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# BALTIC CITIES BULLETIN

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CITIES



## IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING THROUGH INCLUSION AND SPORT IN BALTIC CITIES

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# BALTIC CITIES BULLETIN



Dear UBC Friends and Colleagues,

The UBC jubilee year is coming to its end, the festive season is almost here and it is time to stop for a moment and look at the past year and the way we have come.

For the UBC, the year 2021 marks a significant distance of 30 years and we all have come this way only by reaching common goals and trust in each other. From the very beginning, the UBC has been aiming to promote and develop the advanced, peaceful and prosperous region and encourage the leadership of the cities in shaping the future of our region. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to UBC member cities for your support, hard work, and commitment throughout all these years.

During the past two years of the global pandemic, our activities have been only online. Despite the challenging situation, the UBC Commissions and other UBC bodies have done exceptional work. We didn't stop, we even increased our work. UBC has continued with its policy framework and concretely with the policy papers on topics relevant for UBC: "Climate Change and Sustainable Development Until 2030", "Resilient Cities – beyond 2020", "Social Cohesion in Cities – beyond 2020" and "Urban Agenda for the EU". In addition, the General Conference was carried out successfully online and hosted distinguished international guest speakers.

We are also looking further into future with the New UBC Strategy, which guides our common work until 2030. Furthermore, the UBC Sustainable Action Programme has been finished and will support our actions so that UBC member cities will be climate-smart, resource-efficient and sustainable, providing a good ground for the green economy to grow.

It is not an easy time we are going through, however, the UBC is growing bigger by accepting new members, it is more and more visible on the European and global scale, and it has huge ambitions and big plans for the future years. Concrete actions and results throughout the pandemic have proved that UBC is fast adapting, proactive and needed in the regional and EU scales. No matter what happens in the world, the UBC will continue its work actively and cooperatively.

I wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! May happiness, success and good health be with you.

Warm season's greetings,



Mantas Jurgutis  
President of UBC



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# IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING THROUGH INCLUSION AND SPORT

by Rita Seidel, City of Rostock  
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**The City of Rostock has taken over the chairmanship of the UBC Inclusive and Healthy Cities Commission. Within the UBC we want to build an international network of cities and associations that are ready to promote inclusion through sport offers and volunteer work. Our main goal is to become an inclusive and easily accessible “smile city” for all of our inhabitants and guests. Let’s learn from one another and grow together.**

Our local communities have struggled through the global pandemic. Contact bans, events with distance rules and no warm greetings among people are just a few examples of how our life is influenced by the virus. This mainly affects the elderly generation as well as children, socially disadvantaged and disabled people without a social network. Sport and volunteer work are the central means that can revive our social interaction and at the same time create a healthy, active and inclusive society.

Currently, Rostock has many projects that aim at promoting inclusion in our city's society. Sport is an important link between people that keeps them healthy and makes them socialize. Many sport clubs organise inclusive trainings that promote mutual understanding and awareness between people with and without disabilities as well as old and young.

In 2022 the international and inclusive event „All Inclusive“ will take place for the first time in our city and is supposed to be a recurring event. The event concept includes a sport part, a culture programme, a science part and a family festival. We will motivate our local sport clubs to engage in the organisation and also to get in touch with international partners. They should network with other sport associations on an international level to make them think outside the box and to discover new opportunities for their future sport and free time offers.

“All Inclusive“ should bring people with and without disabilities and from different nations and backgrounds together. We would be very happy to welcome athletes from UBC cities in Rostock from 26–28 August 2022 to participate in the para sports competition in athletics, fencing, sailing, swimming or goalball.

Furthermore, Rostock is applying to be a Host Town for the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin 2023. This way we could offer to be the entry gate for participating UBC countries, which at the same time, could experience our wonderful city and network with our local sport clubs and inclusion institutions.





The Host Town program is not only an event, but also offers access to a knowledge bank where our cities employees and interested associations can take part in seminars and workshops as well as network with the participating cities Germany wide.

Since many sport offers are restricted through the global pandemic and people are prevented from attending sport competitions, our city offered an E-Sports event which was a huge success.

Although it was only on a digital basis, people got ambitious about winning and competing against others. Local companies were ready to offer a sponsoring, which were divided between the sport clubs of the winning participants.

With all these activities, we want to improve the accessibility of cities and involve sport clubs as well as volunteers from different backgrounds to make them work together and develop ideas for possible future projects and co-operations on an international level.

Let's look positively into the future and create a liveable environment for our cities' residents.





# ENVIRONMENTAL AND MARITIME EDUCATION OF YOUTH

by Anna Turnik-Pieciun | [anna.turnik@sportgdansk.pl](mailto:anna.turnik@sportgdansk.pl)



Photos: [zaruski.pl](http://zaruski.pl)

**Gdańsk Sports Center on behalf of the City of Gdańsk is starting the implementation of a 2-year EU project called "ECO-SHIP - environmental and maritime education of youth" under the Erasmus + 2021-2027 Programme in the Youth Sector.**

The project will be implemented in partnership with the Lithuanian University of Klaipėda and the Finnish Keep the Archipelago Tidy Association.

