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# BALTIC CITIES BULLETIN

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UBC

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CITIES

## LIVABLE CITIES FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGE GROUPS

AARHUS • ARENDAL • BERGEN • BERGEN AUF RÜGEN • CĚSIS • DARŁOWO • ELBLĄG • ELVA • ESPOO • GARGŽDAI • GÄVLE • GDAŃSK • GDYNIA • GOTLAND  
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# BALTIC CITIES BULLETIN



Dear UBC Friends,

The coronavirus outbreak has changed our lives dramatically. It deeply hit our families, societies, economies and daily life in the cities. This is the time, when unity, active citizenship and leadership of change are the crucial values paving the way to better tomorrow.

This extreme situation also effects UBC's work but by working harder for our societies and Baltic family we will contribute to a better development of the Union and its cities. Even though we must stay home, we keep together what now seems to be more important than ever before. We all share realities and experiences and, though the approaches and measures differ from country to country – we, as a family, reside in the same Baltic home. Unity and active citizenship are the keys to lock the door of the virus room and to end this hard period

in our society, which will surely be written in history books.

How will this story be remembered? This depends on us. More than ever before our societies need hope, patience and leadership. I have no doubt that you and your teams are the ones to deliver that. This difficult time of uncertainty calls for more responsibility, solidarity and patience, for mutual understanding and compassion. I believe that once what we are facing right now finishes, we will emerge of the situation changed and different, but much stronger than ever before. Baltic values will bring us through the hard today towards a better tomorrow.

In these uncertain times, as a network we should not only protect our citizens and empower medical systems, but also do our best to prepare our cities and UBC for the time after the crisis. The consequences of Covid-19 will be very visible in the economy and daily life, that is why we as UBC should invest our resources in exchanging good practices in European cooperation, build capacities of our staff and look for technological solutions to turn the crisis into opportunities as much as possible, and why not to use the UBC network for this in the upcoming years.

The decisions we make and the lessons we learn as one Baltic society are long-term. Exchange of views and practical solutions is of major importance, as we are all aware that the crisis we are facing today will have long-term consequences in the future. By keeping together, sharing our experiences and problem-solving approaches we will make the future of the cities and the region stronger than ever before. I want to express my support to all of you and your teams fighting day by day in the front lines of this battle with the invisible enemy. By being together, we are stronger than it!

The UBC tries to adapt to this extremely difficult situation. The meetings have been postponed or moved online. How will the pandemic influence the urban planning? This will be a topic to discuss in the future. Meanwhile, read how to create a livable city for all residents in the new Baltic Cities Bulletin.

Stay strong and healthy!

Warm greetings,

Mantas Jurgutis  
President of UBC



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# LIVABLE CITIES FOR

# RESIDENTS OF ALL AGE GROUPS

by Paulina Szewczyk, Deputy Director of City of Gdynia, City Planning Office  
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**Demographic challenges, technological innovations, lifestyle changes and climate change related risks force new strategies for our cities define new goals for the city planners and influence different activities in cities around the Baltic Sea. But still we want our cities to be „livable”. Livability defines the quality of place in the city, suburb or neighbourhood. The more users of different ages the place attracts, the better.**

As the UBC Planning Cities Commission promotes interaction and cooperation between Baltic Sea cities and towns in the field of urban planning and construction, the cities were invited to send their stories on the planning issues – projects and solutions facing those planning challenges. Despite those problems that we are facing today and the fact that most of us work in different circumstances, we have got many interesting and, what we all need now, optimistic stories. **I would like to thank you so much for that!**

Learning from each other is the essence of the UBC Planning Cities Commission work. I would like to mention that we have huge experience in exchanging knowledge through organizing very interesting seminars and workshops. I cordially invite to participate, as well as to host the seminar when we are back to „normal life”.

The stories you can read in this issue show that public space is central to livability in cities. For sure they contribute to the reputation of cities for vibrancy, as well as to the well-being of urban residents.

**Public space is considered a network or a sequence of streets, parks and other spaces regarded together as a kind of continuous circulation system in the city.** In this issue you will learn about how existing public spaces can be enriched by different interventions to make it more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists.

The city of **Elva** proceeds EV100 architectural program called „Good Public Spaces”. As one of the results, the city has got a new central square and the main street - Keskk street - renewed. It boosts/promotes walking and cycling as the mean of transport and attracted businesses along those public spaces.

Also „Public Space Operation Program” elaborated in the city of **Gdańsk** concerns public spaces. Within this project the city created a document called “Gdańsk Local Places System” - the guide line for city's departments to coordinate investment and for local community, to prepare Civic Budget applications regarding public space. The second elaboration of Gdańsk concentrates on local „green” spaces in the Buffer Zone of Tri-City Landscape Park. The intention is to create attractive places in this green area for all users.

The fact that public spaces need a holistic approach is reflected in the city of **Gdynia's** CLIMATic Central Gdynia programme, that the city has just started to implement. It is a complex programme enhancing the quality of public space to make it more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists, applying more features for the public transport, boosting the greenery and improving the quality of air by reduction of the traffic in the city centre.

Reducing the traffic influences the quality of life and makes public space more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists. The city of **Jūrmala** is the one that has experienced that. Read how, using the IT technologies, Jūrmala managed to reduce the flow of transport on the main streets of the city during the active tourist season, which undoubtedly also improved the quality of air.

Accessibility and connectivity of public space network can be optimized by appropriate streetscape design. The story „Design for All in Espoo” tells about applied procedure of re-



viewing the most important construction projects for accessibility in **Espoo** by a Group of people consisting of disabled persons, interest groups and selected city officials.

### **The public spaces network can determine the whole concept of the suburb or neighbourhood.**

The city of **Umeå** is now preparing the project in the northern part of Island, Ön, planned for 7000 inhabitants. What does it mean that it is planned for physical literacy? Read how the planners and architects from Umeå want to encourage movement in a completely new suburb.

A new district for 400 new homes and about as many workplaces is emerging right next to the city centre in the city of **Karlskrona**. This is a very interesting story about how to create a place appreciated by everyone in different ways and how to combine a good place to live for all age groups with being the entire city's new living room.

The public space is also important for planning new development in Visborg - former military regiment area south of **Visby**. You can learn how the artistic perspective can inspire the design, content and experience in creating the right conditions for new housing, preschools, service and recycling, all characterized by innovation, sustainability and a holistic perspective.

### **Green and open urban areas arranged to serve users of all ages, offering different kinds of activities also make a positive impact on citizens' life quality.**

The city of **Darłowo** tells us about modern parks that have been created - some of them were revitalized and another completely new park was created. They have a system of new paths, squares and offer different kinds of facilities so everybody can pick and choose different kinds of activities.

Everyone, at every age can also find something interesting to do in **Liepāja's** Horse Island. It will be interesting for you to read about a park where all people can combine pleasure of learning and discoveries in the NATURA 2000 area of nature with athletic activities and leisure.

In creating healthy communities, it is essential to optimise the use of the park spaces for recreation and physical activity by wide age range of users. Read the story about the City Centre Sports Block in the city of **Riga** - sports and recreation complex in the city centre that is popular among the parents with youngest family members as well as adolescents and seniors and gives opportunities for various activities.

It is obvious that water is essential for life. But it can also mean the livability of urban space. The city of **Koszalin** shares the experiences of implementing successful projects of public spaces where the river plays the most important role.

The greenery makes the public space more aesthetic and friendly, especially to the accompaniment of the floral compositions. The city of **Rostock** tells us about how the flowers can change the image of the city using as an example the promenade in Warnemünde, that has been enriched with colours and scents.

### **Public buildings are also the natural element of public space and more then often they become its natural continuity.**

Offering their programmes to the city, they improve the variety of activities attractive to people of all ages. A completely new building is going to be the gravity centre for the public space in the city of **Kaunas**. It is a very interesting example of design process taking into account the existing and planned public space network. It can become the element of urban space and a kind of landmark as well. How is it possible? I recommend reading a story about The Science Island in Kaunas. Read also about the other project in Kaunas - the new athletics arena that will provide new possibilities to do sports indoors.

The city of **Växjö** shares the project of developing and constructing a new City Hall as an integrated railway station, travel hub and municipal office. The idea is built in accordance with high environmental standards, work space design and modern building techniques. The aim is to create a positive and friendly space where everyone can feel comfort in a welcoming environment.

A very interesting example from **Darłowo** - the Culture Waiting Room, a completely new and popular place on the cultural map of Darłowo, has been created in a part of the former railway station.

Have you heard about „Sparkling spaces”? In **Arendal** 20 empty shops and buildings in the historic city centre are used for new concepts, jobs and cultural activities, also including newcomers and refugees.

### **Public spaces enhance social life, promote social interactions that contribute to city's livability.**

The city of **Arendal** is also sharing with us its other experiences: the „Get involved Arendal!” programme intended to create „a care for each other culture” and “People meet people” - meetings arranged in public places and indoor spaces, between newcomers in the city and people who have lived there for a longer time.

You can learn, how public space can give the beneficial opportunities for interactions between children, young people and older adults, reading about the intergenerational park - **Elbląg** Open Activity Zone. It is meant to promote social connections and participation through trust-creating actions so all residents can feel the sense of belonging.

There is a meeting place called Kemikammari in **Kemi**. It is open, free of charge, for everyone regardless of age, social situation, race and religion. Please read about the place that for some people is the reason to wake up, showing another dimension of public spaces in the sense of livability.

When planning, constructing or organizing the places to live in cities as well as places where the city life goes on, we always have to remember that we do that for the people - inhabitants and visitors - different ages, different lifestyles, different cultures. Making our cities livable is one of our most important goals. But thanks to all efforts of fantastic people working for the Baltic Cities we are on the right track. The stories you will find in this edition of the Bulletin prove that.

If you have any questions to the topic that is interesting to you, please contact the author. We really hope you will enjoy reading the Baltic Cities Bulletin and you will learn good examples of how to make your cities livable for all ages groups.



# TOGETHER

## PEOPLE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

by Lisbeth Iversen | [lisbeth.iversen@arendal.commune.no](mailto:lisbeth.iversen@arendal.commune.no)



Photo: Lisbeth Iversen

**Arendal has been involved in the planning process for sustainable future development and value creation. Initiatives have been raised both by the municipality and the inhabitants.**

The collaboration builds on a penta-helix model developed through the network “With a Heart For Arendal”, (MHFA) (Guribye, 2017). This started as a national pilot project in 2012, to develop a new welfare model and methods of co-creation and inclusion, connecting public sector and society. More than 100 organisations, the municipality, research, business and cultural actors are partners.

