase, in which the results of the project as well as the manual for municipal environmental auditing were presented to interested UBC member cities.

The first dissemination seminar was held in April in Tallinn and the others in Panevėžys, Riga, Kaliningrad and Gdynia at the end of September and the beginning of October.

A wide group of environmental specialists from the cities participated in the seminars, in addition to representatives from the ministries of the

environment, universities and other environmental organizations. Altogether 25 cities and 170 people took part in these five seminars. Both the MEA model and the possibilities of using it in the countries

were discussed. Most participating cities expressed their interest in the model, and many began considering its use in their cities.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES AT A CROSS-ROAD?

Union of the Baltic Cities is a fast growing Baltic Sea Network, and far the largest of the organisations with registered membership fee paying members. 80 cities are members of UBC. The size and the composition of the union, small and big cities working together, mean that there is a lot of potential in the organisation. Do we use the potential?

Referring to the statutes of the Union of the Baltic Cities the network was initiated with the purpose of developing cooperation and exchange between the members, the cities in the Baltic Sea Region. There is no doubt that UBC has succeeded in fulfilling this purpose taking into account the activities of the 8 commissions and the many co-operation projects.

UBC in a European Context

Is that enough or do we want more from

the UBC? The question is whether we, the members cities, want UBC also to develop into a professional political interest organisation taking care of the Baltic cities interests towards national and international organisations, not least the European Union.

The Future of UBC on the Agenda

In Copenhagen we think that this question is becoming more and more urgent. It is time to open the discussion and to strengthen the use of basic democratic involvement in the UBC work if we want to be able to develop the organisation and, at the same time, to continue to attract new members and to hold on to the old members. The UBC Bulletin, which we all appreciate, should be one of the forums for debate and information about Baltic Sea policy development.

The UBC General Assembly in Gdańsk

Most of the UBC member cities were present during the interesting and valuable UBC-conference in Gdańsk one month ago. Concerning the general assembly itself many of us were very confused and wondering what was going on. The reason is that there was no information, no involvement and no debate. When we do not receive information no new ideas and suggestions will be put forward from the member cities. The board did not seek involvement and did not present a proper strategy paper. Pleasant speeches and praise are nice but not enough.

UBC, a European Lobby Organisation?

On October 28, 1997, during the BSSSC conference in Gdańsk, the



president of the UBC stressed that "In the near future we (UBC) must enhance our ties with the European Union." Copenhagen supports this statement. But it takes more than a visit to the EU Commission in Brussels to achieve this goal. The competition between organisations is hard, time and resources are limited. Each organisation that wants to be recognised must have an aim and be prepared, must have an overall policy and a strategy to present. It is a "give and take" situation and UBC must be constructive and make clear what we can offer to the European development.

A Baltic Cities Policy?

If we shall succeed on the EU level the board will have to deal with policy issues and strategy questions. The policy makers of the UBC will need to be supported by a strong, experienced and professional political advisory body linked to the president.

Welcome to the New Board

This is a main issue to discuss for the UBC member cities and a main issue for

the new board to decide on. Copenhagen fully supports the development of UBC into a professional and recognised Baltic Sea organisation, which looks after the interests of the Baltic cities towards the European Union.

Jane Wiis
Head of International Affairs
Copenhagen

COMMENT

The UBC is in a rapid and accelerating development. The demands on UBC have also changed during the years UBC has existed. In the first years there was a great need for contacts after many years of isolation. Also, the cities were overwhelmed with acute problems to be solved. The main issues were of very practical nature.

Since the beginning, much efforts have been put into making the UBC an efficiently working organisation with a good internal structure and devoted and engaged member cities. We have also been succesful in creating unity without destructive competition.

One of the many engaged cities is Copenhagen, which has shown great interest in the UBC and have given valuable contributions in connections with many activities. The initiative Copenhagen is taking by opening a debate on the political role of the UBC is very welcome. Most UBC member cities in former socialist countries now have passed the first, acute phase and are now seeking a feasible orientation to the strategic development. In this respect, the political role of the UBC will be more enhanced.

Several initiatives have been taken or are planned to be taken to enhance the

political discussion in the UBC. In general, to be efficient the discussions on strategic issues should be prepared and carried out in smaller groups. The Board Meeting procedures have been changed in order to facilitate strategic discussions in the board. In the UBC Board meeting in Aalborg at the end of November a first draft document outlining UBC policies will be discussed. Also, I think that it would be useful to nominate some devoted cities outside the Board to participate in a working group for the policy making.

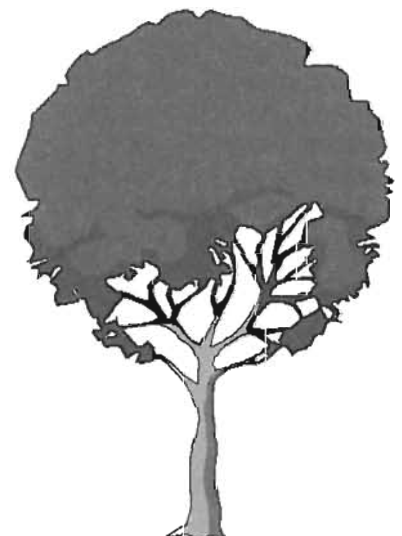
Much efforts must also be put into shaping an EU policy. Of course, one visit to Brussels is not enough. Hopefully Copenhagen can continue to give valuable contribution in the process. We must influence EU issues in many different ways.

Other forums to discuss UBC in political sense are the national meetings, which we encourage to be held at least once a year in each country with UBC members. The Board Member cities are responsible for these meetings in their respective countries. The national meetings carried out so far have been very successful.

The UBC Bulletin should also be used for an open and free debate.

To have policy discussions at the plenary session in the General Conference is not very efficient. Instead they should place in the working groups and at the Commission meetings. But we must have a lively and continuing discussion all the time. We cannot wait for a policy discussion every two year during the General Conferences.

Anders Engström
President of the UBC





LATEST UBC PROJECT APPLICATIONS

On September 19th six UBC projects were submitted to the BSPF program of the EU. All of them were prepared by the UBC Project Manager, but submitted through various UBC member cities. There is no decision yet on the outcome, but hopefully there will be an answer before Christmas.

UBC-EU - UBC Member Cities and the European Union - Submitted by the City of Szczecin.

The aim is to prepare the cities for the expansion of the EU in the Baltic Sea Region. It is a continuation of a presently ongoing project, with the same partners. The activities includes seminars and one conference, plus some "task force activities", where special attention will be given to the influence of EU policies on social and democratic issues. In the long run this important project hopefully can develop into a larger project with more activities and with a larger budget. The UBC considers it completed when all applicant countries in the region have become members of the EU.

Partners: Szczecin, Copenhagen, Kalmar, Tampere, Tallinn, Liepāja, Panevėžys, Rostock.

Via Baltica Accident Project - Submitted by the city of Pärnu.

The Via Baltica is one of the main infrastructural projects in the Baltic States. However, in the infrastructure also accident management is vital where cities play a major role, for example hospitals, rescue teams of the fire brigade and so on. The project includes preparation and implementation of a simulated accident at the Via Baltica somewhere in south Estonia, for example a severe bus accident. The aim is to identify weak points in the organisations and the equipment for accidents. There are plans to carry out similar projects in other cities along the highway.

Partners: Pärnu, Norrköping, the County Council of Östergötland County, Sweden

UBC Library Network - Submitted by the city of Haapsalu

The project aims at ways to attract young adults to use the city public libraries and thus secure the role of libraries to stay as one of the main instruments of the cities to enhance culture for all young adults, also for those from less favoured background. Public libraries, as being one of the main real pillars of freedom of expression, free from commercial domination, thus also serve as a main contributor to real democracy, also in the heart of people.

There is a wide spectrum of possible activities and actions. The participating cities therefore concentrate on various aspects under the common umbrella of this project. During the project, seminars and meeting between all partners will be carried out, but the bulk of the work will be carried out in a twin-library concept.

Partners: Haapsalu, Visby, Helsinki, Riga, Copenhagen, Vilnius

Four Cities Business Partnershiats - Submitted by the City of Panevėžys

The purpose of the project is to shape the first UBC activity in the field of Business development. The activity is to carry out partenariats in Sweden and Lithuania where local business people can meet and eventually find business partners.

Partners: Kalmar, Kristianstad, Panevėžys, Šiauliai

Baltic Tourist Academy - Submitted by the city of Rēzekne

The UBC Commission on Tourism will mainly work with tourism education. The purpose of this project is to shape a network of cities with universities or colleges that have tourism training and education. The main activity is to shape and carry out courses in tourism in cooperation with the educational institutes in the cities.

Partners: Kalmar, Pärnu, Rēzekne, Panevėžys

Young Politicians - Submitted by the city of Pärnu

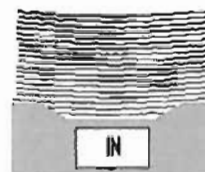
In our region, there are young as well as old democratic countries. The politicians who now are young will take part of the future development of the region. Democracy is constantly changing, but it is essential that it changes in a way that young people engage themselves actively for the future.

At the initiative of a young politician, who also is one of the vice-mayors of Kalmar, Lena Hallengren, the UBC initiated a project to shape a network of about 40 young politicians, regardless of political ideology or party membership. The network should mainly discuss democracy at the local level. The activities will consist of a series of three or four meetings with seminars, workshops and study-visits and with creation of a manifest on local democracy. Participants shall be born 1968 or later.

Partners: Bergen, Kalmar, Aalborg, Turku, Pärnu, Riga, Klaipėda, Szczecin, Rostock, Kaliningrad.

Further information:

Juhan Janusson
UBC Project Manager
Tel. +46 480 83430
Fax +46 480 83122
E-mail: juhan.janusson@ubc.kalmar.se





INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA CLUB MEETING IN TURKEY

The International Black Sea Club (IBSC) is a parallel organisation to the UBC, but located in the Black Sea region. Members are 19 cities from Ukraine, Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey. The President is the Mayor from Odessa, and the secretariat is located in Varna, Bulgaria.