The project responds to the following challenges of the present world:

- progressive degradation of the natural environment, including the marine environment,
- insufficient knowledge of the marine environment among youth,
- narrow understanding of ecological issues by young people,
- lack of motivation to pro-ecological activities among young people,
- lack of effective tools for disseminating the principles of sustainable development.

The aim of the "ECO-SHIP" project is to increase the knowledge and skills in the field of maritime education, ecology, environmental protection and sustainable development among young people aged 15-29 in the Baltic Sea Region by creating, testing and disseminating the "Baltic Sailor Catalog" combining maritime and ecological education.

Each partner will be responsible for preparing educational materials in the areas in which they are the experts. Gdańsk Sports Center, as the shipowner of STS General Zaruski, will be responsible for the sailing and maritime aspect of the project.

The main activities planned in the project are:

- creating a maritime and environmental education programme for young people aged 15-29 called the "The Baltic Sailor Catalog",
- testing the educational programme during international sailing trips on the Gdańsk-based STS General Zaruski sailing ship in the Baltic Sea area,
- equipping 30 young people - the so-called environmental officers with competences allowing them for the training of peers in the field of ecological and maritime education, gained during cruises on the ship STS General Zaruski,
- organization of 3 national conferences to disseminate the intellectual result of the project - a maritime and environmental educational programme, the so-called "The Baltic Sailor Catalog", which will be held in Gdańsk, Klaipėda and Turku.





# SPORT – A MEANS OF INTEGRATION

by Marek Urbaniak | [m.urbaniak@gdyniasport.pl](mailto:m.urbaniak@gdyniasport.pl)



**Sport is an excellent means of integration and social inclusion for various groups, opening people up to others and enabling better communication. In Gdynia, it is used in many fields, including projects implemented by the Gdynia Health Centre and the Gdynia Sports Centre (GCS).**

Since 2013, the city has been implementing a health policy programme "Supporting development and physical and psychosocial health as well as preventing most common health and social problems of children and young people - Sport, Health, Family." It aims to popularise sport and healthy lifestyle among the young and to increase safety during physical activity.

The programme includes free educational classes for young athletes, coaches and parents, popularising physical culture, motivating pro-health attitudes and providing medical examinations enabling safe participation in sports competitions. Every year, around 800 citizens of Gdynia of various ages participate in the programme.

Sport is also an instrument integrating children with various dysfunctions with their peers. For 3 years GCS, together with international partners, has been testing the importance of sport and its effectiveness through the "Bringing Sport to Children with Special Needs" project. International collaboration contributed to creation of important tools improving developmental assistance for these children. Those are an app and a good practices handbook addressed to teachers, caregivers and parents of children with special needs.

Both are free of charge to anyone. The app is available in Google Play shop and the workbook at [www.gdyniasport.pl](http://www.gdyniasport.pl).

Many young people turned away from sport due to the pandemic. The "Get Involved" ("Wgraj się!") project aims to reverse this trend. Its primary aim is to raise awareness among children, parents and teachers of pro-health atti-

tudes by promoting sport at and beyond schools. After a test year, it now operates in 6 schools activating over 400 pupils.

The knowledge and skills acquired by the youngest students allowed them to maintain and even improve their motor skills during about 10 weeks of school absence. This is supported by video trainings created in a virtual studio with modern technology used during e-learning lessons and individually by pupils at home. They brought tangible benefits and showed children how to exercise and be active on a daily basis and taught them consistency in building good habits.

In Gdynia, activation and use of sport supported by various tools - from the traditional, to applications, e-books and videos, starts at an early age.







# MOVE FOR LIFE

## GULDBORGSUND MUNICIPALITY

by Frede Danborg | fd@guldborgsund.dk

**The national sport associations in Denmark have developed the vision that Denmark should be the world's most sport active nation by 2025. A budget of 26 million Euros has been invested in this programme Move for Life. The vision includes that 50% of the Danes should be active in sports associations, and 75% should do physical exercises and sports.**

Guldborgsund Municipality joined Move for Life in 2019 together with 25 other Danish municipalities. The vision and the goals for Move for Life corresponds with the strategies and policies of the Guldborgsund City Council, which includes strengthening frameworks for the good and healthy life.

We are focused on strengthening the sport sector and the conditions for sport associations, and to lift the many challenges that arises for the citizens who do not do sport and do not or participate in active communities.

"Our goal is to increase the number of physically active adults to 65%, corresponding to additional 3.100 citizens. In addition, it is the goal to increase the number of physically active children to 83%, corresponding to additional 1.000 children. It is our ambition that the five years partnership in Move for Life should make sports and exercise more attractive and accessible to all citizens in our municipality. I think that our results from the three examples below proves that we are well on the way", says Chairman of the Committee for Culture, Leisure and Settlement Martin Lohse.