### Holistic approach

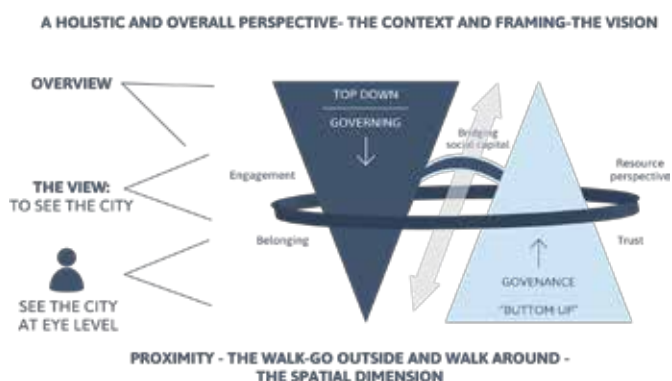
Arendal works through “Asset Based Community Development” (ABCD), peacemaking and co-creation approaches. The city wants to be both “local and global”, “social and digital”, by combining a holistic and proximal approach. A combination of digital ( Digital public meeting) and social meeting places were established to enhance and increase public participation and co-creation in the overall municipal social plan, based on the UN sustainability goals, with a specific emphasis social sustainability. Trust-building, ownership and broad and inclusive models for place-leadership, place-management and place-innovation were addressed.

“Get involved Arendal!” is one example of co-creation and place-making. The project was initiated in 2018 by the police to make the city centre more safe and attractive, raising awareness, clarity and visibility, taking a clear stand on illegal drugs. The project builds on the penta-helix model.

Arendal was a pilot city in the national pilot project Sparkling Spaces 2016-2018, initiated by DOGA, Norway. Multiple actors (Penta Helix) worked through an action-oriented and place-making approach. Together they succeeded in filling 20 empty shops and buildings in the historic city centre, with new concepts, jobs and cultural activities, also including newcomers and refugees.

“People meet people” is an ongoing project based on collaboration between the school of adult education, MHFA and the library. Meetings are arranged in public places and indoor spaces, between newcomers in the city and people who have lived here for a longer time. Through dialogue the city can develop itself to become a lovable and livable place for people, from all generations and all nations.

**Model developed by Lisbeth Iversen, Public sector PhD candidate in Arendal, at Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO), Institute for Urbanism and Landscape.**







# GREEN SPACE

## FOR EVERYONE

by Rafał Nagórski | [r.nagorski@darlowo.pl](mailto:r.nagorski@darlowo.pl)

**Darłowo designs public space so that it serves residents of all ages. In this meaning, the projects for creating new city parks and rebuilding the former railway station into a new place on the cultural map of the city were universal.**

For the 13,000 residents of Darłowo, the biggest challenge is the tourist season, when the number of people staying in the city increases several times. Tourists are looking not only for comfortable accommodation, but also for places where they can spend time interestingly. The strategy of urban development of the city is based on the one hand on preparing land for development investments on which apartments and hotels are built. On the other hand, the city must ensure that it creates a public space that meets the expectations of tourists and residents.

### Green Darłowo

One of the universal projects which meets expectations of this strategy was a powerful project with EU funding entitled "Green Darłowo". It assumed renewal and creation of new city parks together with infrastructure.

Modern parks have been created in four locations throughout the city. For example, the Marine Park covering an area of over 5 hectares located right on the shoreline has been completely revitalized. The park composition with the communication system in the form of paths, squares, elements of small architecture (benches, bins, bicycle racks, table tennis tables, chess tables, outdoor hammocks) and greenery were put in order. The whole was illuminated, the area was

covered by the monitoring system. There were picnic sheds, a playground, a dog run, an outdoor gym zone.

A completely new park was created in the district furthest from the shoreline - on an area of nearly 5 hectares. A system of new paths, squares with elements of small architecture (benches, baskets, bicycle stands) and greenery was created around the water reservoir. There is also a new playground, a dog run. The project ended in December 2019, its value is close to 8 million PLN, of which over 4 million PLN was a grant from EU funds. It strengthens the city's infrastructure and tourism potential.

### Culture Waiting Room

Another project completed in December 2019 and changing the public space of Darłowo was the reconstruction of the former railway station, which had been closed for years. Thanks to the EU subsidy, former waiting rooms, ticket offices, toilets have been adapted to the Culture Waiting Room, a completely new place on the cultural map of Darłowo. The area of the reconstructed rooms was 150 m<sup>2</sup>. A modern multi-functional room, kitchen, toilet and cloakroom are now available. The basic activity of the Waiting Room is to create conditions for the active participation of the inhabitants of the city of Darłowo (tourists) in culture, art, tourism and to co-create workshops and many other activities in which residents participate.





# NEW CITY CENTRE

# IN ELVA

by Kertu Vuks | [kertu.vuks@elva.ee](mailto:kertu.vuks@elva.ee)

Photo: Ragnar Vutt

**City of Elva is the heart of Elva Municipality in Estonia. This is a small (ca 5,500 inhabitants) green city and has always been a visitors' favourite place in the summer.**

Its two beautiful large lakes, that are located in the city centre, are loved by many tourists. It also has some quite remarkable and well preserved architectural masterpieces from the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## A new central square

In recent years the heart of Elva has undergone a makeover - we now have a brand new central square together with the renewal of our main street - Kesk street. This was possible because of EV100 architectural program „Good Public Spaces“. Its aim was to re-launch the centres and main squares of small cities in Estonia to honor the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Republic of Estonia. Together with Elva, city squares of Tõrva, Põlva, Valga, Võru, Rapla and Kuressaare were also completed. Five south Estonian squares (Elva, Tõrva, Võru, Valga and Põlva) will represent Estonia in Venice Architecture Biennale 2020.

Elva new central square and Kesk street were completed in December 2019. Project was funded by Elva Municipality and Enterprise Estonia – total cost was approximately 3,2 million EUR. Architects of the project are Ü. Maiste, D. Taalfeld, A. Saarniit, R. Helbre, T. Kuningas (AT HOME architecture bureau). The name of the renewal project is “Between the Currant Bushes” and it conveys to residents and visitors with the nature of Elva as a summer and garden city.

The result of „Good Public Spaces“ project are the open spaces that are used by Elva residents and also by tourists.

## Boost to the development

We have managed to increase the sense of unity in local community and made living environment more attractive. This new and well organized public space is also a new place for cultural events and spending free time - we have many attractions and a huge pedestrian area to boost walking and cycling as a way of movement in the area. The centre of the city is now used by so many people. Also some new entrepreneurs have started their businesses on Kesk street - for example Elva Bowling and Restaurant. In the next years new apartment house will be built as a result of architectural competition.

The living environment in the heart of Elva has changed a lot – now it is more usable for different age and interest groups due to leisure facilities and better organized public places.



Photo: Inna Inga Kalmus



# DESIGN FOR ALL

# IN ESPOO

by Samuel Tuovinen | samuel.tuovinen@espoo.fi



## Transportation design for all in the city planning phase begins with defining areas and routes of high and basic importance.

Public transportation terminals, city centres, retirement homes and health centres are automatically considered high accessibility areas.

### Special requirements

They entail a maximum gradient of 5% and physical separation between pedestrians and cyclists. Most commonly, a 20 cm wide embedded stone strip separates asphalt pedestrian and bike ways. The demarcation strip provides bottom-of-shoe-feel and white-cane-feel as well as a visual contrast. For the basic level, an 8% gradient is sufficient for a street. The side gradient may occasionally affect city planning being 2% and 3% for high and basic importance areas correspondingly. Pedestrian paths should have benches placed alongside to provide opportunity for rest.

### How does it work?

In the city of Espoo, the Built for All Working Group reviews the most important construction projects for accessibility. The group consists of disabled persons, interest groups and selected city officials. Recently, the group has commented on off-street and on-street drop-off and pick-up locations.

If overlooked, drop-off and pick-up locations are put inside parking facilities where the maximum vehicle height may not suffice for special needs taxis. In addition, as an indus-

try standard, every 30<sup>th</sup> residential parking space, and every 50<sup>th</sup> parking space for other land use is allocated for the disabled.

In addition, home care workers for the elderly have been demanding that parking spaces allocated specifically for them should be provided by the city, whilst the housing co-operatives manage on-site parking.

## A crosswalk in Espoo on Piispansilta street catering for the visually impaired with a 4 cm curbstone as well as with an embedded curb for walking-aids or baby carriages and eventually for bikes.







# MORE ATTRACTIVE LOCAL SPACES

by Maria Magdalena Koprowska | [maria.koprowska@brg.gda.pl](mailto:maria.koprowska@brg.gda.pl)

Photo: [www.drmg.gda.pl](http://www.drmg.gda.pl)

## Everyone can agree that the standard of public spaces influences the quality of residents' life and determines the perception of the city.

It is the reason why "Public Space Operation Program" is recognised and highlighted in the Gdańsk Development Strategy 2030 plus. Following the principles of Strategy and sustainable planning, Gdańsk Urban Development Agency is involved in preparation of two documents worth mentioning. Both programs concern public spaces located in the vicinity of housing neighbourhoods but they differ in approach and subject of the study.

### Projects for more friendly urban spaces

Gdańsk Local Places System elaboration shows the potential for development, attractiveness and directions of improvement for those public spaces. It can be a guideline for city's departments to coordinate investment and for local community, to prepare Civic Budget applications. With limited financial resources it helps to focus on the most promising and important solutions. Elaboration, as a result of local community workshops, is especially valuable in degraded and revitalised areas.

The second elaboration concentrates on local „green” spaces in the Buffer Zone of Tri-City Landscape Park. The intention is to create attractive places in this greenery area for all users. The way of development was the subject of many workshops and discussions with the local communities. The goal is to preserve the high natural values of the forest and at the same time make it available for residents it means keep the walking penetration on the edge of the forest. The

ongoing concept consist of 15 selected forest entrances and up till now three of them have been completed.

There is another interesting project closely related to local spaces in the Buffer Zone of Tri-City Landscape Park. The aim is to make walking in the forest more safe and attractive by creating view points and „opening” views of city landscape. Up till now 15 viewpoints have been open.