The IBSC held its General Assembly meeting in the City of Izmir, Turkey, October 31st to November 2nd 1997. The UBC was represented as an observer through the UBC Project Manager Juhan Janusson, who also presented UBC.

The Black Sea region is very different compared to our region. The political conflicts between Greece and Turkey casted its shadow on the assembly meeting. Among others it had a very



Representatives of the IBSC including the President Mr Eduard Gurvits, Mayor of Odessa, in the middle of the front row.

intense media coverage compared to the UBC meetings.

The main impression was, however, that the meetings was held among friends and in a very good spirit, in spite of the international conflicts. The Turkish hospitality showed itself from its best side.

Several delegates expressed wishes to get closer contacts with the UBC and exchange views and experiences on City Networking. Also concrete wishes of cooperation projects were discussed, primarily regarding tourism and environmental projects.

UBC - 'THE CITY GATEWAY TO THE EU?' LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE GENERATING SKILLS

UBC is a fast growing organisation with a lot of international activities in the Baltic Sea Region. Therefore, it is necessary that local governments generate appropriate skills and coordinate their actions.

The UBC-EU Information Project development combined with the growing urge for EU funding, together with essential political questions can be perceived as means of searching the gateway for the Baltic cities to cope with the EU, especially while improving accession process and project development.

Further, it is in the UBC's interest to become a professional partner to the EU and translate its own strategy into the cities needs and serve as the Baltic cities gateway to the United Europe.

UBC-EU Information Project - update
The UBC-EU Information Project has already become the buzz-word of 1997 in the Baltic Region.

On 4-6 September 1997 Szczecin hosted the second seminar of the Project and focused on the situation in and the role of cities in the European integration process. The Szczecin seminar evaluated the situation in local governments and helped to identify their role in the integration process. It further concluded that it was of vital importance that the cities' voice should be better heard in Brussels and in this way they have more influence on the decisions taken there. Two year results of Swedish integration show that cities potential should be reorientated and made better use of to benefit from this long awaited return to the EU family.



Mr Mart Siimann, Prime Minister of Estonia, opened the UBC-EU Conference in Tallinn



The European integration in the Baltic governments - the conference in Tallinn

17th and 18th of November faced a major project event for the project hosted by Mayor of Tallinn. Here the UBC cities had been offered an impressive agenda on their table. With more than 200 participants, including all Baltic ambassadors, key Estonian politicians and the CNN coverage, the conference turned out to be a big success and greatly contributed to spreading the EU knowledge.

The integration process on the local and regional levels, its present status and future development, pre-accession processes and different levels of preparations in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, the Baltic interests in Brussels, transfer of the EU

information on the EU related matters, are only a few examples of the topics focused on.

It has been highlighted during the conference that both regional and local levels with the local community support should work together to meet the challenge. Further, while talking about the democratic and institutional preparations towards the EU membership it should be not forgotten that it also brings massive investment efforts both into the human resources and the economic growth.

In this context, the UBC member cities have a potential in-house and immensely capable and determined people. Nevertheless, as in any enterprise, people need to feel motivated and part of the enterprise. We can do better in creating a strong network of UBC cities and be even

more efficient in what we do towards the European integration and better explain it to local communities.

The UBC-EU Information Project through 'the UBC Gateway' is aiming at achieving this objective. Again, it is anticipated that the project can be continued next year with more task force activities and more UBC cities involvement to secure that the cities are well equipped to introduce essential EU-oriented policies and strategies just in time.



*The conference attracted more than 200 participants from over 30 UBC member cities
photo: Teet Malsroos*

INTRODUCING THE UBC PRESIDIUUM



Mr Anders Engström
Mayor of Kalmar, Sweden
President of the UBC since 1991

Motto for the term 1998-1999 in UBC:
"The role of our cities is to contribute to positive democratic, economic, social and environmental development in the Baltic Sea Region"



Mr Michael Bouteiller
Mayor of Lübeck, Germany
Vice-President of the UBC since 1991

Motto for the term 1998-1999 in UBC:
"Strengthen the City-Network!"



Mr Bartłomiej Sochański
Mayor of Szczecin, Poland
Vice-President of the UBC since 1997

Motto for the term 1998-1999 in UBC:
"Working together makes us stronger and better, and it makes the Europe stronger and better, too."

PRESENTATION OF THE UBC EXECUTIVE BOARD 1998-1999

City of Aalborg, Denmark

- **Number of inhabitants:** 160 726
- **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:**
 - to establish international projects a.o. with EU and national funding in Eastern Europe with special attention to the Baltic states and Kaliningrad in the fields of environmental and urban environment projects, SMEs, education as well as research projects (5th framework programme)
 - generally increased cooperation with Eastern Europe and Scandinavia
- **Motto for the period 1998 - 1999 as a UBC Board member city:** generally to improve our international cooperation and engagement
- **Contact person for UBC matters:** Ms Mette Jensen

Adviser on International Affairs
City Hall
Rantzausgade 6
DK-9000 Aalborg, Denmark
Tel. +45 99 311514
Fax +45 99 313132
E-mail: mej-borgm@aalbkom.dk

City Hall
Radstueplads 6, PB 805
N-5002 Bergen, Norway
Tel. +47 55 566039
Fax +47 55 566917
E-mail: audun.oiestad@sentraladm.bergen-kommune.telemax.no

City of Bergen, Norway

- **Number of inhabitants:** 224 157
- **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** Economic development
- **Motto:** To strengthen the contact between our region and the regions in East and Central Europe
- **Contact person for UBC matters:** Mr Audun Øiestad
Department Director of Economic Development

City of Gdańsk, Poland

- **Number of inhabitants:** 467 000
- **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:**
 - the city role in the process of creation of new strong selfgovernmental Gdańsk region; we would like to use Scandinavian and German experiences in question.
 - to work out the Gdańsk urban development strategy including district revitalisation, city infrastructure, housing
 - to develop efficient city administration structure

- other fields like social care, social pathology, ecology.

• **Motto:** Cooperation between the Baltic cities as a decisive factor in the process of European integration.

• **Contact person for UBC matters:**

Mr Andrzej Jankowski
Secretary of the City
City Hall
Nowe Ogrody St. 8/12
PL-80-803 Gdańsk, Poland
Tel. +48 58 320323
Fax +48 58 320134
E-mail: sekretarz@gdansk.gda.pl

City of Kaliningrad, Russia

• **Number of inhabitants:** 420 000

• **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** economy, culture, environment, health and social care, education

• **Motto:** Development towards sustainability within the Baltic Sea region.

• **Contact person for UBC matters:**

Ms Julia Matjushina
Head of Foreign Relations Department
City Hall
Pl. Pobedy 1
RUS-236040 Kaliningrad, Russia
Tel./Fax +7-0112-215395
E-mail: postmaster@cityhall.koenig.su

City of Klaipėda, Lithuania

• **Number of inhabitants:** 203 000

• **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** To accelerate preparation for the EU membership and raise the Lithuanian living standard to European level. The city is determined to stir up its activity in all UBC commissions and defines the following priorities of projects in each of them:

Culture: to open cultural layers of our country - cognition of various cultural fields in the Baltic region, exchange of cultural information.

Information and Communications: to create information base and communication network and to join the communication

structure of the Baltic region.

Social affairs: preventive work, integration of the disabled to society, reduction of unemployment

Environment protection: integration of sustainable development concept into municipal policy.

Tourism: introduction of the UBC cities to Lithuanian tourism resources.

Transport: reform of public transport structure in the cities.

Sport: through sports to give young people more chances for communication and guarantee on continuity of traditions.

• **Motto:** Advantages of the UBC membership - the road to the European Union

• **Contact person for UBC matters:**

Ms Ina Jonaitiene
Head of Foreign Relations Department
City Hall
Liepu 11
LT-5800 Klaipėda, Lithuania
Tel./Fax +370 6 214795
E-mail: astar@klaipeda.sav.lt

City of Pärnu, Estonia

• **Number of inhabitants:** 51 807

• **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** Tourism, culture, social affairs, environment, communication, EU projects

• **Motto:** Through UBC to EU

- to participate actively in the commissions of tourism, culture, social affairs, environment, communication, Women's Network, Task Force

- to double the number of member cities in Estonia

- EU project partners from UBC

All friendship towns of Pärnu around the Baltic Sea will be the members of the UBC.

• **Contact person for UBC matters:**

Mr Toivo Riimaa
Councillor of Foreign Affairs
City Hall
Uus 4
EE3600 Pärnu, Estonia
Tel. +372-44 31 497 / 31 305
Fax +372-44 31 019
E-mail: toivo@lv.parnu.ee

City of Rēzekne, Latvia

• **Number of inhabitants:** 41 500

• **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** Tourism, environment, social affairs as well as spatial planning and economic development

• **Motto:** Taking into account its favorable geographic situation and excellent economic potential, Rēzekne City is developing a reputation as a fast-growing city of interest to both local and foreign investors.

• **Contact person for UBC matters:**

Ms Sandra Jonikane
Foreign Affairs Officer
City Hall
93, Atbrivoshanas aleja
LV-4600 Rēzekne, Latvia
Tel./Fax +371-7-89 46 15

City of Rostock, Germany

• **Number of inhabitants:** 231 313

• **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** Social Affairs:
- economical development especially of SMEs

- labour market promotion, decreasing of unemployment

- UBC network for health prevention

- care of elderly people

- youth care

- tourist city marketing

- common approach as UBC - Baltic region towards Brussels and EU institutions

• **Motto:** Strengthening of the influence of our Baltic Region and the UBC as an organisation for cities. Intensifying of the different networks for exchanging of experiences between cities.