### Active local associations

In collaboration with Danish Cycling Union and three local associations, we have launched the project 'Men on Mountain Bikes'. The goal is to get overweight and inactive men of all ages on a MTB, and ride a bike, with no divisions into fitness levels, and with room for everyone.

In addition, the key words are 'cosiness and community', so when the bike ride is over, you have fun in your group and

maybe with barbecue and a beer. So far, this project has resulted in 100 new members for these three associations.

### Educational institutions

In collaboration with the local branch of Danish Sport Confederation (DGI), our local educational institutions and a large number of local associations, we launched the KICK project. The goal is to get the students at e.g. Centre for Vocational Educations and the Health Care School to be more physical active during their school day. Specific agreements were made with local associations, e.g. the MTB-Club, belly dancing and shooting.

The key word is to get the young people to be more physical active, and feel that "it does something good for my body when I move". This should help them to join a local association, which many of the young people in fact previously have been part of. Based on feedback from the teachers, the Kick Project has had a positive effect on the student's well-being.

### Health

A project called 'Sports, exercise and the good everyday life', has started and involves collaboration between Guldborgsund Municipality, the local branch of DGI, the Government Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment and local associations. The goal is to support citizens currently at rehabilitation schemes and the jobcentre to join local associations so they can develop an active life and create new networks, for a better opportunity to live a good and healthy life.

A municipal employee, "the bridge-builder", ensures the close contact with the citizen and through counselling finds out what the citizen wants. Then the bridge builder arrange a test training for the citizen at the local association. If the test goes fine, only then, the role of the bridge builder has been completed, and the citizen is ready to continue in the local association.

Out of nine citizens from the Jobcentre, eight are still active in a local association, and have then started an education or have a new job.



# SPORT AS MEANS OF INCLUSION AND HEALTH

by Iiris Asunmaa

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Photo: outdoor gym in Jyväskylä, by Jouni Kallio

**City of Jyväskylä is the capital of sport and physical activity in Finland with the only national Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences. Jyväskylä's Capital of Sport strategy has been launched to raise awareness of sport and physical activity in all policies and in all levels of city functions.**

In Jyväskylä, social inclusion through sport actualizes through the roadmap where every citizen is being considered. The city is promoting physical activity to all citizens, regardless of their social, ethnic, or economic status or possible disabilities.

Physical activity is one of the key elements of integration. A great example of social inclusion actions in Jyväskylä is a sub-project called social integration of immigrants through sport.

The project helps immigrants of all age groups to get to know each other and other citizens, local sport facilities, and learn new things through the universal language of sport.

City of Jyväskylä has recognized four suburbs with the need of extra support. All these areas also have a significant percentage of immigrant inhabitants and city has targeted additional support and resources for those areas. It has also been noted that free of charge sport facilities, such as outdoor gyms and accessible playgrounds, are important for all with limited access to sport activities.

## Free of charge advice on sports

To support everyone's access to sports, City of Jyväskylä has invested in sports and physical activity counselling. The service is available for all citizens and age groups.

Through the counselling, you get free of charge advice on what sports you could try, and assistance to physical activity and company for the first training in a new hobby.

The counselling is cross-cutting and coordinates many services, which allows fluent service (directing clients to e.g. physiotherapy or doctor's consultations if needed). The goal is to help all citizens, especially those with e.g. disabilities, social or financial difficulties, and disadvantages backgrounds to find a suitable way to become more physically active.

Through Capital of Sports initiative we have been able to put the focus on supporting all citizens access to sports.





# PROJECT “MOVE HEALTHILY”

by Julija Grišė | [julija.grise@kaunovsb.lt](mailto:julija.grise@kaunovsb.lt)



**The free workout project “Move Healthily”, which was commenced in Kaunas back in 2013, was initiated by the public, but later taken over to be administered by Kaunas City Municipality together with Public Health Bureau of the city. The idea of the project was to provide the residents of Kaunas an opportunity to be as active as possible, receiving free services in attractive and convenient places of the city.**

Currently residents of Kaunas can take part in as many as thirty workouts per week organized by the project, which are suitable for everyone, from the youngest to the elderly people, regardless of their physical capacities. Each age group can choose activities of the most suitable intensity: from quiet yoga, Pilates or workouts for seniors to intense functional, cardio boxing or street dance workouts for kids.

Free workouts and exercises take place throughout the entire year, all week, on weekdays. Depending on the epidemiological situation, the workouts are organized in contact or remotely. In-contact workouts are organized in different public spaces and neighbourhoods of Kaunas City and every year they attract thousands of residents of Kaunas City who enjoy healthy and active lifestyle.

During the summer season, the workouts are held in the open air, and during the cold season – indoors. Workouts are organized at the hours suitable for the residents of Kaunas City: for seniors – in the morning and for working people – in the evening. The project “Move Healthily” funded by Kaunas City Municipality also invites the residents of Kaunas City to various additional activities, such as orienteering games or workouts on the roof of a building with a picturesque panorama of Kaunas City.