**Gdańsk Local Places System indicates almost 100 public places located in the housing proximity; they are important for local identity and everyday social local life. Picture: [www.brg.gda.pl](http://www.brg.gda.pl)**





# CLIMATic

## GDYNIA CITY CENTRE

by Paulina Szewczyk | p.szewczyk@gdynia.pl



Photo: City of Gdynia

**The city centre of Gdynia is going to become more vibrant, green and safe. At the end of January the Mayor of Gdynia, Wojciech Szczurek, presented a project called CLIMATic Central Gdynia.**

The assumptions of the project indicate solutions to be implemented regarding the resilience to climate change related risks. It also reflects the city's effort of being attractive, livable and accessible for residents of all ages.

### Climate-neutral city

CLIMATic Gdynia City Centre project is the element of the development and implementation of a climate-neutral strategy for the city. It aims at reduction in the intensity of carbon dioxide emission and improvement of living environment by increasing the urban greenery, convincing inhabitants to change their transport habits and making mobility sustainable, accessible to more people and integrated for higher overall efficiency.

There are 647 passenger cars per 1,000 inhabitants in Gdynia and this number is still growing. To reverse this trend, the project proposes attractive alternatives encouraging people to leave cars outside the city centre and start to use the public transport or other sustainable means of transport like car sharing, bicycles or simply walking. One of the key points is to integrate parking outside the city centre with public transport to reduce traffic. Choosing buses or other sustainable means of transport rather than a private car is going to be more profitable for users in terms of both time and money. The idea is also to improve public transport with reducing waiting and riding times for passengers.

However, it is equally important to improve the city centre visual image, its safety and attractiveness to different age groups – seniors and families with children, as well. Luckily, the modern tenement houses in the city centre, which the city is famous for, create human scaled pattern of plazas and streets so the implementation of the project doesn't require big reconstructions. Many of the wide range of planned activities are possible to implement through street-space interventions and changes in organisation of traffic.

### Modifying streetscape design

Unused spaces are going to be developed into green areas and spaces that can be safely used by pedestrians to walk or rest. Arranging space dedicated to bicycles, public transport/electric cars in the streetscape is expected to decrease traffic and unsafe driving behaviours and to increase the number of pedestrians. Introducing more one-way traffic streets, more bus lanes also contraflow lanes for buses and electric cars only, and finally - reducing the number of lanes used by private cars – these are actions favouring the sustainable mobility that aims at better quality of air in the city centre and better quality of life.

The demands of the city's inhabitants had been collected for months and then analysed carefully. Most ideas for the activities and implementations are obtained through investigating the people's needs. We believe, the interventions will make residents feel safer, and overall attitudes will be favourable. The program is going to be realized continuously in the next few years. The first activities started in March and the effects are expected before this year's summer holidays.



CAURLAIŽU  
IEGĀDE

# IT AND TRANSPORT MOVEMENT

by IT Team of Jūrmala City Council | [Iveta.Kelpe@jurmala.lv](mailto:Iveta.Kelpe@jurmala.lv)

**Jūrmala is a resort city on the coast of the Baltic Sea, and one of the strategic development goals of this municipality is to ensure high quality of life for its 57,000 residents, as well as visitors.**

The unique combination of nature and location makes Jūrmala an extremely attractive city for tourists, as thousands of visitors come every year to have a break from the everyday hustle and bustle. To regulate the movement of transport and to divert transit routes outside the city centre in the summer season (which is set from 1 April until 30 September), visitors must pay an entrance fee when entering Jūrmala. The responsibility of collecting the fee is taken care of by municipal services using various technological solutions. Thus, the flow of transport on the main streets of the city is reduced during the active tourist season, which undoubtedly also improves the air quality.

## How does the system work?

When entering the territory of Jūrmala, all vehicles are documented by cameras. After capturing the images, the registration number of a vehicle is determined with the help of special software. All arrivals are assembled in a single line and a valid pass is selected for each of them. There are five types of passes: one-day pass (2 EUR), 7-day pass (10 EUR), 30-day pass (31 EUR), 90-day or season passes. There are multiple ways to get a valid pass: it can be granted automatically, for example to persons registered in Jūrmala; it can be purchased electronically on [jurmala.lv](http://jurmala.lv) or [visitjurmala.lv](http://visitjurmala.lv) website, through the “Mobilly” mobile application or the Internet bank, or purchased by cash or card in the vending machines when entering the Jūrmala territory or in the city.

When buying a pass on the website, by sending a SMS from a mobile phone or using the vending machines located in the city, the most important thing is to make sure that the submitted registration number of the vehicle is correct. But even if any mistakes have been made, there is no need to worry, as there are different ways to correct them.

The municipality ensures the efficiency of this system: technical infrastructure, including data networks, recognition cameras and servers as well as appropriate software are used. The system keeps a list of vehicles that have entered the zone, and a second list of valid passes – the data is automatically compared. After the comparing process, a third list is created for vehicles with no exact registration number or a valid pass. After this the municipal police officers carry out manual number recognition, check if the vehicle is listed in any of the various registers, and find the owner of the vehicle or its holder. If a pass was indeed not purchased for the vehicle, then the owner must pay a fine for entering the city without a pass.

In order to create an operational system for acquiring, managing and controlling the passes, several existing systems were integrated, online links with state registries of persons, cars and other property were established, and new solutions were created for various system users. Most of the work was done in-house and the project was developed gradually on a step-by-step basis.

The project is constantly evaluated and improved to make the process of paying the symbolic entrance fee as comfortable as possible for visitors. Parking in Jūrmala is free of charge in all designated parking spaces!



# NEIGHBOURHOOD

## FOR ALL

by Ola Swardh | [ola.swardh@karlskrona.se](mailto:ola.swardh@karlskrona.se)



**A new district is emerging right next to the city centre in the World Heritage City of Karlskrona. About 400 new homes and as many workplaces are currently being built directly by the sea and the central station.**

The goal is to create a neighborhood that is attractive to as many people as possible to live in, but which will also serve as the entire city's new living room. The ambition is to create an appreciated place for everyone in different ways!

### Accessible architecture

The homes are planned to provide a variation between condominiums, rental apartments and a small number of townhouses. The district also includes both a larger retirement home and the possibility of a preschool in the best location next to the promenade. Offices, shops and restaurants are also available. Across the street there is a larger gym, which attracts visitors from all over the city. One way to ensure that the district is welcoming to everyone is to make sure that the homes are accessible for as many as possible. In Sweden, no specific standards are applied to different dwellings, but all are designed with high accessibility for people with mobility problems. In the Pottholmen project this is further improved by the majority of the houses being given entrances from both the yard and the street. Through the courtyard entrance, all stairwells are accessible comfortably and without stairs, with accessibility secured for temporary flooding from the adjacent bay. The entrances to the street ensure an increased public life, which makes the generous parks and quayside promenades as populated as

possible. For those of us who are not residents of the area, large pier decks, parks and promenades have been created in the district.

### Space for services

In the buildings along these areas there is room for various forms of service. Together with the marina planned at the northern end of Pottholmen, this will be an obvious place to stay during your free time! In everyday life, much of life will be around the central station, the World Trade Center, the other workplaces and around the gym.

A large part of Karlskrona's everyday life takes place here. Combined with pleasant environments and walking distance to all of central Karlskrona, this becomes a neighborhood for everyone!

The major challenges in the project have been to find a way to move the cars away from the water, to handle the polluted ground after previous uses and to create as efficient a travel center as possible. By dealing with these technical and economic, and sometimes difficult issues wisely, social values have been given high priority. It has also been important to create good quality housing with good design in order to live up to the architectural and cultural historical values of Karlskrona. Here, meetings between people are created, as well as recreation in the middle of the city and sustainable travel through proximity and good public transport. Simply a better life, well integrated with the city in the sea Karlskrona.



# NEW PROJECTS

## IN KAUNAS

by Karolina Bagočenko | karolina.bagocenko@kaunas.lt

**Kaunas has been constantly investing in the city infrastructure, not only to boost its development, but first of all to ensure the comfortable living conditions for all inhabitants.**

In January 2019 the plan on how the “Science Island” with Planetarium, interactive lab, conference halls, workshops and other spaces will look like on the Nemunas Island was introduced. The construction was planned to start in the beginning of 2020.

Australian and Spanish architects F. Jerez and B. Perez De Juan with the partners from Lithuania won the contest of international architecture vision.

“Before the technical project will be finishing, the other team parallel will prepare concept of internal composition”, stated the Mayor of Kaunas, **Visvaldas Matijošaitis**.

The authors of the project created a functionally attractive and convenient building for the visitors with A++ energy class construction, with 10,200 m<sup>2</sup> area with temporary and permanent exposition space. The project will be designed taking into account further city’s plans – building of the water sport center near “Žalgiris” arena and the pedestrian bridges that will connect Nemunas Island with K. Mindaugo prospect and M.K. Čiurlionis concert centre. According to architect G. Natkevičius, the main visual accent of the building will be a disk with internal mirror surface visible from other places and will become a gravity centre for the public.

The science promotion museum will consist of 4 laboratories in which various scientific researches, experiments will be held and will be open to the public. A planetarium, that



### Vision of the Science Island in Kaunas

will hold 100 places, is expected to be most popular program for the public. Architect J. Audėjaitis hopes the new science museum will attract not only local visitors, but also the foreigners and will increase the interest into our planet.

### Sports for all

The rebuilding and the reconstruction of S. Darius and S. Girėnas sports hall and stadium, which was in full swing, is only a part of the project of Ažuolynas multi-functional sports and leisure complex. In the near future, it will be complemented by the best athletic space in the country.

The new athletics arena will include running tracks, vertical and horizontal jump sectors, as well as pole vaulting, shot put, discus and javelin throw training sectors. Athletes will sweat in gyms and regain their strength in massage parlors. There will be 500 spectator stands in the arena.

“The upcoming arena will be capable of holding the Lithuanian indoor athletic championships, as well as other high-level competitions. This sports arena will serve especially well for quality training sessions during winter. In addition to that, we will try to hold the European Athletics Championships at S. Darius and S. Girėnas Stadium, and one of the requirements is to have a warm-up area. Athletes in the new space will be provided with all the necessary conditions to achieve the best results,” says **Andrius Palionis**, Deputy Mayor of Kaunas.