• **Contact person for UBC matters:**

Mr Ulrich Bauermeister
Head of Mayor's Office
City administration
Neuer Markt 1
D-18055 Rostock, Germany
Tel.+49-381-381 1247
Fax +49-381-381 1903
E-mail: rostock@compuserve.com

City of Stockholm, Sweden

- **Number of inhabitants:** 700 000
- **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** To develop the new Commission on Business Cooperation
- **Motto:** The Baltic Sea area, the centre of Europe
- **Contact person for UBC matters:**
Ms Lillian Westerberg
SML
Box 127 12
S-11294 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel. +46-8-785 80 08
Fax +46-8-654 93 56
E-mail: lillian.westerberg@sml.stockholm.se

City of Turku, Finland

- **Number of inhabitants:** 165 000
- **Main fields / interests for Baltic Sea cooperation:** Health, environment and health-related economics
- **Motto:** Long live the Baltic!
- **Contact person for UBC matters:**
Mr Mikko Jokinen
Director of Environmental Protection Office
Linnankatu 61
FIN-20100 Turku, Finland
Tel. +358-2-2623 412
Fax: +358-2-2303 518
E-mail: mikko.jokinen@ympto.turku.elisa.fi

THE UBC SECRETARIAT IN GDAŃSK AT YOUR SERVICE



Mr Paweł Żaboklicki
Secretary General since 1993



Ms Iwona Śmigierska-Belczak
Assistant since 1995



Ms Anna Sońnicka
Assistant since 1997

The UBC Secretariat is located in Gdańsk in Poland.

Its responsibilities include:

- coordination of UBC daily work and activities
- communication with the member cities and other organisations
- organising UBC conferences, meetings and events
- producing reports, documents, newsletters

Contact information:

Union of the Baltic Cities
Długi Targ 24
PL-80-828 Gdańsk, Poland
Tel. / Fax +48 58 3010917
E-mail: ubc@itnet.com.pl
Internet: <http://www.ubc.net>

Attention all Commissions and member cities!

Remember to check that your contact names and addresses are correct in the UBC www homepage. Please make all the necessary changes and corrections directly through the web to the infomaster.

Commissions are also requested to immediately update their own pages. The UBC site is at your service!

www.ubc.net



INTRODUCTION TO UBC COMMISSIONS

- Let's keep the wheels running!

Today the UBC has eight different commissions on business co-operation, communication, culture, environment, social affairs, sport, tourism and transportation.

Much of the work of the Union takes place within these commissions. They have numerous activities in their respective fields ranging from music festivals and sports events to concrete projects and training seminars.



But even an energetic and innovative commission without active member cities and partners is like a bicycle without wheels, so it is up to our devotion to keep

these vehicles on the right track and moving.

The following pages aim at briefly presenting the different commissions and their activities. Everyone is encouraged to contact the commissions and join their activities. And remember, the commissions have been established to promote cooperation between the UBC member cities. Now it is your time to utilize this opportunity!

COMMISSION ON BUSINESS COOPERATION

The Commission on Business Co-operation is the newest UBC Commission. It was established at the General Conference of the UBC in Gdańsk in September 1997. The City of Stockholm will invite the board members to a preparatory meeting in Stockholm in the beginning of 1998.

Ms Lillian Westerberg
SML
Box 127 12
S-11294 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel. +46-8-785 80 08
Fax +46-8-654 93 56
E-mail: lillian.westerberg@sml.stockholm.se

experiences, bringing up new initiatives and creating impact on joint projects. It may improve possibilities to take part in the EU funding of large and small scale projects with focus on internationalisation of enterprises and the developing of business networks in the region.

Background and ideas

Several members of the UBC prosecute an active networking today to promote business contacts with the cities they have a formal twin city cooperation with. Besides that many members participate in joint business arrangements like the Hansa Days in Kalmar, The Business Convent in Karlskrona and others. There are some ongoing multilateral projects such as "The UBC-EU information Project" with focus on the information technology and EU-association.

The organisation has a huge potential as the platform for mutual initiatives in the fields of business development and match-making activities in the Baltic Sea Region. Several arguments are put forward that this structure can efficiently be used as an initiator and applicant in projects with EU-funding within special programs such as Cross Border Co-operation, Baltic Small Project Facility etc. The Interreg-initiatives also open new possibilities to initiate and finance joint projects.

A future Commission on Business Co-operation could be used like a:

1. Opinion making organ in all questions concerning business development and trade in the region.
2. Organizer of contact meetings like the INTERPRISE for individual companies
3. Initiator of business conventions of all kinds
4. Promoter of trade fairs of international importance in the region
5. Project manager in multilateral projects in the field of business development, institution building or business education
6. Applicant in the EU-projects that promotes business cooperation in the region.

Working with these issues in a more organized way, in a specialized commission, gives the member cities a better possibility of exchanging



COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATION

Leading cities are Kalmar and Riga and the other cities are Gdańsk and Tampere. Chairman is Lars Malmberg, Kalmar and the other members are Viktors Buls, Riga, Elżbieta Stangret, Gdańsk and Sonja Hilavuo, Tampere. Sonja Hilavuo is also the chairman of the UBC Task Force which works closely with the commission.



The commission has put up its goals for the next period; developing the internal Internet network and connecting our net to the other major Baltic nets. 1997 was a break-through for the co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. At the UBC general conference a decision was taken to invite all major organisations to a round table discussion over future common work. One of the tools for this is the Baltic Sea Alliance, a platform for communication

between the major organisations, UBC, BSSC and BCCA. Co-ordinator General for the project is Sonja Hilavuo and the server is at the moment located in Kalmar. As chairman for the Commission I represent UBC in the steering group.

In co-operation with the Task Force, the Commission has concluded a seminar in Kalmar in October for both Task Force members and a few internet specialists from the member cities. The aim is to build up an Internet-Team, much of the same type as the Task Force to develop the UBC net technically. The ultimate aim is to build up the best Internet system in the Baltic. The address of the server is Balticsea.net and it demonstrates the platform character of the project.

But to be able to present the best information, that means correct and updated, every member city must take its responsibility. The system is not better than its weakest link. The commission is therefore working hard to find money for two further seminars in 1998, for the forthcoming Internet-Team and one for the Mayors of the UBC. The Commission will also, together with our partners in



*Mr Lars Malmberg,
Chairman of the Commission*

BSA go for EU-money to be able to give courses for how to use the net in the best way and to make it more professional in the future. The commission will also try to develop the Internet network together with the other commissions.

Further information:

UBC Commission on Communication
Lars Malmberg
Kalmar City Hall
Box 611
39126 Kalmar, Sweden
Tel. +46 480 83494
Fax +46 480 83493
E-mail: lars.malmberg@kommun.kalmar.se

COMMISSION ON CULTURE

UBC Commission on Culture intends to enrich cultural life of the citizens living in the area of the Baltic Sea. The aim of the Commission is to stimulate and coordinate culture and art projects, events and cooperation especially among UBC members to enrich contacts and develop joint cultural projects.

Cultural collaboration due to the networks of contacts is a perfect tool for enlivening of mutual understanding, knowledge of history and the cultural background of the Baltic. The promotion of the contemporary art and artists, as well as of the historical and cultural traditions in 10 different Baltic countries could help us to break the former walls between countries, nations, cities and ordinary people around the Baltic Sea.

The second goal of the Commission is to provide and disseminate information on cultural activity in the Region. The

Commission works according to the Action Plan which is prepared every two years. The Commission on Culture looks forward to the more efficient co-operation within UBC city members. The Commission is chaired by Mr Sławomir Szafranski (Szczecin) and Mr Olov Gibson (Visby). The Secretariat of the Commission is financed by the City of Szczecin and led by Ms Magdalena Lewoc and Ms Marlena Chybowska.

UBC Art & Culture Festival

The festival is the most significant culture event initiated by the Union.

Until now it has been organised by: Kaliningrad (Russia) in 1993 and 1994, Szczecin (Poland) in 1995 and 1996, Gdynia (Poland) 1997. In 1998 the festival will be probably realised jointly by Szczecin - The Baltic Theatre meetings and Klaipėda (Lithuania) - Off-



*Mr Sławomir Szafranski,
Chairman of the Commission*

theatre days as a promotion and presentation of the Baltic dramaturgy and interesting performances.

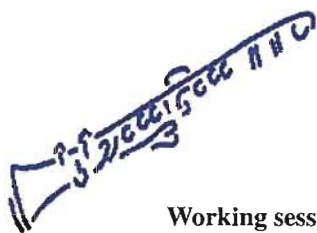
Dissemination of information

In 1995 the UBC Catalogue of Cultural Institutions was published by the city of Visby. The catalogues includes contact addresses and descriptions of over 650 municipal culture offices, art Centres,

museums, libraries, art schools and other culture institutions. The catalogue is also available on UBC Internet homepages www.ubc.net. The UBC Calendar of Cultural Events is presented under the same www address being updated twice a year.

MARE ARTICUM - Baltic contemporary art magazine

Szczecin is an initiator and coordinator of that project. The main purpose of the magazine is to initiate a joint discussion and to establish a promotional tool for the under-developed artistic movement in the Baltic region. The first issue was published in September 1997.



Working sessions

The Commission co-ordinates the international working sessions which focus on different cultural topics and helps to establish the international networking groups. Until now the following sessions have been held: 1995 in Szczecin to discuss the possibilities of co-operation in the field of culture, 1996 in Visby (Sweden) on the theme "Freedom of expression Information Library" when the UBC Library Network has been established. The 1998 session in Kaliningrad will focus on Artistic

Education and the Scholarship System in the Baltic Countries. One of the goals of the session is creation of a working group for facilitating the future co-operation between artistic schools and publishing a catalogue of art. and music schools and colleges in the UBC cities. For 1999 in Kalmar the proposed theme "Protection of cultural heritage"

Further information:

UBC Commission on Culture
Mr Sławomir Szafranski
City Hall
Pl. Armii Krajowej 1
70-456 Szczecin, Poland
Tel./Fax +48 91 245650
E-mail: slawomir.szafranski@um.szczecin.pl

COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT

The Commission on Environment aims at increasing cooperation and the exchange of experiences and know-how between cities in the field of environmental protection. The focus is on environmental issues that are relevant from the member cities point of view, e.g., traffic, treatment of contaminated soils and management of environmental issues.

The Commission on Environment is chaired by Mr Carl Nielsen from Aarhus and Mr Mikko Jokinen from Turku. Mr Peter Gavelin from Sundsvall is the third person belonging into the core group of the Commission. The Secretariat of the Commission on Environment is located in Turku, Finland, where UBC's Environmental Coordinator Esko Sorakunnas and Project Assistant Antonia Sucksdorff-Selkämä work on a full-time basis.