During the free workout project “Move Healthily”, special focus is placed on the trainers and instructors, consequently the workouts are organized by professional trainers, who have long-lasting experience and do not just help to perform exercises correctly, but also guarantee great mood of the participants, motivate to move during energetic group workouts.

The specialists of Public Health Bureau of Kaunas City Municipality as well as project coordinators try to involve in the activities as many residents of Kaunas City as possible, therefore, the project is constantly expanding: the variety of workouts is increasing, more different age groups are included, additional activities are included, whereas at the end of this year physical activities shall be commenced at companies, their premises, at the time suitable for the employees.

The workouts of the project “Move Healthily” are free for everyone, the participants are only asked to bring their own training mat, sportswear, comfortable clothes and footwear, also a bottle of water, and thus, anyone can attend the workouts of “Move Healthily”.

**You can also join the large sports community of Kaunas City.**

For more information visit: [judeksveikai.kaunas.lt](http://judeksveikai.kaunas.lt) or “Judėksveikai” on Facebook.

Pre-registration is required for workouts, to be completed at [judeksveikai.kaunas.lt/registracija](http://judeksveikai.kaunas.lt/registracija)



# KEMI – SPORT AND WELLNESS COUNSELING TO CITIZENS

by Riina Koivisto | riina.koivisto@kemi.fi



**The City of Kemi's Liikettä Kemiin! project provides sport and wellness counseling to citizens who do too little physical activity in terms of their health.**

The counseling lasts approximately 6–12 months and includes a start interview, health condition measurements and personal counseling for increasing moving, recovery and diet.

After the interest rate restrictions came into force last year, we switched to telecommuting for several months. We conducted customer meetings as normal or video calls, and exercise counseling was conveniently handled as video calls.

Our clientele also includes, among others, unemployed and mental health rehabilitators, for whom we were an important social channel at the time when their other groups and clubs were temporarily closed.

During summer time, we did a lot of counseling in the nature and at the same time got a change to get people more familiar with nature and outdoor sport places. Also, being and moving in nature gives you many health effects.

We have now been able to return to customer meetings as much as restrictions allow.

Let's take care of each other and our well-being!







# RIGA NGO HOUSE – A POINT OF SUPPORT, CONTACT AND EDUCATION FOR NGOS

by Brigita Medne | bmedne3@edu.riga.lv

**Riga NGO House is a place created by the municipality for NGOs to meet, work, learn and create. Although the NGO House has been unusually quiet since the beginning of the pandemic due to limited face-to-face services and public events, the NGO House continues to support NGOs by adapting to the new conditions and listening to their needs.**

In the virtual environment there is active cooperation and communication between NGOs, and the ability to digitally transform is one of the cornerstones of successful cooperation between NGO House and NGOs, which was highlighted during the Covid-19 outbreak.

## **NGO House – point of education**

Same as before the pandemic, NGOs meet weekly at NGO House for educational seminars, but now - online. NGOs representatives are keen to learn about the various tools and platforms for organising their work in the digital environment. The online NGOs Consultation Days, where NGOs representatives receive expert advice and guidance to develop their NGO's activities, are also popular.

## **NGO House – a contact point**

The NGO House provides a platform for the exchange of information between NGOs and their initiatives during pandemic. NGOs are invited to share good ideas and initiatives on how to survive this time of crisis and adapt to the situation. During online experience exchange conferences representatives of NGOs and municipalities from Riga and other regions of Latvia share their experiences on how to strengthen the capacity of NGOs during these challenging times.

## **NGO House – a support point**

The NGO House encourages NGOs to continue their activities, to work remotely, in a sense to “keep them alive” and to find ways to move forward. During online networking events NGO House encourages NGOs to be active, because this is the time to show the power of NGOs by being charitable, helping people in the neighbourhood.

We believe that this unusual situation helps with valuable lessons: the pandemic proves the readiness of both NGO House and NGOs to learn and adapt to modern digital tools in order to learn to work differently, to invest in an evolving experience, to be able to solve complex tasks and to use digital solutions to make NGOs' processes more efficient. Our motto for this time is: The Covid-19 pandemic will end, but NGOs and NGO House will remain!





# INCLUSION IN SPORTS – THE CITY OF KIEL IS ON ITS WAY

by Philip Schüller | philip.schueller@kiel.de & Hanno Treuer | hanno.treuer@kiel.de



Photo: Arne Gloy

**The state capital Kiel defined inclusion as a cross-sectional goal in 2013 as part of its strategic goals. There is a consensus in Kiel that in local action every person is accepted as an individual just as they are. It must be possible for all people living in Kiel to participate entirely in social life. This applies to all areas of life and of course also to sports. Nevertheless, people with disabilities are still underrepresented in sports. They do significantly less sport than people without disabilities.**

Kiel pursues the goal of enabling all people to participate in sport through different approaches. One of the approaches is to redesign sports facilities so that no people are excluded by physical or structural barriers. Therefore, renovations and new buildings of sports facilities are built barrier-free so that they can also be used by people with disabilities.