# KEMIKAMMARI

## A MEETING PLACE FOR ALL

by Riikka Vuoristo | riikka.vuoristo@meriva.com

**We have in Kemi a meeting place called Kemikammari. It is an open place for everyone regardless age, social situation, race and religion. There is a Community counselling place for elderly and special activities for unemployed persons. All activities are open for all aged people and they are free of charge.**

Kemikammari is founded by town of Kemi (counselling for elderly) and Meriva foundation with financing of Founding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (Stea) (activities for all aged people who are in danger of become marginalized).

Kemikammari's target is to reduce loneliness, to increase sense of community and to offer all kinds of activities which improve citizens welfare physically, psychically and socially. Also, counselling is offered not only for elderly but also for working-age persons.

### Doing things together

We have about 1,900 visitors per year and nearly 150 persons who visit regularly Kemikammari every week. 65% of visitors are over 65 and 45% are aged 18-65. Also some children visit our place with their parents. Our visitors are unemployed persons, working people, persons in disability pension, old aged pensioned, parents who are at home and immigrants. In Kemikammari different kind of people meet and do things together.

We offer plenty of activities for our visitors. We exercise together many times a week, we have groups for hobby crafts, we offer digital counselling, we play together (cards, board games, snooker, petanque), sing together and just talk and spend time together. Parties, music events and balls are

our activities, too. Also, we have lectures about welfare (nutrition, sleeping, exercising) and about communal services (health care, cultural and social). The social workers offer their services regularly in Kemikammari.

We visit together communal services like museums and exercise places. We make walking trips to parks and nearby forests. We visited and co-operated with other meeting places (places for immigrants and mental health rehabilitators in Kemi). Our visitors do also volunteer work – they make handicraft to elderly people homes and lead hobby groups and exercise in Kemikammari.

Our main target is a happy visitor. Our visitors have told us that Kemikammari is their everyday joy, a reason to wake up, a place to meet others, even if something like mothers lap! Many of them have find new friends in Kemikammari, even some couples have find each other in our place.



# LEARNING AND RECREATION

by Aigars Štāls | aigars.stals@liepaja.lv



**As a result of cooperation between the local government of Liepāja City, state institutions, residents, education and the non-governmental sector, one of the two islands in Liepāja Lake, with its unique physical, natural and landscape values, has become a very popular part of the city's public outdoor area in recent years.**

A spot of a former municipal waste dump, that was in operation up until the 60-ies and later on for decades was still not available to the residents, is now transformed into the active and diverse recreation area of all ages and groups of society.

Along a narrow passage across the water moat, municipal companies still carried waste collected from urban parks and green zones to the island: leaves, branches, dry grass etc., which contributed to the area's self-reclamation and the development of a layer of fertile soil. However, as the island grew with shrubs and grass at the same time, it gained degraded status in the eyes of local residents.

Now the island, which name is Horse Island, has a driveway, a parking lot, a walk path of more than one kilometre, with a bird observation tower, a wooden foot trail along the bank, a viewing platform on the lake. The nature trail has been supplemented with planted vegetation, outdoor workout devices, recreation places, fire and fishing places. Several information boards and signs tell visitors about nature's values and protection rules. On the Horse Island, it is possible to combine athletic activities with the pleasure of natural learning and discoveries in the NATURA 2000 area of nature conservation.



**NATURA 2000 site in Lake Liepāja. The everyday walk path reflects the efforts of Liepāja municipality to involve different target groups in the development of the city's public infrastructure with different planning methods.**

The positive transformations started with the project implemented by the Nature Conservation Authority in 2013: a bird observation tower was constructed in the part of the lake that is part of the NATURA 2000 site.

In order for the transformation and the return of 22.3 ha back to the people to take place in well-elaborated way, while preserving natural and landscape values, as well as ensuring its sustainable management, the municipality organised a tender for urban planning site.

The ideas and proposals of the tender were used in designing and gradually rebuilding the existing amenities. Before the tender, the local government also conducted a survey of residents, learning about their wishes for the future use of the area.

In 2020, a new site, the Horse Island Nature House, will open the door for everyone. Environmental education activities will take place here. The programmes and content of the activities have been developed by the Latvian Universities together with the educational institutions of the city and the nature organisations.





# INSPIRED BY

## ART IN VISBY

by Christian Hegardt | christian.hegardt@gotland.se

**Visborg is a former military regiment area south of Visby on the island of Gotland. The area today offers workplaces, schools, green areas, sports and recreation environments in close proximity to the city and the sea.**

With the coming addition of housing and new urban space, a unique and exciting neighbourhood begins to take shape. Development in Visborg aims to create the right conditions for new housing, preschools, service and recycling, all characterized by innovation, sustainability and a holistic perspective. Visborg of the future will offer a unique environment to work and live in. The development will take place in stages starting in 2020 in the northwest part towards Visby and later further south. A total of 400 hectares can create opportunities for 3500 attractive housing within the coming decades.

### Art in urban planning

Public space where people meet is an important part of the planning and here the artistic perspective can inspire design, content and experience. Working with artistic design early in the urban building process is possible through a collaboration with the Swedish Public Arts Agency and the Visby-based artist residence Baltic Art Center (BAC). City Architect Christian Hegardt works with the design of the area and Helena Selder from BAC is assigned the task of involving artists in the project. By adding different perspectives of art, artistic interventions with connections to both history and new experiences can influence the planning process and the new city district.

"We are very excited about our ongoing collaboration with the Public Art Agency and BAC. We believe that the artistic perspective can give new perspectives in urban planning,

and that new ideas can help strengthen social sustainability in the district", **Christian Hegardt** says.

"Yes, it is extremely gratifying that the Region of Gotland includes the artistic thinking in the planning of Visborg. The idea is that we should be able to involve artists in exploratory projects on site that may in the long run influence the design of the emerging area's common space" continues **Helena Selder**.

As artistic director at Baltic Art Centre since 2016, an international production-based residence for contemporary art based in Visby, she has a long experience working with public art, for example as a curator for Marabouparken Konsthall in Sundbyberg, Stockholm, where she invited artists and local collaborators to develop projects in and around public space. The collaboration with the Public Art Agency and BAC, "Art in Urban Development in Visborg" is ongoing until December 2020.



**Lithuanian artists Gediminas and Nomedas Urbonas together with landscape architect Emilia Friberg Olsson (to the right), at the site of Visborg**



Photo: BAC





# TOWARDS

# ALL-AGE-FRIENDLY CITY

by Sylwia Bięga | [sylwia.biega@umelblag.pl](mailto:sylwia.biega@umelblag.pl)

**Designing an all-age-friendly city that takes into account the needs and interests of all generations might sound challenging, but the good news is that the needs and interests of children, young people and older adults are often complementary.**

All residents appreciate high quality and age-friendly infrastructure, accessible and low cost transport systems, smooth pavements with safe pedestrian crossings and benches to take a rest. Such improvements are already being implemented. Elbląg has recently added 102 new benches and improved pedestrians' safety and modernised tram lines. This helps to encourage residents' mobility and participation in public life. Nevertheless, an age-friendly city needs to go far beyond infrastructure.

### Public space to build intergenerational trust

What is fundamental for creating all-age-friendly city, is to ensure the shared sense of community, in particular with regards to public spaces, where all residents are welcome and can feel the sense of belonging. Integrated planning should build community cohesiveness and trust.

With that in mind Elbląg has created the Open Activity Zone, intergenerational public space to encourage beneficial opportunities for interactions between children, young people and older adults.

Usually municipal parks, although open to all age groups, have some age-based boundaries: children occupy play-

grounds, youngsters are attracted to sport fields and gymnastic equipment whereas relaxation zones are filled with older people.

The concept of intergenerational park, such as Elbląg Open Activity Zone brings a new focus to social contacts. It is a place meant to foster social connections and participation through trust-creating actions that are free and held in natural environment. It is set in a municipal park, a well-maintained and safe green space, with easily accessed seating and bicycle stands. Various walkways through an invigorating and diverse landscape intersect the part, there are no walls or gates. They are utilized by people of all ages: runners, mothers with strollers, adults and children.

The park encompasses an outdoor fitness area enabling general development workout, table tennis facilities, and relaxation area with benches among flowerbeds and trees as well as a playground with educational games such as mills, twisters or hopscotch.

Elbląg Open Activity Zone is getting ready for the summer season's family festivals, tournaments and everyday strolls that are proven to positively contribute to our wellbeing and improve living standards.



# SPORTS COMPLEX

## FOR ALL

by Māra Liepa-Zemeša | mara.liepa@riga.lv



**Planning documents of Riga say that it is necessary to provide public services close to inhabitants, ensuring network of suitable infrastructure giving possibilities for useful leisure time and sport activities.**

According to the growing interest of the population in participating in sports, and the desire of families to spend time together engaging in active recreation the Sustainable Development Strategy of Riga until 2030 sets that in residential areas public space must be suitable for sport activities for residents of all age groups, providing accessible sport fields and facilities covering different kind of urban sports and gymnastics. Priority for the city is to develop existing public domain for educational, cultural, recreational and health purposes. Riga City Municipality launched a new programme – creating publicly accessible sports and recreation complexes next to educational institutions.

Initially the sports fields were dominated by the provision of facilities for sports activities; however, by observing the demand and needs of the city's residents, the idea of multi-functionality of the fields came through, as well as of the necessity to create such complexes, where the entire family can find suitable activities and actively do sports together – both the youngest family members together with their parents, as well as adolescents and seniors. In accordance with the new concept, in addition to equipment for street gymnastics, running tracks, football and multi-functional playgrounds, children's playgrounds for different age groups were also designed in these complexes. The largest complexes, where one could engage in a variety of activities, became especially popular.

As a significant turning point in the development of the city public space, the City Centre Sports Block must be men-

tioned, which was established in 2016 in an environmentally degrading area in the historic centre of Riga, where a football field was once located. In four hectares, a football field, running tracks, several multi-functional fields, a bicycle park, a skatepark, beach volleyball court and a 0.7-hectare children's playground were built.

### **For the whole family, for all generations**

It should be noted that the amount of visitors to the area exceeded expectations. Visitors came to the complex from all parts of Riga, the surrounding cities and even neighbouring countries, and their density exceeded the capacity of the area. Therefore a decision was made to create a similar area in one of the neighbourhoods of Riga on the other side of the River Daugava. There were many large trees in this area, which could be integrated into the complex, and in addition to active recreation areas, a quiet area for mothers with babies, seniors and for small family picnics was created. Many positive comments were received about this area, from seniors in particular.