The Commission on Environment is currently working with the following topics:

Baltic Municipal Environmental Auditing (MEA) Project

The MEA project has developed a model for municipal environmental auditing in Baltic cities, tested it in Tallinn and disseminated it to interested cities in the Baltic Sea Region. The first phase of project will be finished by the end of



Core group of the Commission on Environment, from left to right: co-chairmen Mr Mikko Jokinen and Mr Carl Nielsen together with Mr Peter Gavelin from Sundsvall.

November 1997, but it is followed by the implementation phase when UBC member cities are expected to adopt the model and use it in auditing their own city. The project has been financed by the EU's Life-fund, the World Bank, Finnish and Estonian Ministry of the Environment and the participating cities.

Harbours and the Environment in Finnish-Swedish Archipelago

This new project, started in August 1997, aims at creating a common environmental policy for the harbours and ships in the Archipelago Sea between

Finland and Sweden. The cities involved in this project are Turku and Mariehamn from Finland and Stockholm from Sweden. The project is financed by the participating cities and the EU's Interreg II A programme.

Seminar on Contaminated Soils

The Seminar on Contaminated Soils is going to be arranged together with ECAT Lithuania in Lithuania 20-22 February 1998. Methods for surveying and monitoring potentially contaminated sites, different remediation methods as well as financing of remediation activities

are the main themes of this seminar. This is the last event in the environmental training programme carried out by the Commission on Environment with financial support from The Nordic Council of Ministers.

Baltic 21 and Baltic Local Agenda 21 Forum

The Commission on Environment has participated in Baltic 21, the process of creating an Agenda 21 for the entire Baltic Sea Region. In addition, it has been actively involved also in the Baltic Local

Agenda 21 Forum, which is a recently established network to support Agenda 21 activities in cities and municipalities around the Baltic Sea.

Baltic Cities Environmental Bulletin

The Commission on Environment publishes an environmental bulletin four times a year. The bulletin focuses on environmental issues that are relevant from the cities point of view, e.g. waste management, traffic and Agenda 21. The edition, 2.500 copies, is distributed to environmental experts and decision-

makers in the Baltic Sea Region. *All UBC members are encouraged to send material to be published in the environmental bulletin.* Also, if you would like to receive the bulletin, please contact the UBC Commission on Environment.

UBC Commission on Environment
Linnankatu 61
20100 Turku, FINLAND
Tel. +358 2 230 2030
Fax +358 2 253 8613
E-mail: esko.sorakunnas@pp
weppi.fi

COMMISSION ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The Commission on Social Affairs is chaired by Mr Ulrich Baeurmeister from Rostock and Mr Michael Bouteiller from Lübeck. The secretariat of the Commission on Social Affairs is financed by the city of Rostock and Ms Petra Hamann and Ms Karin Wohlgemuth are responsible for the secretariat.

The Commission on Social Affairs has very actively developed new project ideas, applied for funding from different EU programmes and successfully carried out projects. The following is a short summary of the main activities.

The EU PACTE Project "Baltic Cities"

The project was launched in May 1996. Participating cities are: Helsinki, Storstrom, Kalmar, Lübeck and Rostock. The main aim of the project is the exchange of experience in transnational employment development between the Baltic Cities. The project budget is 131900 ECU. The projects includes seminars in each city, workshop, conference, exhibition and a brochure. The project ended in September 97.

Conference on "Labour Market and Social Policy" in the Baltic Sea region

The conference took place in March 1997 and was a part of the above mentioned project. 120 participants from

9 Baltic countries and approximately 35 cities participated.

ECOS-Ouverture project "Baltic City Tourism"

The project application has been prepared in July 1997. The project aims were developed directly from the results of the BALTIC TREFF workshop. The Baltic Events Calendar "What happens in the Baltic?" shall be distributed around the Baltic Sea region. The Commission expects to obtain EU grants in order to perform this project from the beginning of 1998.

Baltic Bicycle Ride for Charity

The bicycle ride went around the Baltic Sea, through Germany, Poland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Finland, Sweden and Germany. A group of Rostock citizens started on 16 June 1997 taking with them goods dedicated to three orphanages in Stegna / Poland, in Kaliningrad / Russia and Riga / Latvia. The goods which came from Rostock inhabitants, were successfully delivered and gratefully accepted.

New activities from the Commission on Social Affairs

During the IVth UBC General Conference it was decided to extend the profile of the Commission's work towards social and health promotion



Mr Ulrich Bauermeister, Chairman of the Commission

problems. We approached the WHO sub-regional office for the Baltic located in Turku, Finland in order to find out about their work and to use the already existing networks and sources. The answer was very positive and our first meeting will be in Rostock on 5th of December.

One of the main tasks of our commission will be the creation of different networks for persons responsible for health and social welfare and services; exchange of information and experience; training of specialists of hospitals, homes for elderly and disabled; raising of public awareness to diseases like cancer, AIDS and drug abuses through publications, teaching training courses.

Today's introduction of the Social Market is one of the results of our new ideas and work. In order to make it work, we need your help and assistance - we kindly ask all of you to answer a questionnaire which will be sent to you in the near future.

UBC SOCIAL MARKET PLACE



Dear Friends - Citizens of 79 Cities around the Baltic Sea, through radio, TV, newspapers and sometimes personal experience we are very well aware of social and health problems facing some of our member cities. We have to do something about that!

Let us help each other to fight problems like: poverty, drug abuse, neglected homeless children, insufficient health care, badly equipped houses for senior citizens and disabled persons, high rates of unemployment.

Some of you surely can share gained knowledge and experience in fighting these our common problems. Or maybe you can spare medical, technical and school equipment, medicines, computers or other material for those in need?

Let us start to help!

Feel free to name your most desperate needs - write about them to our UBC Social Market Place. Or advertise used medical, technical and school equipment, that you could donate to other users. Your announcements will be published in the Social Market Place in this bulletin.

For further information:

UBC Commission on Social Affairs
Petra Hamann / Karin Wohlgenuth

Neuer Markt 1
D-18050 Rostock, Germany
Tel. +49/381/381 1452
Fax +49/381/381 1913
E-mail: rostock@compuserve.com

COMMISSION ON SPORT



Mr Zdzisław Urla, Chairman of the Commission

The UBC Commission on Sport was established to stimulate and strengthen the relations between young participants in various individual and collective sport, to create a peaceful and harmonic relationship between young people in fields of sport, to spread information about UBC activities. It is chaired by Mr Zdzisław Urla from Gdynia. The Commission on Sport has a secretariat in Gdynia, which is financed by the city. Deputy Chairman is Mr Björn Fries from Karlskrona.

The activities of the Commission on Sport enables young people to participate in many events all around Baltic. During 1996 and 1997 several sport events took place under the flag of UBC Commission on Sport. The major events were:

- Grant Prix Regatta in windsurfing in Leba

- Christmas Football Games in Karlskrona in 1996
- Twin Cities Sporting Competition, 1996 and 1997 in Gdynia.

The Commission will continue to arrange several smaller events every year under the flag of UBC Commission on Sport. In addition, it intends to hold one bigger official UBC Commission on Sport Games 1998.

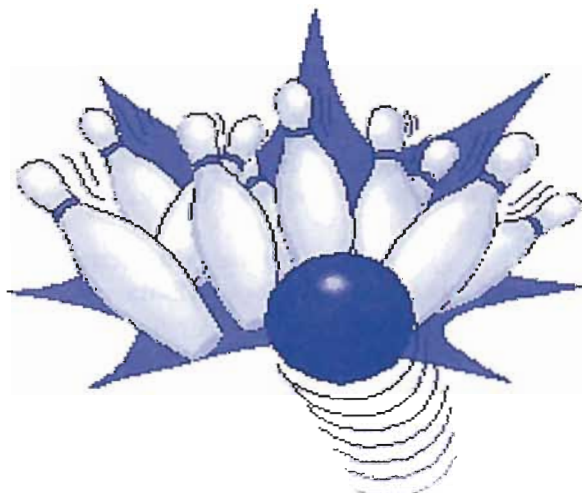
Currently 20 UBC Members cities participate in the work of the Commission of Sport, comparing to 10 at first meeting in Gdynia in 1995. The Working Group, created at meeting in Karlskrona, which consist of (except Gdynia) Turku (Ms Helena Kempas), Karlskrona (Mr Mats Persson), Šiaulai (Mr Kestuis Petraitis)

shall meet in Gdynia to discuss results of their work, which shall be submitted to the Commission during next meeting in Turku (arranged by Mr Perko fax: + 358 2 262 3255).

Further information:

Mr Zdzisław Urla
UBC Commission on Sport
City Hall of Gdynia
Al. Piłsudskiego 52/54
81-382 Gdynia, POLAND

Tel. +48 58 202513
Fax +48 58 216764
E-mail: umgdynia@miasto.gdynia.pl

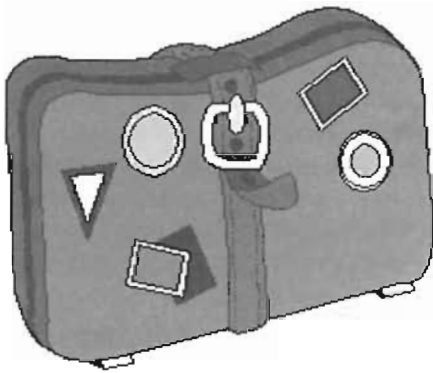


COMMISSION ON TOURISM

The Commission on Tourism was established in 1996 to promote tourism in the Baltic Sea Region. The focus is on education and development of sustainable tourism. The Commission on Tourism is chaired by Mr Leif Nilsson from Kalmar.

At the moment following cities are or want to be involved in activities within the Commission: Gdynia, Haapsalu, Kaunas, Mariehamn, Liepāja, Panevėžys, Palanga, Pärnu, Rēzekne, Riga, Rostock, Tallinn, Vilnius and Kalmar. The activities are mainly participation in projects proposals and some meetings.