For example in the "Sport- und Begegnungspark Kiel Gaarden" ("Sports- and Leisurepark Kiel Gaarden") accessibility is a consistent requirement in the planning progress. This unique park is a 37 hectare-sized sports facility that has been successively expanded since 2011.

Another important thing is about to break down barriers in people's minds and extend their perspective. The aim is that everyone can imagine that all people are belonging together and of course do sports together. This is why Kiel supports a lot of inclusive sporting events.

For example, Kiel hosted the National games of Special Olympics Germany in 2018. Also Kiel organizes the event "Kieler Woche inklusiv" (Kiel Week – Inclusive"), a sports fes-

tival for people with and without disabilities, as part of the Kiel Week. Events like these bring people with and without disabilities and different generations together and encourage all participants to engage with inclusive sports activities. As a result, the interests of people with disabilities receive increased social attention, which is why Kiel will continue to support inclusive sporting events.

In this year the city of Kiel has published its annual social report with the focus topic "Inclusion and integration through sports". In particular, people with disabilities must be invited to do their sport in the sports clubs together with non-disabled people.

For this, everyone has to reduce reservations and resentments and gain new experiences. It became clear that the path to barrier-free participation of people with disabilities has been taken but we are still on a long way to reach our goal of a healthy and active city.



Photo: Lh Kiel - Bodo Quante



# UBC CITIES EXPLORING HEALTH AND



**The world has changed a lot last year as we stepped into the unknown. Our region didn't become an exception, the long-recognized challenges in health and well-being became even more perplexed by the fact of lockdowns and anti-pandemic actions. Amidst the Covid restrictions, the UBC cities were trying their best to adapt and solve lifestyle-related health issues and to find novel ways to promote health and well-being by involving the citizens, NGOs and SMEs in the efforts.**

Long term UBC members Helsinki, Klaipeda, Tartu and Turku have teamed up with fellow BSR cities (Pskov, Jelgava local municipality, Poznań, Suwałki and Cherepovets) to create an effective model of cross-sectoral cooperation for health and well-being promotion.

The InterregBSR project called Healthy Boost was kicked-off in 2019 and was supposed to run the pilots during the year 2020 to test the Model, fine-tune it and produce the set of best practices to be disseminated among fellow cities.

The pandemic somewhat hindered the plans but couldn't bring the process to a stand-still. The cities of the project have managed to adapt, experiment with the extended reality tools and utilize the opportunity to test the model solving the challenges they had.

The City of Klaipėda revealed through surveys and studies that residents were facing a physical inactivity problem. The decision was to promote sustainable mobility within the city and for that reason, VR technology was used to give people an opportunity to feel how it would be like to travel Klaipėda by bike.

After the end of quarantine, the city residents were invited to come to Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau to try the VR tool. Moreover, various activities and events were organized during European Mobility Week. Read more:

- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/pilots/klaipeda>
- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/sites/hboost/files/hb-klaipeda-vr-room1-700.jpg>
- [http://www.healthyboost.eu/sites/hboost/files/HB\\_-\\_Klaipeda-Co-designing-workshop-with-Iron-Cat-2020-09-14.jpg](http://www.healthyboost.eu/sites/hboost/files/HB_-_Klaipeda-Co-designing-workshop-with-Iron-Cat-2020-09-14.jpg)

The City of Tartu was concerned about adults that often sit the whole working day and while commuting – after-work activities do not always compensate for this inactivity resulting in problems arising with physical and mental health. It was necessary to start shaping the mindset, how to organize working day to be more active and make exercising outdoors more accessible for everybody.

Tartu has engaged residents to cooperate and co-create providing accessible information to people with any social and physical background. The city of Tartu has developed an augmented reality application to make the exercising more exciting and involving and designed accessible information boards. Read more:

- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/pilots/tartu>
- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/sites/hboost/files/hb-tartu-information-board.jpg>
- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/sites/hboost/files/styles/box/public/field/image/hb-tartu-app03-700px.jpg?itok=l-2MQ4o29>



# NOVEL WAYS TO PROMOTE WELL-BEING

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The City of Turku aimed to find ways to communicate about health and wellbeing services, and that way help city residents make choices that benefit their well-being and participate in decision making.