It should be emphasised that, when creating each complex, its identity was considered, therefore a different theme was created for each playground and individual details were taken into account.

Since 2013, four large (approximately four hectares each) and 13 medium-sized sports and recreation complexes have been built in Riga, which have significantly changed the public outdoor spaces and the habits of the city's residents.





# ROSTOCK

## COMES INTO BLOOM

by City of Rostock, Press Department | kerstin.kanaa@rostock.de

Photo: Joachim Kloock

**In Rostock, the traditional spring planting started on 19 March. About 6,000 early bloomers of all colours were planted along the promenade in Warnemünde.**

Workers of the Department of Urban Greenery, Nature Protection and Landscape Caring prepared the first five flower beds between Kurhaus and 'Hotel am Leuchtturm'.

The town will be embellished with 29,200 flowering plants like 5,304 *Bellis perennis* (Tausendschönchen) in red and pink, 6,480 *Myosotis* or forget-me-nots (*Vergissmeinnicht*) in white and blue, 12,771 of *Viola cornuta* (Hornveilchen) in blue, orange, yellow and white, and 4,720 *Viola wittrockiana* (Stiefmütterchen) in yellow, orange and blue (German trivial names in brackets). *Viola cornuta* and *myosotis* are considered to be very attractive for bees.

The teams specialized in maintenance of parks and biotops, together with apprentices, usually prepare all crops three days in advance. This included works like milling, digging and marking. The city is spending an amount of EUR 12,611 in all plantings at the Promenade in Warnemünde, the main street Lange Strasse, the Duncker Square, and, along the Old Stream. Already last autumn 2,110 bulbs were placed.

### Making a city colourful

The flower beds are under steady care of the gardeners of the Department of Urban Greenery Nature Protection and Landscape Caring. They are looking after the arrangements and removing the weeds weekly. Irrigation systems make

sure that all crops will beautifully blossom throughout the whole season.

During the whole year, everybody could enjoy as well meadows full of flowers, e.g. at the old Canon Hill, the KTC shopping center, the triangular area at Mühlendamm/Warnowstraße, the creek Schmarler Bach, the Swan Lake Park, the Park of the creek Kringelgraben and at the Place named after Holbein. In the New and in the Western Graveyards flower meadows will be prepared, as well.

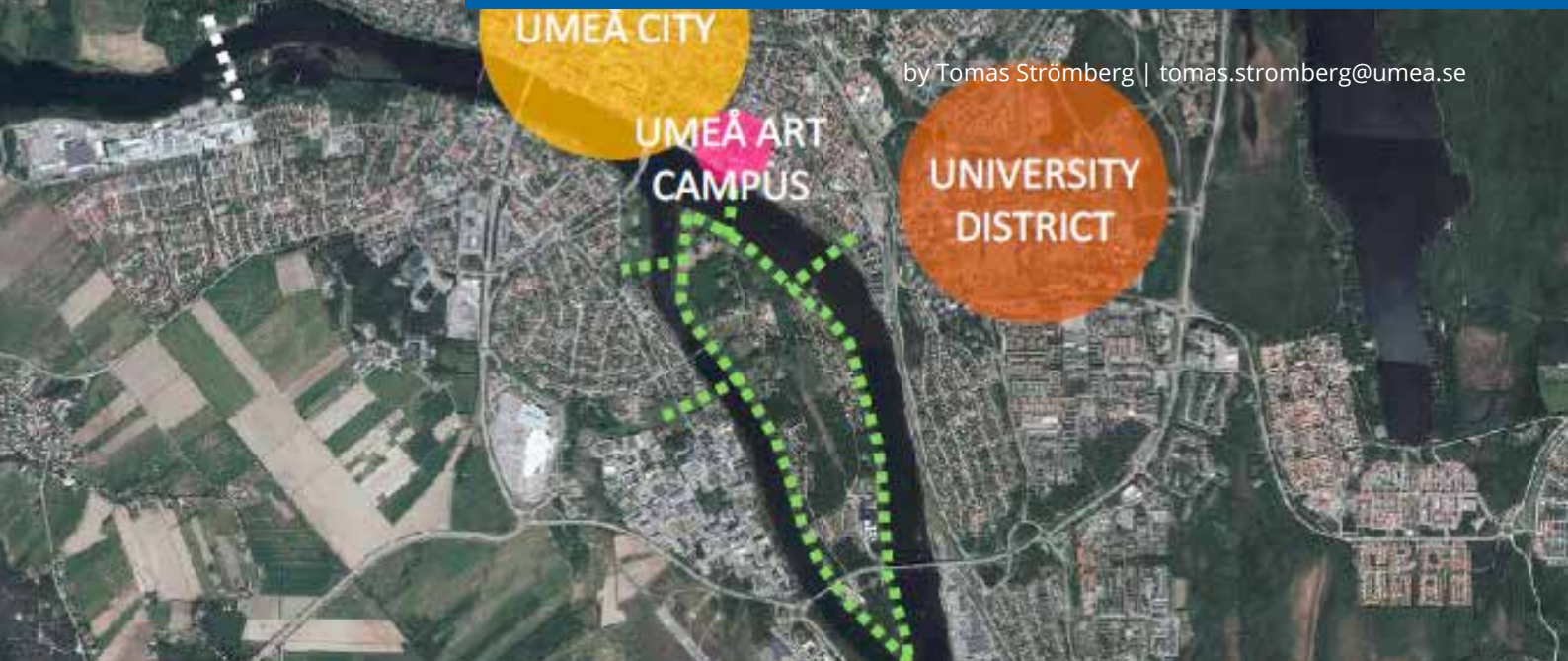




# CITY PLANNING

## FOR PHYSICAL LITERACY

by Tomas Strömberg | [tomas.stromberg@umea.se](mailto:tomas.stromberg@umea.se)



**Umeå has Europe's most environmentally engaged citizens! We are 125,000 inhabitants – aiming to be 200,000 by the year of 2050. Last year 700 companies started, and 1,100 new jobs were created. 1,300 new homes were built, and we welcomed 6 300 new residents to Umeå. One of the largest projects is the northern part of Island, Ön, where we plan for 7,000 inhabitants.**

Umeå has entered a partnership with the Government Offices of Sweden. The aim is to facilitate planning processes to achieve increased and sustainable housing construction. The municipality has six growth strategies. The Government has supported the city in starting up the project with actors in the field of innovative planning and social sustainability and will follow our work.

### Focus on sustainability

What do we mean when we say that we plan for physical literacy? When designing the grid, we are not only planning sites for specific purpose, but we work also on how to connect these sites. We want to help more people to find them and make connections that encourages movement. The possibility to improve physical literacy should be evident throughout the whole island. Where we place target points, for example the preschools, the grocery store and the mobility hub should all be decided in favour of movement. When we started, we saw an opportunity to develop a district where it is easier, faster and more convenient to choose sustainable transportation instead of choosing the car. We will start to plan for bicycle paths and walkways as accessible, short and straight as possible, thereafter for cars.

Even though we are in the beginning of this project; we can see that it will result in new ways of thinking just by having this perspective in mind. Umeå is developing a sustainable city and contributes to an equal and socially sustainable city as access to the city increases for everyone. Urban planning and land development for physical literacy is a major challenge, but we are convinced that we are on the right track.

### Umeå's six strategies for sustainable growth







# A GATEWAY TO

# VÄXJÖ

by Bo Hjälmeffjord | [bo.hjalmeffjord@vaxjo.se](mailto:bo.hjalmeffjord@vaxjo.se)

Photo: Bo Hjälmeffjord

**The Municipality of Växjö has joined forces with Jernhusen, a state-owned property company to develop and construct a new City Hall as an integrated railway station, travel hub and municipal office space for 600 municipal employees and politicians.**

The planning for the project builds on modern ideas regarding environmental standards, work space design and building techniques. Växjö Municipality strives to create a positive and friendly space where everyone can feel comfort in a welcoming environment.

## Glass and wood

The building a total of 16,900 sqm large is now going in to its final stages. It has been built up with a wood structure and a glass exterior. It follows the strategy that the Municipality of Växjö shall construct at least 50% of the public buildings with a wooden structure, for environmental reasons. The building's inclusion of glass in its design represents the region's long history of glasswork.

The building is being built with enough merit to eventually be certified to the Swedish building council's Environmental building standard 'Gold', which requires the highest quality regarding energy efficiency, material choice and indoor climate. One measure to accommodate this is to cover the roof with solar cells.

The construction which commenced in 2018 has been managed by Skanska who has constructed the wood frame under a weather protection tent which recently has been re-

moved. The tent has facilitated a dry construction space to protect the building and has also provided a safe and pleasant working environment for the construction. It has been a landmark in Växjö for the past year.

In the first quarter of 2021, the offices will provide working spaces for some of the city hall employees. The activity-based setup will provide opportunities to introduce new and modern ways of working. The employees will choose their work space from day-to-day depending on type of activities and requirements they need to complete their tasks. The building will have areas for everyone's needs in a pleasant working environment.

The city hall and railway station will be ready in August 2021 becoming the gate from the railway to the city, including shops, restaurants, and cafés for the general public. This part of the building will be the heart of the city welcoming travellers and citizens alike.



Photo: Bo Hjälmeffjord





# CITY FOR ITS INHABITANS

by Urszula Barańska | [urszula.baranska@um.koszalin.pl](mailto:urszula.baranska@um.koszalin.pl)

**Any spatial structure - city, district or settlement to function properly and not to degrade, must have a user interested in its creation, who works here, spends free time, sets up a family, returns from travels. The quality of this place is determined by various factors which make a place friendly.**

The participation of the local community in the creation of a friendly space through development of urban documents: strategies, programmes, and plans is valuable. Koszalin's Development Strategy is the most important document of the long-term development of the city, setting out the socio-economic objectives and related directions of development over a period of several years (the current perspective covers 2013–2020).

The strategy in the development policy management system is also a communication tool and a place of partnership with residents. "Friendly urban space" is one of four goals of the document that the city tries to achieve by providing e.g. comfortable housing, social services efficiency, a wide range of education services, but also by providing accessible green areas.

## Water Valley

The tiny river with a quite large valley forms a green axis of the city of Koszalin, which successively enriches the urban public space with new attractive recreation areas and sports and cultural facilities. Next to the oldest historical part - city parks with the building of the Cultural Center 105 and the modern Koszalin Philharmonic, with the historic ensemble

of the Museum in Koszalin and with the south part of the sports club "Baltic Koszalin" - other projects in the space of the Dzierżęcinka valley appeared.