The Commission is involved in two project proposals concerning education and seminars and the outcome shall be



presented in January 1998. The Commission has also been involved in a project in the Kaliningrad region for almost a year. This autumn representatives from the city of Baltijsk and the Commission have discussed a joint project and the first steps have actually been made to start writing a proposal.

During those two first years since the start of the Commission the main work has been writing or being a participant in writing proposals, being involved in one project and trying to start other projects. The Commission has also tried to co-ordinate some activities with Baltic Sea Tourism Commission (BTC). But the part of education which is so important has so far had no progress. Education programme courses have been tested, but a break through is far away. Or isn't there any demand for education?

A hope for the future is that the work with education will have greater progress because "Conditions are changing all the time, and to adapt one's thinking to the new conditions, one must study. Even those who have a better grasp and are more firm have to go on studying, have to absorb what is new and study new problems. We can learn what we did not know."

The Chairman, Mr Leif Nilsson describes his field, tourism, as follows:



Mr Leif Nilsson, Chairman of the Commission

"There is a lot to be said about tourism and tourism in education. Tourism can educate people, the tourist as well as the local people. It can give a lot of experiences by introducing people to other cultures. The new, rising trend is "ecotourism", which is about how to develop tourism and protect the ecosystem at the same time or even make them support each other. One of the crucial question is: Can tourism be developed in harmony with the local society and environment in a certain area?"

Further information:

UBC Commission on Tourism
Mr Leif Nilsson
Kalmar University
391 26 Kalmar
Tel. +46 480 446126
Fax +46 480 446475

COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION

The Commission on Transportation is chaired by Prof. Maciej T. Krzyżanowski, Gdańsk. The Commission on Transportation aims at improving, integrating and connecting



Prof. Maciej T. Krzyżanowski, Chairman of the Commission

the transport system in the Baltic Region better with the Trans-European Network. An important issue is the connection of waterborne transit chains of the Baltic Sea with inland transportation systems.

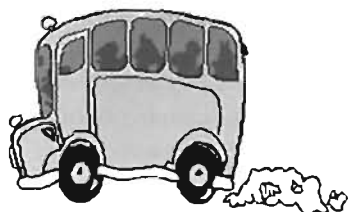
From the beginning of 1996 onwards, the Commission has continued to implement the recommendations of the UBC Conference on Actual Problems of the Baltic Sea-Land Transportation Systems held in Gdańsk, April 1995, as regards the Trans European Motorway North-South (TEM), Via-Baltica and Via-Hanseatica. The Commission has presented the following documents in 1996 as a basis for future work: "Development of land transport systems

linking a hinterland with the Baltic ports" and "Short Sea Shipping and Land Transportation Systems in the Baltic Region". In February 1997, the Commission established two working groups, one focusing on short sea shipping and the other one on public transportation reorganisation

Prof. Maciej T. Krzyżanowski describes the activities of this Commission as follows:

"The first steps for the activities of the Commission have been directed to the elimination of the infra-structural shortcoming and undeveloped transport networks existing between the cities of Gdańsk, Elbląg, Kaliningrad and other Baltic States. As a result, a regular railway

link between Gdynia and Kaliningrad has been opened, construction works on the the coastal road from Kaliningrad to Poland have been started and a regular air connection between the Baltic Cities has been established.



The growing increase in transportation demand and complexity of international transport operation in Europe include the application of intermodal solutions. The expected shift in the future towards road transport leads to increasing level of the environmental damage. The necessity of

activation of the Baltic Sea transport, having in mind the cargo transport, stimulated the Commission into organising the international seminar on "The transit chains in the Baltic Sea Region. The short-sea shipping in the Baltic" in Helsinki in June 1996.

The problem of the short sea shipping realized in a new form of the fast ships adapted to the market demand and ports activities is strongly supported by the European Union. The long distance bottlenecks, congested highways in the Western and Middle Europe, environmental problems and safety reason, including the lower costs of an operation in comparison with the other modes of transport, have created the necessity of the development of the modern system.

Problems which will be tackled by the Commission on Transportation in 1998 are:

1. Analytical studies on the economic effects of the modern fast ferries operated in the Baltic and Northern Sea.
2. Adaptation of modern systems of communication to city transport.
3. Concepts of creation of logistic centres in the developed ports of the Baltic Sea.

Further information:

Mr Maciej T. Krzyżanowski
 UBC Commission on Transportation
 Al. Niepodległości 780/3
 81-805 Sopot, POLAND
 Tel. +48 58 511247

THE UBC TASK FORCE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!

Each UBC member city is entitled to nominate one representative to the UBC



Task Force for Communication and Public Relations (TF). The TF is a functional group of contact persons who have the will and the skill to promote practical Baltic Sea cooperation between the UBC network and their own cities. Active involvement in the Task Force operations also guarantees a member city its place within the UBC main flow of communication.

Presently the TF has 60 members

The Task Force members are typically city officials responsible for international and/or public relations in their cities, as the aim of the TF is essentially to develop communication about international projects, partnerships, events and other developments regarding cities and the region. The Task Force membership is a great opportunity to a city, not an obligation - and already 60 persons from all over the region have taken up this challenge!

Many benefits to your city

The UBC is growing rapidly and so is the importance of the role of the Task Force. The TF is a right place for you if you want to:



*Ms Sonja Hilavuo,
 Chairman of the Task Force*

- search and identify right partners for different projects
- increase your direct contacts and connections to other member cities
- gain promotional possibilities for your city on national and international level
- build networks towards media, financial institutions and the European Union
- learn from the mutual exchange of experiences and practises

The Task Force meets once every year and the meeting in 1998 will take place in the City of Szczecin, Poland. We have our own action plan and mailing lists, so to find out more, please contact:

Sonja Hilavuo
 Chairman of the Task Force
 City of Tampere
 Box 487
 33101 Tampere, FINLAND
 Tel. +358 50 516 9111
 Fax +358 3 219 6252
 E-mail: sonja.hilavuo@tt.tampere.fi



III. Member Cities in Action



WELCOME TO... 1001 YEARS ANNIVERSARY OF GDAŃSK

Celebration of the 1000 years of Gdańsk lasted for many months, has just been finished. Last farewell events organised in order to meet different expectations and interests of as much large as possible audience took place on the 17th and 18th of October.

Plain-air events were reachable by everybody. The thousand flowers - symbolised by garlands of candles, torches and huge flaming constructions - went on fire in early evening along the banks of the old part of harbour. Visual impressions were supported by the psycho-delic music. Dramaturgy was completed by elements unexpected in scenery like: broken masts of lately saved sailing-boat and full moon raised above whole scene. The fireworks show was a culmination perfectly fitted to this fire poetics.

After the brake which allowed crowd to displace to the place near by the theatre, next fascinating performance of the French group Trans Express Circus has started. This spectacle was a mixture of the theatre, concert, circus and events „light & sound”. Suddenly music was heard among the audience and burning

platform-stages - where the actors dressed like in armours, or diving-dresses started their performance. Spectators were already inclined to become wearied with this part of spectacle, but their attention was arrested by big tubular construction reminding the pierced, transparent glass-cover, glass-bell?, flower? which was situated in the middle of the place. Prevailing actors, provided with sets of small and big bells, various percussion have fastened themselves to the ends of pipes of that machine.

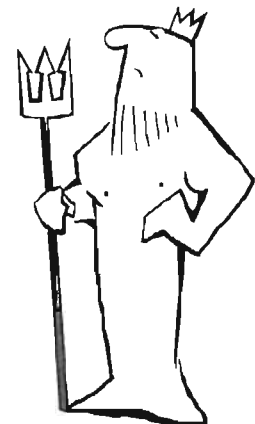
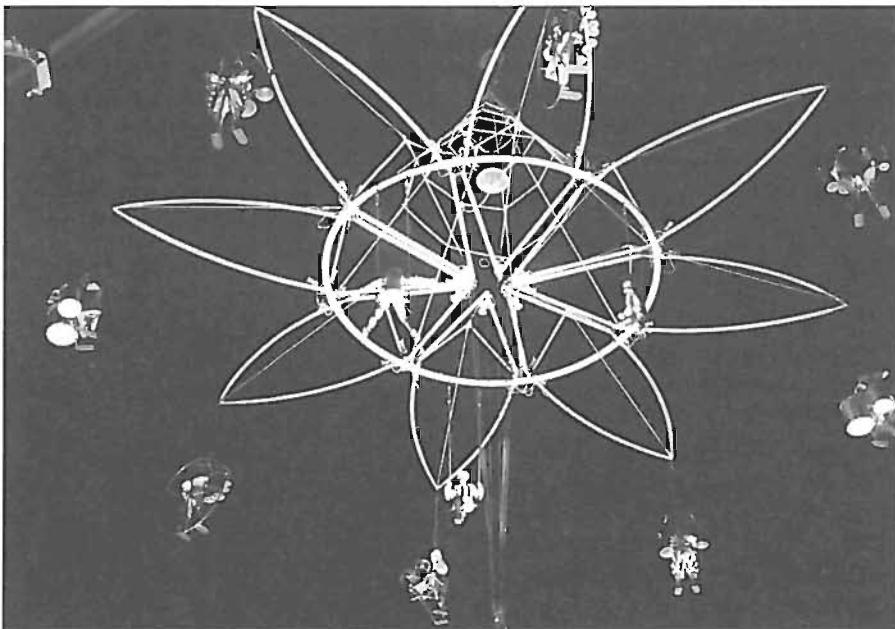
Unexpectedly the giant lift has carried up whole high above the place. There was a ravishing chiming-percussion concert above Gdańsk. On the level of 30 metres above the ground, tubular arms with musicians started to part. Acrobats making evolutions were hanging on the three trapezes in the centre of the construction. The atmosphere was emphasised by colourful beam of respotlights which was focused on this magic academy of movement, light and sound. Loud and long cheers were an applause for the bravado and beauty of the performance.

Only few noticed the Mayor of the City who, with his wife and daughter was happy to give the joy for the Gdańsk citizens.