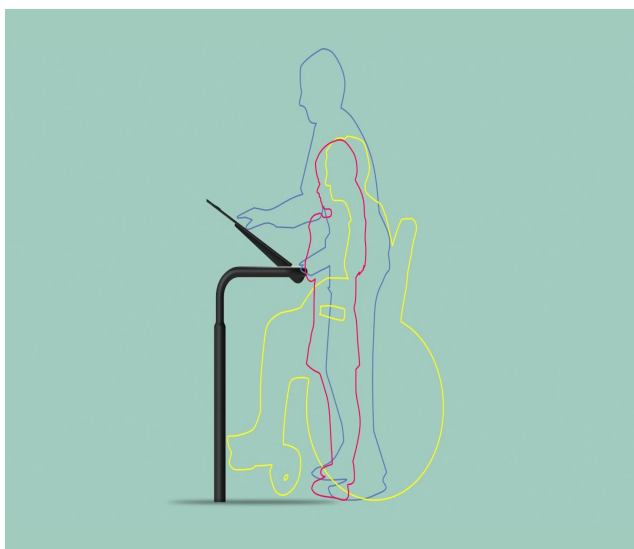
To reach a sustainable result, Turku has approached these challenges from different angles. Turku targeted residents directly and worked with city employees and NGOs providing services for them.

Light to Turku series of videos developed by City of Turku told hopeful stories that looked for an optimistic future during an exceptional time at the Covid-19 epidemic. The series consisted of ten videos and online articles with photographs.

The series introduces, among other things, the elderly's exercises done in balconies to keep social distance, student choir activities, additional support received in schools, educational opportunities for those who have become unemployed due to covid-19, and children's summer activities.

The idea was not only to cheer up but describe different opportunities to foster well-being during the epidemic. Read more:

- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/pilots/turku>
- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/sites/hboost/files/images/pilot/nuorisoliikunta3.jpg>
- <http://www.healthyboost.eu/sites/hboost/files/styles/box/public/field/image/nuorisoliikunta4.jpg?itok=Qh17GhBt>







## The XVI UBC General Conference was held online

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

**The UBC XVI General Conference, held online due to the Covid-19 situation, elected the Presidium and Board for the next 2-year period as well as adopted the new UBC Strategy and other operational documents. Over 80 cities' representatives participated.**

The General Conference hosted distinguished guest speakers: **Sergey Lavrov**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, **Dario Nardella**, Mayor of Florence and President of Eurocities, **Normunds Popenis**, Deputy Director General, DG Regio, EC, and **Grzegorz Poznański**, Director General, CBSS Secretariat. The General Conference called for cities and the UBC as drivers of sustainable economy and inclusiveness that share the same interests and goals with many partners – goals such as green and digital transition becoming reality.

“Despite the Covid situation and no matter what happens in the world, the UBC functions actively and cooperatively”, states the newly re-elected UBC President **Mantas Jurgutis**.

Vice-Mayor of Turku **Elina Rantanen** was re-elected as the 1st Vice-President and as other three Vice-Presidents Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk **Piotr Grzelak**, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for External Relations of St. Petersburg **Vyacheslav Kalganov**, and Councillor of the City of Kristiansand **Jørgen H. Kristiansen**.

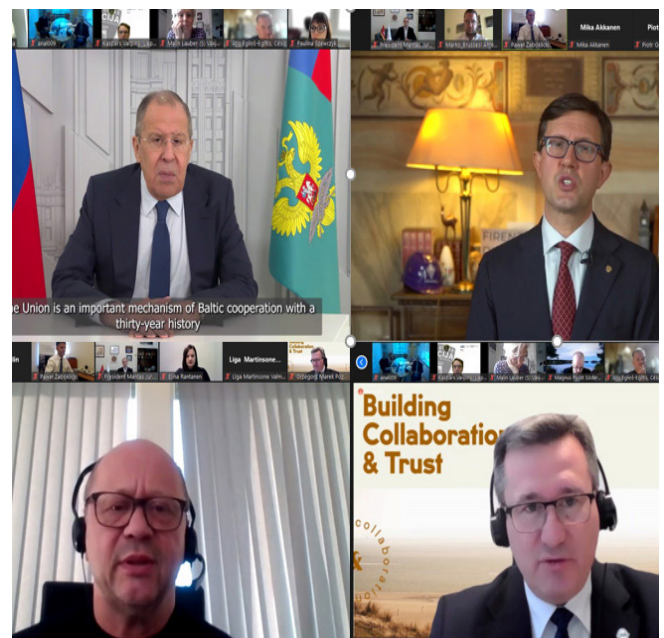
### Through challenging times together – in past and present

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the UBC. The organisation was founded in 1991 in Gdańsk and has ever since worked towards boosting cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region and improving the lives of citizens across the region. “From the very beginning the UBC was aiming to promote and develop the advanced, peaceful and prosperous region around the Baltic Sea and encourage the leadership of the cities in shaping the future of our region. Though

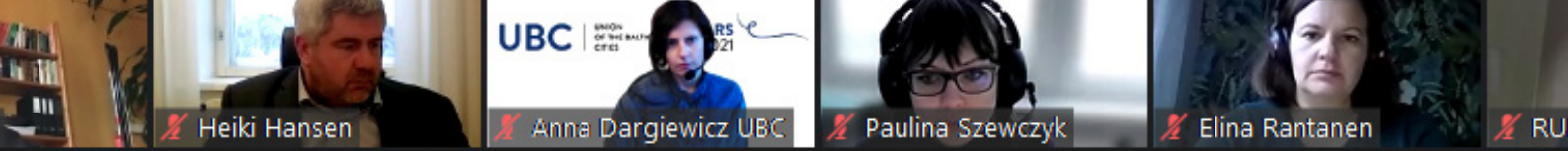
during this mandate, the past two years, our activities have been only online, still our organization has been proactive in all daily activities, projects and initiatives. There are a number of projects started and still going on. The UBC has proved to be a reliable partner in various cooperational partnerships.”, says President Jurgutis.