Additionally, the recreational development of the area surrounding the retention tank has been continued. The project of the waterfront reservoir, located in the south-eastern part of Koszalin, took into account the natural values of the river valley - its gently falling towards the water side of the slope was used to shape the walking boulevards.

## Vital urban space

Also, the city beach with a guarded bathing area, children's playgrounds and recreation areas for adults, with a lift for wakeboarding and off-road gyms were realized. The implementation of the "Water Valley" contributed to the creation of another attractive urban space, which in 2017 was the winner of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Marshal's competition for the best public space of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, appreciated by the chapter of the competition: "Vital urban space serving active recreation and dedicated to residents of different ages and interests".

Successively revalued areas of the Dzierżęcinka Valley provides the residents and tourists with a new quality of public space, increases the prestige of the city, strengthens its tourist attractiveness.





# UBC NEWS & FACES



## The UBC Executive Board met online

by Irene Pendolin | [irene.pendolin@ubc.net](mailto:irene.pendolin@ubc.net)

**The 85<sup>th</sup> UBC Executive Board meeting was held on 17 April 2020 – online for the very first time due to the coronavirus epidemic. The historical meeting hosted around 30 participants from all UBC countries.**

On the agenda were, among others, action plans of the Commissions, UBC budget as well as strategy, policy, and projects.

Due to the coronavirus situation, the UBC Commissions have been forced to put some of their activities on hold, such as seminars and other live events, although also online seminars have been hosted e.g. by Safe Cities Commission and Sustainable Cities Commission.

“These days we are living now show that the UBC is needed. The changes we are going through will only strengthen us”, emphasized UBC President **Mantas Jurgutis** in his opening speech.

The Executive Board decided that Paweł Żaboklicki would continue as Secretary General in the next 4-year period.

The Board was informed that the UBC has established a page on the website [www.ubc.net](http://www.ubc.net) concentrating on the cities’ solutions and measures during the coronavirus epidemic.

Other topics discussed in the meeting included digitalisation in UBC member cities, questionnaire to member cities and UBC pool of experts, HA Capacity, information from

Brussels on forthcoming events and consultations, the severe wastewater treatment problem in Guatemala and the 11<sup>th</sup> EUSBSR Annual Forum in Turku (19–20 October 2020).

### **Questionnaire “Mapping the needs of UBC Member Cities” and UBC pool of experts**

An important and inspirational topic during the meeting were the results of the survey conducted earlier this spring among the UBC member cities, “Mapping the needs of UBC Member Cities”.

The survey questions included:

- What does UBC do best?
- What can be improved?
- What is the motivation of your city to be part of UBC?
- What does your city expect from UBC?
- What are the main external trends and challenges UBC should address in the future?
- How do you see the future role of UBC?

The survey results are available online on [www.ubc.net](http://www.ubc.net) and will be used when planning the new UBC strategy process.

In addition, the Executive Board decided to start mustering a UBC pool of experts so that the considerable expertise in the member cities could be better utilised.

The decision about the venue of the next UBC Executive Board meeting will be taken soon.





# STEAM Baltic Sea Region

by Matti Mäkelä | matti.makela@turku.fi

**STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) Baltic Sea Region study visit and workshop was arranged in Tallinn on 11–12 February 2020 with 17 participants from five different countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania).**

The aim of the event was to bring together STEAM experts in pre-school, basic education and secondary level education to learn from each other and to strengthen STEAM cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

Workshop started with the 10–15 minutes presentations of the best practices in STEAM work in different BSR cities. Then the participants discussed together about two crucial questions: What have we already learned? How can we work together in the future? Workshop also included planning of the future work, namely activities in 2020 and 2021, STEAM seminar in 2020, working tools, new projects and other forms of joint development, added value and expected results.

On the second day the participants visited Kelmiküla Lasteaed (Kelmiküla preschool) and Tallinna 21. Kool (Tallinn 21<sup>st</sup> school), where they had an opportunity to learn more about Tallinn STEAM activities and new learning environments at preschool and at basic education school.

During the Tallinn meeting the Task Force planned to arrange a seminar in Turku in June one day prior to Annual Forum but due to outbreak of the Coronavirus and its implications, the organizers of the Annual Forum decided to postpone the event and it will now be held on 19–20 October 2020 in Turku. This decision meant that TF decided to postpone its seminar as well and it will be held in Turku on 21 October. Themes of the seminar are STEAM, VET attrac-

tiveness, NEETs and Basic Skills. During the seminar TF will also arrange a second STEAM workshop.

## Three Working Themes

In 2020 UBC Task Force Supporting Youth Employment and Well-Being concentrates on three major themes: STEAM, attractiveness of vocational education and basic skills. The idea behind the new theme-based approach is that concentrating on certain issues would make cooperation and creation of common goals and projects easier.

Activities of the year 2020 include study visits and workshops, one Task Force seminar, implementation of new transnational projects in themes mentioned above, continuing the dissemination of good practices, cooperation with other networks and actors, further development of the website and development of the use of social media in dissemination and development work.





# Baltic Sea Youth Platform aims at empowering youth

by Dmitrijs Zverevs | dmitrijs.zverevs@riga.lv

## Baltic Sea Youth Platform



With the support  
Erasmus+ Program  
of the European

**This spring marked the beginning of a long-nurtured strategic partnership project “Baltic Sea Youth Platform” (further on - BSYP) that is being implemented jointly by CBSS, BSSC, Euroregion Baltic, UBC, LijOT and ESN Finland under the Erasmus+ programme.**

The project strives to enable youth organisations to reach their fullest potential to develop new ideas and pursue them jointly and sets the following aims to the partnership:

1. Improve the political impact of youth on Baltic Sea policy-making;
2. Develop tools for better knowledge transfer;
3. Facilitate various innovative projects relying on the interests and capacities of youth in a broad range of policy areas.

BSYP will work as an umbrella coordination mechanism for several youth organisations horizontally across sectors in connection to the different policy areas of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR).

The outputs the project will produce will be usable for both youth organisations and the policy makers in the Baltic Sea Region and beyond:

- A virtual platform for youth, organisations and decision makers for projects and to interact with each other. The platform will be built according to the needs of the young people in the region and the demands from policy-makers. The platform enables youth to interact, cooperate and communicate across borders and to virtually meet peers and decision-makers in a safe and productive environment;
- Baltic Sea Youth Power Box, with toolkits and guidelines for intergenerational dialogue, policymaking, youth engagement and advocacy especially tailored for youth

in the region, but with possible transferability to other regions;

- The youth platform participants will be able to engage in the production of youth inputs for the Baltic Sea Cultural Cities a flagship project of the Policy Area Culture of the EUSBSR;
- External Reports to show what projects have been done and how the platform was established. Furthermore, Policy Recommendations for decision-makers in the region to emphasize the political perspective of young people and to ensure their positions and rationales are delivered to those who make decisions about our future, will be produced.

To learn more about the BSYP, please visit its webpage [www.bsyp.eu](http://www.bsyp.eu).

If you do share our vision that there should be nothing about young people without them, please don't hesitate to become an associate partner to the project (you can sign up online at the BSYP webpage).

Even if you are not ready to become an associate partner, we are willing to hear your ideas regarding how BSYP should look like. Please fill in the survey yourself here [www.cbss.org/baltic-sea-youth-platform-development-survey-2](http://www.cbss.org/baltic-sea-youth-platform-development-survey-2) and share it with your friends and everyone who might be interested.





# CASCADE project has published the findings and results

by Jutta Mäkinen | [jutta.makinen@turku.fi](mailto:jutta.makinen@turku.fi)

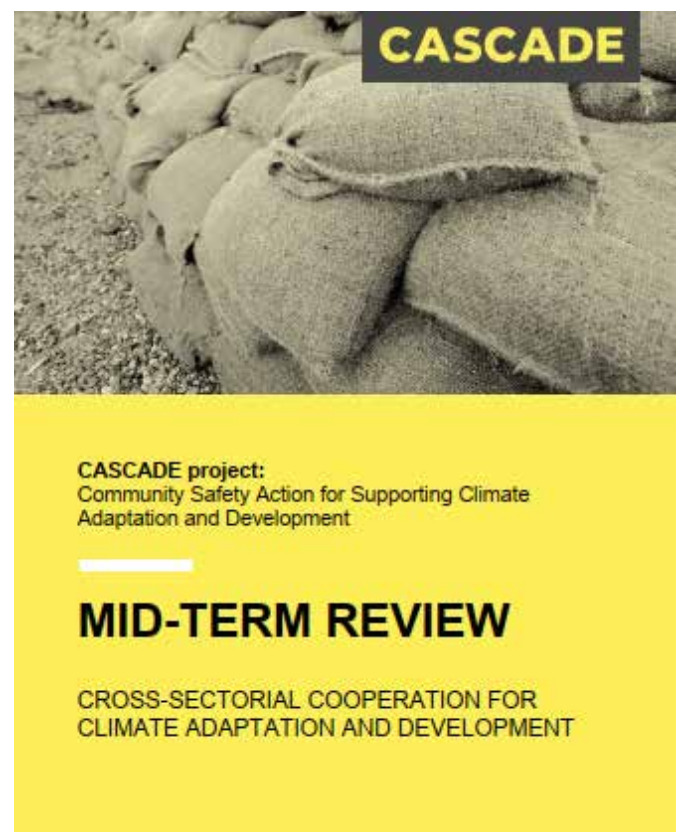
**The Safe Cities Commission and the Sustainable Cities Commission work together on a project called CASCADE along with seven other partners from Baltic Sea Region. CASCADE – Community Safety Action for Supporting Climate Adaptation and Development - is a unique, innovative project seeking to improve urban resilience in cities and towns, as well as the overall macro-regional resilience.**

One of main objectives of the project is to improve the capacity to understand, assess, and treat current and future climate change related risks on the local level, focusing on the Baltic Sea Region conditions. Another objective is to increase practical risk management capabilities of local authorities, creating positive cascading effects through training civil protection experts and city planners, who will use the developed training material to enhance the capacity of urban communities. The project also strives to initiate a region-wide policy dialogue on the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction to form cross-sectoral cooperation between different levels of governance and for greater policy coherence on climate risk assessments.