The next day, there was the ceremonial concert of the contemporary music by Krzysztof Penderecki, conducted by the composer, transmitted by tv. Leaders of Polish politics and many music lovers were present at this event. The final chord, closing the millennial celebrations was the first performance of the „Hymn for St. Adalbert”, composed especially for this occasion. The Gdańsk Millennium started from the first description of the St. Adalbert mission and his death. As last that night, young citizens of Gdańsk were bidding farewell to the Millennium during the concert-party with the famous US3 group.

The authorities of Gdańsk do not want the curtain to drop over at this moment. Events of the millennial year have given the impetus for new initiatives and created new expectations. To meet them, on the base of gained experience, preparations for the new, annual rich offer of cultural events, are being developed. **You are welcome!**

by Jan Romeyko-Hurko



Fascinating performance of the French group Trans Express Circus impressed the hundreds of spectators at the final celebrations of Gdańsk Millennium.



DO YOUR INHABITANTS KNOW YOUR SISTER CITIES?

In Gdynia the answer is - yes. The city has decided that the best way to promote its partnership ties is through direct contacts between inhabitants of the twin cities.

The project Inhabitants' Exchange begun in 1995 by a three days visit of inhabitants from the sister city Kiel. During the stay the Germans visited the Tri-City (Gdynia, Sopot, Gdańsk) and the surroundings. A get-together party with music, dance and contests was also arranged. The stay in Gdynia arouse response among Kiels citizens and in May 1996 inhabitants from Gdynia visited Kiel. The group of 60 persons stayed at German families, participated in the very attractive tourist and entertainment programme as well as in an informal party for all the participants. This visit was co-financed by the European Commission Twinning Programme.



Citizens of Kiel visiting their sister city of Gdynia

In September 1997 the next visit of Kiel's inhabitants took place. The most important of all were the close

relationships between people which were established during that visit or continued from the former years.

A FURTHER STEP TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY IN KALININGRAD

Since the start of the transition of the Eastern European countries to market economies, traffic related environmental problems have increased enormously and become a serious challenge in the Kaliningrad area.

Kaliningrad as one of the most important links in the Baltic Sea Area for commercial activities between Western Europe and Russia is particularly affected by this development. Therefore, ECAT-Kaliningrad elaborated in cooperation with the City of Kaliningrad the project proposal "Sustainable traffic development in Kaliningrad City, Russia", which was accepted by the Life 97 programme. The general aim of this project is to assist Kaliningrad City in reducing traffic related environmental impacts and to support Kaliningrad's development towards a sustainable city. This will be done by:

- elaborating and implementing an integrated urban traffic concept

- establishing technical and environmental control of vehicles
- raising the public awareness for traffic related environmental effects

The integrated urban traffic concept for Kaliningrad City will be elaborated and implemented in close cooperation with the local authorities and the Zentrum fuer innovative Verkehrslösungen GmbH until August 1999 in five successive phases. In the first phase, necessary information and data will be gathered and analysed. Based on these examinations, an integrated urban traffic concept will be elaborated. In the following phase, the implementation will be prepared including a financing concept and the definition of priority measures. After evaluation and adoption of the concept by the responsible authorities and legislative bodies, the implementation of the concept will be started in the last phase.

For improving the environmental and technical control of vehicles in Kaliningrad, both investments for necessary technical infrastructure and development of human resources are required. The training

of experts according to western technical, operational and quality standards shall take place within the project. This is necessary in order to start the operation of the inspection station.

In order to raise the public awareness, an information campaign including various events and actions about traffic related pollution, the impacts of the pollutants on environment and health and about sustainable ways of transport will be organised during the following years.

By implementing this project, Kaliningrad will continue its development towards a sustainable city and contribute to a sustainable development in the Baltic Sea region as a whole.

Further information:

Dr. Ingrid Hofmann and Ms Olga Kovaleva
ECAT-Kaliningrad
Ul. Gorkogo 25
236040 Kaliningrad, Russia
Tel./Fax +7 0112 275110
E-mail: ecatk@online.ru



RESIDENTIAL RESTORATION PROJECT IN KALMAR

- Ecological and energy saving restorations of real estates within normal economic frames

Kalmarhem Corp. will carry through the restoration of a residential quarter, namely Inspektoren. The residential quarter was built in 1956 and it involves five three storeyed houses containing 159 flats, all in all approximately 7.000 m2. The big challenge of this project is to carry through the reconstruction with the biggest possible adjustment and adaptation to the environmental demands in the same time as the housing policy goals will be achieved.

Objectives of project

In connection with the restoration of an estate area from the 1950's:

* create and carry through different kind of methods for a total restoration in which reasonable improvements of the environment and energy savings are created without economic restrain of the



project;

* create and carry through method of measurements before, during and after restoration in order to establish general measures relating to environmental dumping, energy absorbing, noise and electromagnetic radiation.

* to give tenants increased influence during the restoration process;

* to give the tenants an opportunity to increase the level of environmental standards, in addition to general measures of environmental protection;

The project will involve transnational partnerships, including national entrepreneurs, municipalities and experts along with transnational housing firms with its horizontal partners.

Within the next twenty years, the needs of restoring houses and buildings from early 1940's to 1970's will be most urgent. Most of the houses and buildings are build in a manner that they are not responding to the modern societies

environmental and energy laws and rules. An important aspect of this project is therefore that these restorations will be implemented in a subversive way in order to reduce and lower environmental costs as well as energy consumption. It is also very important to look after that the rental charges stays on the same level, so they will not affect the communities expenditures.

To further broaden the project, we will now link some strategic and interesting transnational partners. They will participate in the development of this project whereas they contribute with their experience and expertise.

Further information:

Mr Tomas Eriksson, Kalmarhem
Tel. +46 480 44 75 00
Fax +46 480 44 75 19
E-mail: tomas.eriksson@kalmarhem.kalmar.se



KAUNAS WATER AND ENVIRONMENT INVESTMENT PROJECT

Two years ago Kaunas Water and Environment Investment Project was started. The goals of the project have been to build a waste water treatment plant, to renew pumping stations, the network of urban water-supply and sewerage systems, and to implement a programme for water saving.

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania has financed more than a half of the project. Other co-financers are Kaunas City Municipality, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, EU-PHARE, SIDA, NEFCO and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment. Some of the means needed will be gathered by increasing the tariffs for water supply and sewerage in the City of Kaunas.



Sewage treatment plant in Kaunas is scheduled to be in full operation in May 1999.



Almost half of the project means were used for the construction of a waste water treatment plant. The construction works began in 1992. At the present it is prepared to construct the mechanical equipment. It is foreseen that the plant operation will begin in May, 1999.

At present two urban water-supply pumping stations are already in use and the other pumping stations are under

preparation. A renovation project for urban water-supply and sewerage networks will be prepared by a Swedish consultative company, and it will be ready by 1 December, 1997. Means for the network renovation will be gathered from the increased tariffs.

A water saving programme for the city was ready in July, 1997. Water meters will be bought and an account system for

computers, "SKALA", has been installed in the closely joined stock company. This system has improved the work effectiveness.

Thus, the project is under successful execution and Kaunas can already feel some of the results. More significant changes are expected in May 1999, when the waste water treatment plant will begin its operation.



THE SIMON DACH HOUSE IN KLAIPĖDA

The Simon Dach House in Klaipėda, established in a reconstructed house from the beginning of our century, was opened in October 1996 as a German-Lithuanian meeting-place. The house is mainly funded by the German government and gets also support from the German Embassy in Vilnius and the Goethe Institute in Riga.

The house is named after the Memel-born German baroque poet Simon Dach (1605-1659), professor at Albrecht University Königsberg and author of many hymns. His most famous poem "Ännchen of Tharau", written for the marriage of Anna Neander, is a quite popular German folksong today. In 1912 the citizens of Memel erected a fountain with a statue of "Ännchen" and dedicated it to the great son of the city. The Simon Dach House is situated only some minutes away from this statue, which, right in the heart of the old city, has become Klaipėda's symbol and a tourist attraction.

Despite the awful events during World War II and in post-war time, at the end of the eighties a comparatively high number of Germans and people of German origin could still be found in Klaipėda, formerly known as Memel. After restoring Lithuania's independence, those people were given the opportunity to assemble publicly without fearing political persecution any longer. In the newly-created democratic atmosphere the Society of Germans in Klaipėda was founded, which at the moment boasts a membership of over 400.

With the opening of the Simon Dach House, the Society of Germans obtained a respectable home with all kinds of facilities. Furthermore, it houses the editorial office of the society-owned monthly paper "German News for Lithuania", which appears both in German and Lithuanian, and a library with German books and periodicals from Germany and German minorities in other parts of the world.

Apart from it, the Simon Dach House seeks also to develop an open cultural centre for everyone interested in German history, culture and today's Germany, no matter what nationality he/she is. It organizes concerts, exhibitions, lectures and readings, invites artists from Germany, shows German videos (feature films and documentaries). The Simon Dach House provides information about Germany and helps Lithuanian partners to get in touch with various institutions in Germany.

Last not least, the Simon Dach House sees itself as a mediator of different ethnic minorities living in Klaipėda. It tries to establish contacts between them and helps to find ways of integration into the Lithuanian society.

Further information:
 Silke Brohm
 Simon Dach House
 Jūros g. 7
 LT - 5800 Klaipėda, Lithuania
 Tel./Fax: +370 6 311 481



NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR SENIOR CITIZENS BETWEEN LÜBECK AND KOTKA

A new type of partnership for senior citizens in Baltic cities conveys better knowledge on social and cultural aspects of current life in our European towns to the participants. This senior citizens partnership ("Seniorenpartnerschaft") is going to be continued in Finland in 1998, and one

of the topics will be the life of senior women in our cities.

The first idea to create a new partnership of senior citizens in towns around the Baltic Sea arose in the end of 1995. The existing partnership between Lübeck and Kotka helped us to contact our Finnish friends, and so a new project was

put into practice: in October 1996 a group of Finnish visitors came to Lübeck to discuss in a colloquium the different aspects and problems of social and cultural life of senior citizens.

The background of this new partnership:

1. Demographic investigations show a



continual change in European societies, and statistics predict that in 2030 the senior citizens (50 years and over) will constitute nearly 40% of our population in Germany. We want to discuss the consequences as to political and social life in the whole society.