More UBC's past and present stories in the “UBC 30 Years” jubilee publication:

- <https://ubc.net/sites/default/files/ubc30lr.pdf>
- <https://issuu.com/unionofthebalticcities/docs/ubc30lr>







## The new UBC Executive Board met online

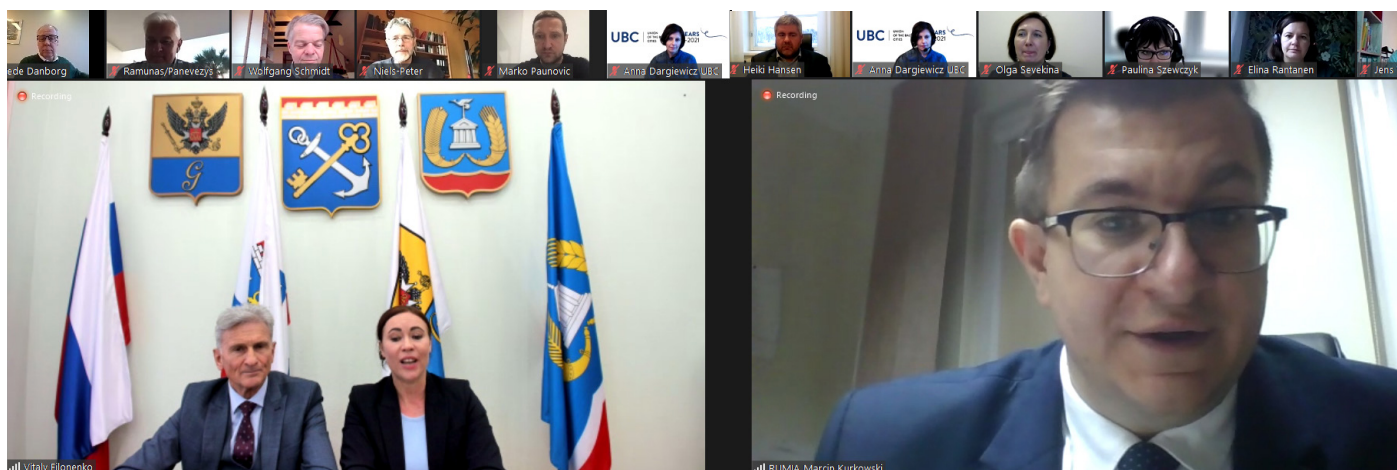
by Irene Pendolin | [irene.pendolin@ubc.net](mailto:irene.pendolin@ubc.net)

The new UBC Executive Board, elected in the XVI UBC General Conference in October, met online on 30 November. The Board approved the applications of two new UBC member cities: Rumia, Poland and Gatchina, Russia. UBC President Mantas Jurgutis expressed a warm welcome to the UBC family.

Other topics on the agenda were planned activities, project proposals and budget for 2022, which the Executive Board approved. In addition, the Board decided to support "SMILE CITY goes Baltic" – an initiative of the City of Rostock – as well as authorised the UBC Presidium to make the final decision after application of three UBC member cities to establish an ad hoc commission on education. Final decision about a new commission is made by the General Conference.

To conclude, President Jurgutis emphasized that despite the difficult situation created by the global pandemic, the UBC Commissions have done exceptional work. – We didn't stop, we even increased our work, we moved online. The spring will tell if we are finally able to meet in person, which I know we are all looking forward to.

The next UBC Executive Board meeting date will be announced later, with regard to the Covid-19 situation.



Mayor of the City of Gatchina **Vitaly Filonenko** and Secretary of the City of Rumia **Marcin Kurkowski** expressed their gladness for being approved as member cities of the UBC.





# UBC 2030: New strategy for the upcoming years

by Björn Grönholm | [bjorn.gronholm@turku.fi](mailto:bjorn.gronholm@turku.fi)

**The UBC is celebrating our 30-year anniversary and decided on a new UBC 2030 Strategy. 30 years of steady development and cooperation of the Baltic Sea Region gives the UBC a strong foundation to stand on and vision for the next years.**

During the years up to 2030 our region and the UBC cities will face a lot of large scale and demanding challenges. Many of these challenges are known and we need to find a path and solutions to these challenges. Time, knowledge, resource and dedicated political leaders as well as employees in cities will be needed for finding best possible solutions.

The role of cities is clear as the cities implement international and national legislation to practices on the local level in our societies. For UBC member cities, it will be important to see the role, our mandate and responsibility clearly and try to take a pro-active approach to prepare ourselves for upcoming needs and decisions.