CASCADE has now published the findings and results of the project so far (as of February 2020) in a mid-term review called "Cross-sectoral cooperation for climate adaptation and development". It is intended to serve as an example of an innovative way to respond to the challenges related to climate change via a cross-sectoral approach.

The materials and results of CASCADE are replicable for all Baltic Sea Region countries and will be available in an easy to use online tool on our project website at the end of the project.

Find more about the project and read the mid-term review here: <https://www.cascade-bsr.eu/materials/Publications>







# Living Streets – temporarily redesigning public space for citizens

by Sini Lamoureux | [sini.lamoureux@turku.fi](mailto:sini.lamoureux@turku.fi)

Photo: The city of Tartu

**Imagine a street in your city temporarily being closed down. Instead of being filled with car traffic and parked vehicles the street is turned into a livable public space where residents can meet and take part in activities. The Living Street concept, originally developed in Ghent (NL), is a temporary action which transforms urban space for the citizens on their terms.**

The cities Karlskrona (SWE), Tartu (EST) and Gdańsk (PL) have at least three things in common; they are UBC member cities, they are project partners in the Interreg BSR funded project cities.multimodal and they have organised Living Streets. There is no set model for the Living Street, cities can adapt the concept to their liking and therefore every Living Street is different.

Karlskrona's Living Street was organised during the car-free day in connection to the European Mobility Week (EMW) 2019. The closed street was turned into a versatile public space in which some of the parking spots were transformed into mini parks. Even an obstacle course for hobby horsing was set up. The residents could also enjoy a farmer's market, second-hand shopping as well as a DIY handicrafts workshop for the younger residents.

Karlskrona wasn't the only city that combined the EMW with organising of a Living Street. The Living Street in Gdańsk encouraged residents to take part in activities with a sportive and healthy note. During a whole week an intersection in Gdańsk was closed down and filled with sport competitions, dance classes, free bicycle service as well as free health and recycling consultation.

In Tartu the Living Street, which was organised in the end of June 2019, was combined with the launching of a new bike sharing system and bus lines. The campaign included several cultural elements such as a book fair, a silent disco and the showing of a sing-along version of the Grease movie.

From a sustainable urban mobility perspective, the Living Streets temporarily concretise everyday life without the dangers, noise and air pollution caused by car traffic. Living Streets are also a great opportunity for cities and municipalities to get to know their residents and their lifestyles in an interactive way.

## Preparations of the Living Streets in Gdańsk



Photo: The city of Gdańsk



# Sustainable Cities Commission – planning the next decade

by Jutta Mäkinen | [jutta.makinen@turku.fi](mailto:jutta.makinen@turku.fi)



**The UBC Sustainable Cities Commission has entered the new decade with a clear objective - to reactivate our UBC network! The Commission has launched new ways for the network's members to be active by offering member cities new ways of meeting and cooperating.**

#### **Call for interest to host a UBC SCC event**

From 2020 onwards the Commission is publishing a call for interest for all UBC member cities to host a UBC event with the Commission. It has gained extensive experience with organizing different kind of events throughout the years: now the commission wants to support the UBC member cities in organizing successful events together. The first call was open from 25 February to 13 March 2020.

#### **UBC TALKS Webinar series giving a voice to cities**

Another way our member cities to be active is the new UBC TALKS webinar series also launched in the beginning of 2020. This webinar series offers a platform for UBC member cities to get their voices heard and to share their best practices with other cities in the network. Since the beginning of the year UBC member cities have shared their experiences around the following topics: organization of marine litter campaigns around the Baltic Sea region, experiences on Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning and best practices and tips on reporting cities environmental data to CDP. UBC TALKS takes place every last Tuesday of the month at 09:30 CET (10:30 EET).

#### **Preparations for the 6<sup>th</sup> UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2021–2030 are ongoing**

The different actors involved in shaping the new Sustainability Action programme are: UBC leadership, UBC Com-

missions, Sustainable Cities Commission's Advisory Board, Sustainable Cities Commission Secretariat, UBC member cities and external actors, such as UBC strategic partners and other stakeholders.

The mapping and initial discussions on sustainability related topics, themes and challenges that relate to our region in the coming decade are ongoing and in the coming months the Commission will survey the UBC member cities for their input, as well. The next UBC Sustainable Development Action Programme will be presented at the UBC XVI General Conference in St. Petersburg in October 2021 and it will cover the period of 2021–2030.

**The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the UBC Commissions' events calendar. The Youthful Cities Commission and the Planning Cities Commission meetings, that were planned to be held in April and May 2020, have been postponed. The Safe Cities Commission holds the video-conferences (two so far) to discuss and share knowledge, updates and experience gained in the time of pandemic. The recording from the last meeting is available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vku\\_Ju-dYj4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vku_Ju-dYj4&feature=youtu.be)**

**The next Safe Cities Commission online meeting will be held on 7 May at 12.00. Follow the UBC website to be up-to-date.**



# A space to showcase and network - Europe Weeks of Regions and Cities

by Marko Paunovic | marko@outofthebox-international.org

## REGIONS & CITIES

### European Week | Brussels

**“2020 Europe Weeks of Regions and Cities” will take place on 12–15 October 2020 in Brussels, focusing on the following main themes: Green Europe, Cohesion and Cooperation, and Empowering Citizens**

“Europe Weeks of Regions and Cities” is an annual four-day event taking place in Brussels (Belgium) during which cities and regions network, showcase innovative policy and technological solutions to global challenges, learn from each other’s experiences and discuss EU approaches towards regions and cities. With more than 9000 attendees, the event is the largest gathering of policy makers in the capital of EU, where European Union cohesion and regional development policies and instruments are being discussed, thus strengthening the involvement of cities and regions in EU policy-making.

Not limited to cities and regions, “Europe Weeks of Regions and Cities” is a space where a cross-sectoral community of practitioners is invited, representing policy makers the business sector and Civil Sector Organizations (CSO) alike, in order to provide diversity and networking opportunities beneficial to all stakeholders working on these topics.

To illustrate this, the “18<sup>th</sup> Europe Weeks of Regions and Cities” in 2019 gathered over 9000 EU members’ participants, but also outreaching EU grounds. More than 500 selected partners and over 1500 speakers have showcased their experiences, knowledge and ideas during 390 sessions. The 2019 edition’s main themes were: The Future of the EU and the roles of the Regions and Cities; A Europe Closer to Citizen; A greener Europe; A smarter Europe; A more connected Europe: mobility; A more socially integrated Europe.

It is expected that the “2020 Europe Weeks of Regions and Cities” will surpass the last year’s event numbers. The event will aim to become a more gender balanced, paperless and plastic-free event to minimize its environmental impact. The following main themes: Green Europe, Cohesion and Cooperation, and Empowering Citizens will be the main focus of Q&A, workshops, participatory labs and EU Regions talk’s sessions, thus mirroring “Europe 2020” strategy.

#### **A good practice: “SMART CITIES of the future”, 2019**

As an example of good practice, a workshop organised by Out of the Box International, Kamisoft, European Projects Association, City of Venice, Fazana Municipality, ISTRIAN de Dignan – ECOMUSEUM and Informo, “SMART CITIES OF THE FUTURE” took place in Brussels during the 19<sup>th</sup> edition of the event. During the 3h workshop, new trends in smart cities were presented and discussed. The workshop was concluded with showcasing a concrete example of policies and ICT solutions from Venice (Italy) and Fazana (Croatia) on energy saving and active participation of citizens in order to inspire delegates.







# CITY NEWS

## MAKING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS BETTER FOR LIVING

**UrbCulturalPlanning (UCP) is an Interreg Baltic Sea Region (BSR) flagship project, running from January 2019 until June 2021. Its main method is to use culture and creativity to improve living in the neighbourhoods in cities or in rural areas in the BSR.**

What makes UCP special is its “target audience”. Usually similar projects focus on boosting either residents or artists, or NGOs working with residents. Now the idea is to improve innovation within the policy- and decision-makers, and the main objective of UCP is to advance the capacity of public authorities in the BSR, local NGOs, and associations to collaborate on citizen driven cultural planning.

One of the tools is called Urban Lab. For now, there have been several labs already – in Copenhagen, Gdańsk, Kiel, and Pori. Residents, activists, and practitioners from urban and creative industries get together with public authorities and municipal planners, and work toward a shared goal – to make our neighbourhoods better for living. This can be achieved by boosting social innovation and capacity building, and by improving direct dialogue between the grass-roots and municipal stakeholders.

Such Urban Labs (along with three conferences) literally bring cities together with citizens in order to plan culturally. Neighbourhoods become mutual canvases for cultural innovation, experimentation, creative changes within urban planning to benefit for all. For example, in Urban Lab Kiel everybody developed the creative index of the city together, led by the kingpin of cultural planning, Charles Landry. In Urban Lab Pori the overall topic was “Pori as an experimental city”, where a collaborative space PORIS also helped gathering more than 2000 suggestions from residents in one month’s time.

Another great tool developed during the project is the Urban Toolkit. Its main idea is to gather great examples of cultural planning initiatives across the BSR and provide their methods in a comprehensive way online. The website also allows potential or actual planners to select their search preferences of case studies according to the character of the place, population of the urban area, ownership, types of organisations, duration, participants, or challenges.

UCP is a cross-border project of 14 Partners and 36 Associated Organizations in 8 countries, including UBC municipalities: Gdańsk, Guldborgsund, Kiel, Pori, and Riga. Each city is hosting one or more BSR Demonstrator Projects, where the ideas of Cultural Planning are tested and implemented in real life on neighbourhood or small-town scale with participation of residents, NGOs, artists and activists.

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## NINE OVERALL GOALS FOR THE WORK IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LULEÅ

**In April 2019, the City Council decided on nine overall goals to achieve Vision Luleå 2050 and to describe Luleå municipality's way of connecting the work to Agenda 2030. The nine overall goals constitute a natural part of Luleå's overall planning and will do the municipality's long-term work for Vision Luleå 2050 clearer.**

The nine overall goals include issues such as health, participation, security, culture and leisure, consumption, nature and climate, work and growth.

### **Vision Luleå 2050**

The nine overall goals are further based on the vision work "Vision Luleå 2050" that the municipality implemented in the early 2000s. The vision, which was adopted politically

in 2008, is about creating an attractive Luleå that is sustainable over time. The process of developing the vision was carried out in close dialogue with residents, citizens associations, business and other stakeholders. For example, lectures and open forums were organized as well as special vision workshops where the vision and images of the future were developed.