2. Political topics concerning the everyday needs of older inhabitants of the cities are social and political topics as well. We want to know and understand, how senior citizens live in countries around the Baltic Sea. And we want to find out, how certain problems are solved elsewhere. Maybe we can support each other by crossing our geographical borders.

3. A very important subject is the exchange of knowledge and experience with younger generations. There are different kinds and possibilities of communication among people of the same age and between the old and the young. We communicate via exhibitions, senior-theatres, "markets of knowledge" organized by senior citizens, visits to history classes at school etc. We want to give each other new ideas how to communicate generation-wide.

4. And last but not least we want to have fun together, and we want to learn a bit about Baltic states. Here are some of the items of the last agenda in 1996: we showed our guests, how senior citizens live in Lübeck; we had discussions with political senior citizens delegates, members of the "Seniorenbeirat", and we debated voluntary working in social organizations; we visited an exhibition on art and craft objects created by senior hobby-artists.

Our next colloquium will be held in Kotka in Finland, if we solve the serious problem, how to raise money for the expensive journey. We are a mixed group of very engaged pensioners and of younger, still working people. We always welcome new members, and if you are interested in more information, or if you even want to join our next meeting, please contact:

Dr. Iris Knoop
Tel. +49541/477394



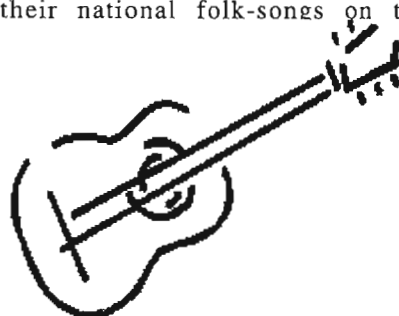
INTERNATIONAL CHOIR FESTIVAL PÄRNU 98 ON 10-13 JULY 1998

For the second time culturally active persons in Pärnu are arranging a grand event for everyone who cares about songs and singing.

The first choir festival in 1996 with over a thousand choir singers from Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Finland, Norway and other countries was an excellent affirmation for Pärnu that such events are unique opportunities for amateur choirs. Owing to the success of the 1996 festival Pärnu has enough courage and potential to arrange a new one.

Similarly to the first choir festival the city offers the choirs an opportunity to perform in the best concert halls and open air stages in Pärnu. There are no restrictions as to the repertoire - everyone has a chance to present their originality. Trips to different parts of Pärnu County will be organised in order to make the performances of the choirs more varied.

The programme of the festival is arranged in the same way as during the first festival with the Day of Town and the Day of the County and Song Festival; the latter will also serve as a festive farewell event. The intention is also to continue with the competition of folk-songs. Last time there were eleven choirs from Estonia and the same number from abroad taking part in the event and competing for the title of the best performer of folk songs. Hopefully there will be many more choirs willing to sing their national folk-songs on the



IMPORTANT CHANGES IN ŠIAULIAI

Siauliai International Airport Opened

Šiauliai International Airport was opened on 28 August 1997. The biggest airport in the region has been reconstructed by Philips. In the first stage of reconstruction comprising ten years the airport will be able to accept at least 50 planes a day. Philips installed the most up-to-date lightning, navigation, communication and meteorological systems as well as equipped the Air Traffic Control Tower, which has been designed, built and installed by local construction companies. Šiauliai International Airport is now waiting for customers.

Free Economic Zone

In 1993 city authorities initiated the establishment of a Free Economic Zone in the neighbourhood of Šiauliai airport. The Parliament passed the Law on the

Fundamentals of Free Economic Zones and a special Law of Šiauliai FEZ in 1995 and 1996 respectively. On 9 January 1997, USA-Lithuanian Joint-Stock company "Šiauliai skrydis" won the international tender for the best business plan of FEZ development and was approved by the Government as FEZ administration company in September. The main shareholder of "Šiauliai skrydis" is the Baltic Fund which is registered in Delaware, USA.

A Brand New University in Siauliai

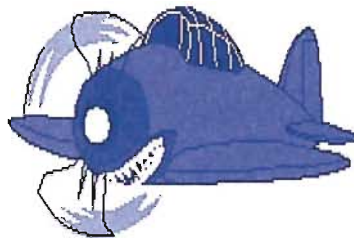
On 1 September 1997, a brand new University in Šiauliai opened its doors to the students. This university has appeared by joining Šiauliai Pedagogical Institute and Kaunas Technological University Šiauliai Branch. Šiauliai University has now about 13 new specialities, 28 departments and more than 3 000 students. The idea that inspired the



establishment of Šiauliai University is based on the aim to attract young people of the region, grant them a University degree and prepare specialists for local labour market.

Holiday of Friendship in Šiauliai

On 24 October 1997, Šiauliai and Pärnu



celebrated the 30th anniversary of friendship and co-operation between the cities. Jelgava, the sister-city of Šiauliai in Latvia, was also invited to this holiday of friendship. Politicians and public officers shared experiences, played basketball and football and were happy just being together.



NEWS FROM STOCKHOLM

Cultural Capital of Europe 1998

Stockholm has been designated the Cultural Capital of Europe 1998. During that year there will be many interesting and exiting cultural arrangements taking place in the city. The final programme was presented in October 1997. Information on activities can be found on the homepage: www.stockholm98.se

Sail Stockholm 1998

During the summer of 1998, when Stockholm is the Cultural Capital of Europe, many of the world's largest and most beautiful tall ships will visit Stockholm during Sail Stockholm 98. At least 50 ships are expected to participate in the event that takes place on 16-20 July. Sail Stockholm 98 will create attention and many spectators will visit the bedding area during the event. Companies, organisations and the public are invited to participate in the event, sailing between harbours or on day-cruises.

Contact person: Torbjörn Bengtsson, Tel. + 46-8-785 80 06.

The Stockholm Days in St. Petersburg

During 21-23 April 1998, the City of Stockholm will organise an exhibition in St. Petersburg. The exhibition has two goals. The first is to support business contact between companies in the Stockholm and St. Petersburg regions. The second is to increase the knowledge of Stockholm among the general public in St. Petersburg and to support new and old links between these two cities.

The event is a joint project between the City of Stockholm and Bonnier Business Press Z.A.O. The exhibition will take place at the Manezh, an exhibition hall on the very centre of St. Petersburg.

Contact person: Jan Sjölin, Tel. +46-8-785 80 00

The Stockholm Environmental Business Days, in Gdańsk

To bring Polish and Swedish companies in the environmental sector

together and to celebrate the first millennium of Gdańsk, the City of Stockholm organises the Stockholm Environmental Days on 7-10 December 1997.

The Stockholm Environmental Business Days will arrange workshops in order to match companies with similar interests and to organise seminars on topics such as EU regulations and financial sources in the field of environmental protection.

Contact person: Irena Lundberg, Tel. +46-8-785 80 11



*Next summer the largest and most beautiful tall ships will visit Stockholm
photo: Jan Asplund*



TAMPERE MAJA - CULTURE AND INFORMATION CENTRE IN TARTU

Tampere Maja in Tartu is the City of Tampere's centre of culture, information and guest house, situated at Jaani 4, just 100 metres from the University at the heart of the historic city.



The building itself dates partly from the 18th century, though most of it consists of a log house built in the 19th century and modernized and taken into use in September 1997. The name of the house itself has its own nuance: Tampere Talo (Tampere Hall) in Tampere means the largest congress and concert centre in Scandinavia. So Tampere Maja (Tampere Cottage) can be seen as a smaller version of it in Tartu.

Tampere Maja has two double rooms for accommodation, a sauna, a meeting room and an exhibition and multipurpose hall, which all can be hired. Besides, there are two lodgings for students from Tampere who study at Tartu University, a travel agency and some business premises.

Tampere Maja is part of the wide twin town cooperation between the cities of Tampere and Tartu, which started directly after the regained independence of Estonia. The cooperation is moving from mainly concrete material assistance to more reciprocal activities, not only in the sphere of culture. In addition to the official forms of cooperation, joint

activities between different citizen organizations and even friendship relations between families are increasing more and more.

The first weeks of use have shown the necessity of Tampere Maja. The accommodation capacity has been almost fully booked, the meeting room and other premises have been in frequent use and the student lodgers have settled down. The staff of the house looks forward to the future with confidence.

The existence of Tampere Maja is proof of the established twin town relations between the cities of Tampere and Tartu, which will only be strengthened by the activities of the house.

Further information:

Lassi Saressalo
Director of Cultural Affairs
Tel. +358 3 219 6852
Fax +358 3 219 6756
E-mail: lassi.saressalo@tt.tampere.fi



VILJANDI FOLK MUSIC FESTIVALS

The Folk Music Festival is one of the largest and most visited cultural events in Viljandi that has already taken place every July since 1993. This folk music party lasts for three days and nights in the ruins of Viljandi Order Castle and at many cosy places in the old town. It is one of the summer top events which always turns out to be merry and popular.

In 1993, on the initiative of young folk musicians, a company of young folkmusicians was founded as well, and its aim was to introduce folk music to young people at seminars, concerts, festivals and camp sites.

People dealing with folk music all over

Estonia come to this Folk Music Festival. Within the years the festival has gradually become international - in 1996 102 performers from eight foreign countries participated in the festivities in addition to our own musicians. All in all the folk musicians from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Ireland, Hungary, Germany, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia have taken part in the festival.

Besides the concerts during the festival days, anyone can take an instrument in hand at beer yards or somewhere else and play alone or together with friends, paint in the open air, drink beer, etc. At the market of musical instruments one can buy and sell or just let the instruments be

repaired. At the same time folk music workshops are arranged, the most popular being Irish, Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish folk music.

The organizer of the festival is "Viljandi Folk Music Festival" with Ando Kiviberg, Marek Rätsep, and Ants Johanson. All young and talented folk musicians all over Estonia and elsewhere in the world are invited to the festivals.

Viljandi Folk Music Festival has been supported by Estonian Fund for Culture, Viljandi Town Government, Union of Viljandi Local Municipalities and Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Estonia. The next festival will be arranged on July 23 - 26, 1998.



WELCOME TO TURKU, CHRISTMAS CITY OF FINLAND



www.christmascity.com

The celebration of Turku, Christmas City of Finland, is an annual series of events over more than a month forged around the City's history, culture and Christmas traditions. This year, the Christmas City pageant was inaugurated on November 30th and will close on St. Knut's day on January 13th, 1998.

Turku was first proclaimed the Christmas City of Finland in 1996. The inaugural season's programme consisted of over 300 events run by thousands and followed by hundreds of thousands of people. This year's programme is even more varied. And for the future, Turku will also participate in the international Christmas City project "Destination Christmas" linking the Alsace region of France, and the cities of Bethlehem, Naples, St. Petersburg and Rovaniemi in Finnish Lapland. One of the project's goals is to create a common, international tourism product around the Christmas tradition.

Centuries long traditions as Finland's gateway to Europe and the country's former capital combine with Turku's contemporary culture to make the city the home of Finnish Christmas today. The best known of Turku's Christmas traditions is the declaration of the Christmas Peace on Christmas Eve. Turku is the only city in the Nordic countries where this declaration has continued unbroken since the Middle Ages.

The museums of Turku display old-fashioned Christmas table fare and arrange Christmas exhibitions and events. The Christmas City offers a special, extended programme on Independence

Day, December 6th, and on St. Lucia's Day, December 13th.

Beautiful Christmas carols are sung in all Turku churches throughout the Christmas season, in Finnish, Swedish and English languages. Turku Cathedral is Finland's national shrine, from where the Christian Christmas message has spread throughout Finland since the 13th century.

Turku Cathedral also conveys the Christmas message to all the peoples of the world. Along with the Christmas Peace declaration, the Appeal for Peace is another unique event that has developed in Turku. On Christmas Eve at noon, enlivened by festive music, Turku declares the Christmas Peace for the whole of Finland according to a mediaeval ritual from the Old Town Square.

And Christmas City events continue after Christmas, too. Among the highlights are the New Year festivities, Turku Castle Knight Days, a joyful St Knut's Day party and the Christmas season closing ceremony in the Market Square.



COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT IN VENTSPILS

Lately both governmental and non-governmental institutions have expressed their anxiety about the degradation of the ecological system of the coastal territories. Although the Latvian coastal zone has preserved countless places with unspoiled nature, still human activities have caused a large load on the coastal zone and the fragile ecological systems. The intensity of these activities has significantly increased during the last years.

Last July the project "Integrated Management and Running of the Coastal Zone" was launched for the Latvian part of the Baltic Sea coast. The project is financed by the PHARE programme and is supported by the World Bank.

The objective of the project is to work out a procedure and mechanism for the running of the coastal zone and management integration. In order to ensure a sustainable development and

environment protection of the coastal zone, the project provides a national and local action plan, preparation of investments and demonstration programme with an active participation of all interested parties.

The following issues will be harmonised in this plan:

- * What kind of development is needed ?
- * What kind of investments are needed ?
- * What and where should be protected ?
- * What kind of nature protection regime is necessary ?
- * How to coordinate different coastal zone plans if they represent different interests ?

The project will not replace, revoke or change the existing or future territorial, national, private or economical plans. It should formulate the directions and raise the public awareness as regards the coastal environment and its future.

Both local and governmental specialists of various qualifications, including Ventspils municipal experts, are involved in the development of the plan. The Irish Development Cooperation Agency (DEVCO) in cooperation with the Dutch Industrial Planning company (TEBODIN) give us technical assistance and consultations concerning the development of the project.





BALTIC CITIES ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN

4/97 AVAILABLE

Main themes:

- State of the environment in the big northern cities
- EU financing for environmental projects
- Blue-green algal blooms in the Baltic Sea
- Baltic Local Agenda 21 Forum
- Kristiansand - the environmental city
- Daugavpils - Tampere Water Works



Interested?

If you are not yet on our mailing list, please contact the UBC Commission on Environment:

Tel. +358 2 230 2030

Fax +358 2 253 8613

E-mail: esko.sorakunnas@pp.weppi.fi

or click www.ubc.net

Remember,
all member cities are
welcome to send material to
be published in this Bulletin!

INVITATION

BALTIC LOCAL AGENDA 21

CONFERENCE IN TURKU, SEPTEMBER 1998

Next year EU's Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign will hold four regional conferences in Europe. One of their aims is to act as follow-up meetings for the Aalborg (1994) and Lisboa (1996) conferences. One of these four events will be held in Turku, Finland in September 1998.

The Turku conference focuses on evaluating the final report of the Baltic Agenda 21 process from the local level point of view. One area of particular interest is how Local Agenda 21 work could be strengthened and accelerated in the Baltic countries, Poland and Russia.

Another goal is to integrate health issues to sustainable development in Baltic cities, which is emphasized by the WHO.

Baltic Local Agenda 21 Forum, which was established in September 1997, plays a key role in preparing the conference. During the winter, it shall compile a draft local level action plan for the entire Baltic Sea Region. This draft will form the basis for the Turku conference and it shall be finalized during the conference.

The conference will be organized in cooperation by the City of Turku, UBC, ICLEI, WHO Healthy Cities Programme, Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign,

the Association of Finnish Local Authorities, Finnish Ministry of the Environment and HELCOM. Financial support has been applied from the City of Turku, the EU and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment. More detailed information will be provided in the coming UBC Bulletins.

Further information:

UBC Commission on Environment

Tel. +358 2 230 2030

E-mail: esko.sorakunnas@pp.weppi.fi



Baltic Sea Events Calendar

NOVEMBER 1997

17-18 November, Tallinn
UBC Conference "The European integration in the BSR - a challenge for local governments"

24 November, Brussels
European Event - Promoting Sustainable Development and Local Agenda 21

28-29 November, Aalborg
19th Meeting of UBC Executive Board

DECEMBER 1997

5 December, Sodertorn
"Women actors around the Baltic"

8-10 December, Copenhagen
11th Meeting of HELCOM PITF

10-13 December, Helsinki
Baltic Sea Region Development and Urban Management Conference

JANUARY 1998

22-23 January, Riga
2nd Baltic Sea States Summit

FEBRUARY 1998

20-22 February, Birstonas
UBC Seminar on Contaminated Soils

MARCH 1998

10-13 March, Helsinki
19th Meeting of the Helsinki Commission and Baltic Environment Ministerial Meeting

20-21 March, Kalmar
20th Meeting of UBC Executive Board

APRIL 1998

23-26 April, Kaliningrad
3rd Working Session of the UBC Commission on Culture



ATTENTION Member Cities !!!

The theme of the next bulletin will be 'BALTIC CITIES BUSINESS COOPERATION' and everyone is welcomed to send material to be published in it.

The deadline for your contributions is March 10, 1998 - please respect it!

The Editorial Board wishes following contributions to the bulletin:

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

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

EDITORIAL BOARD



CITIES - MEMBERS OF THE UBC EXECUTIVE BOARD:



*The Editorial Board
wishes you
a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year 1998!*

Aalborg
City Hall
Rantzausgade 6
DK-9000 Aalborg, Denmark
contact: Ms M. Jensen
Tel. +45 99 311514
Fax +45 99 313132

Bergen
City Hall
Rådstueplads 6, P.B. 805
N-5002 Bergen, Norway
contact: Mr A. Øiestad
Tel. +47 55 566039
Fax +47 55 566917

Gdańsk
City Hall
Nowe Ogrody St. 8/12
PL-80-803 Gdańsk, Poland
contact: Mr A. Jankowski
Tel. +48 58 3020323
Fax +48 58 3020134

Kaliningrad
City Hall
Pl. Pobedy 1
RUS-236040 Kaliningrad, Russia
contact: Ms J. Matjushina
Tel./Fax +7 0112 215395

Klaipėda
City Hall
Liepų 11
LT-5800 Klaipėda, Lithuania
contact: Ms I. Jonaitienė
Tel./Fax +370 6 244795

Pärnu
City Hall
Uus 4
EE-3600 Pärnu, Estonia
contact: Mr T. Riimaa
Tel. +372 44 31497
Fax +372 44 31019

Rēzekne
City Hall
Atbrivoshanas Aleja 93
LV-4600 Rēzekne, Latvia
contact: Ms S. Jonikane
Tel/Fax +371 7 894615

Rostock
City Hall
Neuer Markt 1
D-18050 Rostock, Germany
contact: Mr U. Bauermeister
Tel. +49 381 381 1247
Fax +49 381 381 1903

Stockholm
SML
Box 12712
S-11294 Stockholm, Sweden
contact: Ms L. Westerberg
Tel. +46 8 785 8008
Fax +46 8 654 9356

Turku
City Hall
Kristiinankatu 1
FIN-20100 Turku, Finland
contact: Mr M. Jokinen
Tel. +358 2 2623412
Fax +358 2 2303518

PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Mr Anders Engström
Mayor of the City of Kalmar
Kalmar Kommun, Box 611
S-391 26 Kalmar, Sweden
Tel. +46 480 83500
Fax +46 480 83122

SECRETARIAT OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Mr Paweł Żabokliński
Secretary General
Długi Targ 24
PL-80-828 Gdańsk, Poland
Tel./Fax +48 58 3017637
Tel./Fax +48 58 3010917
Tel./Fax +48 58 3019123
e-mail: ubc@itnet.com.pl
http://www.ubc.net

BANK ACCOUNT OF THE UNION
BIG BANK GDAŃSKI S.A.
IV Oddział w Gdańsku
10401211-661416-132



Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is a network of currently 79 member cities from all 10 Baltic countries, with an overriding goal of contributing to the democratic, economic, social, cultural and environmentally sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.

The Union has based its operational activities on eight working Commissions on Business Cooperation, Communication, Culture, Environment, Social Affairs, Sport, Tourism and Transportation. The Commissions coordinate and execute specific projects, activities and special events. Each city is capable to have its own creative and fully independent input to the Commissions' work.

The Union has an observer status with the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Parliamentary Conference on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) and the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE).

The Union is open for new members. Any coastal city of the Baltic Sea or any other city interested in the development of the Baltic Sea Region may become a member of the Union by making a written declaration of its will to enter UBC.

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