### **Annual follow-up**

The Municipality of Luleå will follow on annual basis the development in relation to the nine overall goals and thereby how the municipality fulfills its part of Agenda 2030. The fulfillment of these goals will be followed with the help of several indicators. The analysis will give the information if the municipality is investing correctly, doing the right way and will help to find out if there are better ways to conduct the work. The analysis will also examine potential differences for age, gender, group and geographical area.

For more information about follow-up and reporting, please, visit the website of the Municipality of Luleå: <http://programuppfoljning.lulea.se/>

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## RESIDENTS ARE UNITED BY PALANGA CITIZENS' CARD

**A new city loyalty program – Palanga Citizens' Card - was launched in Palanga, Lithuania, almost two years ago. This loyalty program has received a great deal of interest and success. The Palanga Citizens' Card is issued only to a resident or an honorary citizen of Palanga.**

The card is one, but it provides great benefits - it is not necessary to have separate cards for the offers of different partners, one card is enough to get plenty of discounts at different places. According to statistics, almost 18,000 people live in Palanga. Since the loyalty program was launched, today more than 10,000 people have issued these cards. Residents are willing to take out these cards not only because of the discounts they receive, but also as a kind of citizen's passport.

The Municipality, as a coordinator of this loyalty program, invited resort companies, institutions and organizations to cooperate and provide discounts on goods and services purchased by card holders. In this way, entrepreneurs are encouraged to show their social responsibility, to contribute to the needs of the Municipality's residents, to improve the quality of life and to increase satisfaction with living in

Palanga. Every month the card holders receive a lot of different discount offers. The biggest discounts are given for events and catering, so the loyalty program is probably the most active in these areas of offers. Every month, almost 70 discount positions are given to the residents of Palanga. Recently, the use of the card has been very popular in the newly opened Palanga swimming-pool, where discounts for citizens reach up to 50%, and for the swimming-pool it is a great advertisement.

The number of discount partners has almost tripled over this time. And there is a good reason for this, because the Palanga citizens' card loyalty program is an ideal solution for small entrepreneurs. Firstly, they don't need to create a separate loyalty program, they do not have to pay any loyalty program administration fee. Secondly, the list of discounts is published free of charge in the local press, on social networks, on the websites of the Municipality and the Tourism Information Center, so it is a free advertisement for entrepreneurs. All entrepreneurs can change their discount offers every month.

The Palanga Citizens' Card is very popular and unites city residents and local businessmen. Not only the residents are interested in this loyalty program, also the local entrepreneurs are willing to join it, which shows their social responsibility and allows Palanga residents to feel good in their city. It also encourages other people to choose Palanga as their place of residence, where it is good to live and relax.

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Photo: [www.kaunas2022.eu](http://www.kaunas2022.eu)

## THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE FORUM FOCUS ON THE HUMAN FACTOR

**On 23–24 May 2019 the European Capital of Culture Forum was held in Kaunas (Lithuania), at the amphitheatre in “Žalgirio Arena”. The Forum was an annual event initiated and organised by the team of “Kaunas – European Capital of Culture 2022”.**

The umbrella topic of the forum was the “Human Factor”. It invited participants to discuss on the welfare of the society and the future of the cultural institutions, cities and Europe as it is perceived by the individuals who constitute our audience.

“Too often we ground our decisions solely on our private experience and attitudes, on convention, habit or simply the assumptions about others. We forget that our own “social bubbles” and other factors determine our very limited ability to really know what other people want or need”, says

**Ana Čižauskienė**, Head of International Relations and Programming at “Kaunas 2022”. “Besides, she notes, we strive to better understand the needs of the society and find out the reasons causing, as it seems, the deepening division between the society and institutions, as well as the emerging political or civic conflicts in Europe”.

According to the Head of International Relations, the event was created not only for the professionals of the cultural sector, but also for everyone engaged in the creative practices – representatives of the business sector, artists, people working in the creative industries, as well as other professionals. In 2019, the participants of the Forum were offered the opportunity to listen to the presentations, take part in the workshops or discussions on different topics, such as applying technological innovations in the field of audience development; the power of intuition in management; social entrepreneurship; the trends in the culture sponsorship.

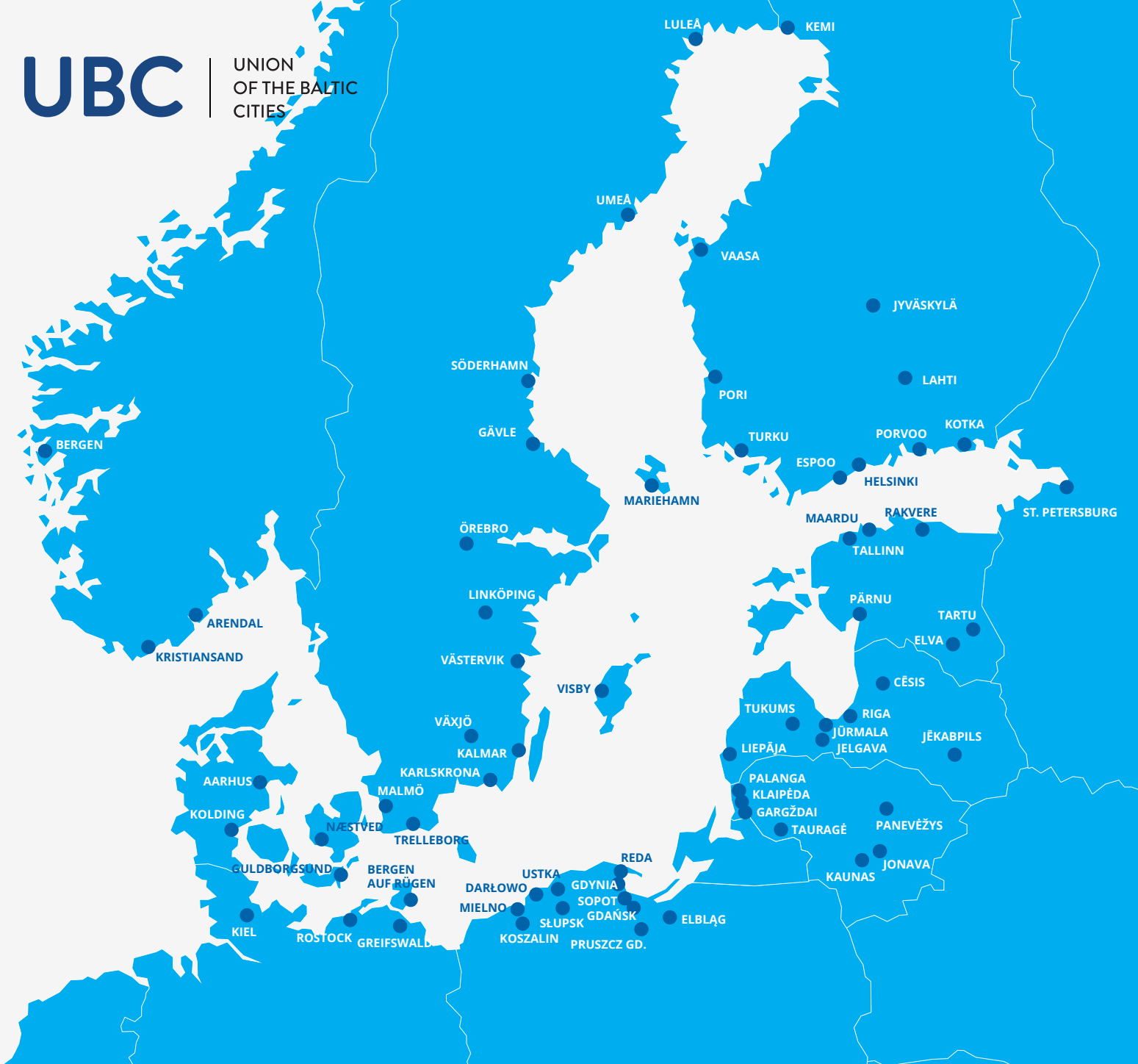
The previous European Capital of Culture Forum attracted representatives from more than 80 countries, including the managers of other (past, present and future) European capitals, and representatives of other European bodies. They shared their experiences on different issues such as how the cultural programs contribute to the integration of various society groups, public initiatives, volunteering, creative industries and tourism, cooperation between public institutions as well as building relations among local and foreign organisations.

by Karolina Bagočenko | [karolina.bagocenko@kaunas.lt](mailto:karolina.bagocenko@kaunas.lt)



# UBC

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OF THE BALTIC  
CITIES



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UBC – working together to foster sustainable, smart and safe cities

Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) is the leading network of cities in the Baltic Sea Region with the members from all ten Baltic Sea countries. Founded in 1991 in Gdańsk, UBC is a voluntary, proactive network mobilizing the shared potential of its member cities for a safe, smart and sustainable Baltic Sea Region. The UBC cooperates with numerous Baltic and European organisations.

The UBC's practical work is carried out through active cooperation of the member cities in seven thematic Commissions: Cultural Cities, Inclusive and Healthy Cities, Planning Cities, Safe Cities, Smart and Prospering Cities, Sustainable Cities, and Youthful Cities. The Commissions coordinate and execute specific projects, activities and events.

In addition to the Commissions, significant work is carried out in the UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-being, UBC Working Group on Gender Equality and UBC Communications Network.

Any coastal city or any other city interested in the development of the Baltic Sea Region may become a member of the UBC – please contact the UBC Secretariat.

[www.ubc.net](http://www.ubc.net)



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VISIT US ONLINE!



## CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC: SHARE YOUR CITIES' EXPERIENCES

The UBC meetings have been postponed or moved online. We stay at home, but we keep in touch what now seems to be more important than ever before. We all share this horrible experience, though the approaches and measures differ from country to country.

Exchange of views and practical solutions is of major importance, as we are all aware that the crisis we face today will have long-term consequences in the future. How to endure this tremendous challenge? How to cope with its effects? Let's exchange our knowledge through the UBC website that will be open now to show how the UBC cities cope with this extraordinary situation.

Share your solutions, ideas, problems and needs by sending them to [info@ubc.net](mailto:info@ubc.net) or [irene.pendolin@ubc.net](mailto:irene.pendolin@ubc.net)

Read how the UBC cope with pandemic:  
<https://ubc.net/content/coronavirus-epidemic-share-your-cities-experiences>