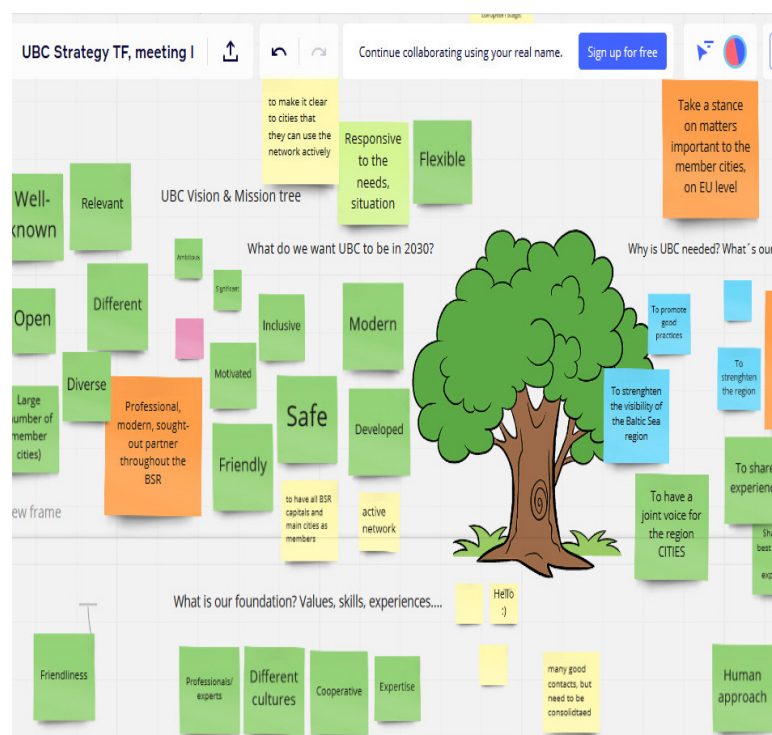
UBC follows closely the global and EU goals and priorities for the upcoming years and continue to enhance active multi-stakeholder partnerships and find new dynamic steps for successful cooperation within the region but also in Europe and globally.

The new UBC 2030 Strategy has been drafted to be as operative and ambitious as possible. UBC wants to be an inclusive and dynamic platform for our member cities. UBC will cooperate with other networks and organizations and UBC want to be recognized as a global forerunner.

UBC wants to have an active role in further developing our Baltic Sea Region in creating high-quality living environment for our inhabitants.

With the new UBC 2030 Strategy, the intention is to create a joint voice for cities in the Baltic Sea Region, regardless of size. The different perspectives of the cities in the Baltic Sea Region are a richness, where common goals and innovative solutions can be found.

We trust in our work, working together!





# UBC Planning Cities Commission: From a model city of socialist urbanization to a sustainable city

by Andreas Schubert | [Andreas.Schubert@rostock.de](mailto:Andreas.Schubert@rostock.de)  
Paulina Szewczyk | [pszewczyk@gdynia.pl](mailto:pszewczyk@gdynia.pl)



Photo: Andreas Schubert

**From September 26 to 29, 2021, Union of the Baltic Cities, Planning Cities Commission in cooperation with the City of Rostock held the annual seminar in Rostock. Over 20 urban development experts from 10 UBC Member Cities worked together with their colleagues from Rostock.**

The topic of the seminar was “From a model city of socialist urbanization to a sustainable city Rostock NW 2035+ : How to make 5 absolutely solid satellite towns even better?”

On Monday morning, Dr. **Paulina Szewczyk**, the chairperson of the UBC Planning Cities Commission from the City of Gdynia, welcomed the participants and expressed great satisfaction of meeting in person. She thanked resigning **Christian Hegardt**, Region Gotland and announced the new vice chairperson of the Commission Dr. **Māra Liepa-Zemeša** from the city of Riga and a new steering group.

Utilizing the UBC approach, the Rostock team led by Dr. **Andreas Schubert** have given a report of the implementation of UBC workshop’s recommendations in Rostock 2017. The Rostock team presented the current planning status of the national gardener exhibition 2025 as an essential step towards realizing the “Rostock Oval” strategy. Finally, the Rostock team introduced the workshop sites and all participants had an opportunity to visit and walk through them.

On Tuesday morning Dr. **Berndt Hunger** (Berlin), chairman of the Centre of Competence for Major Housing Estates gave the inspiring keynote lecture titled “Renewal of Large Housing Estates – German Experiences”.

During the workshop sessions, development options of the five districts of Rostock’s northwest were investigated in details and recommendations for strategic and tactical action were formulated.

As a result, the experts came to the recommendation to keep the already high structural, spatial and social qualities of the large housing estates at a high level through close-knit offers for social revitalization, as well as to strengthen the local economy.

However, all thoughts about Rostock NW are about the everyday life of around 75 000 residents and equalizing their living conditions to that of other city quarters (under development and transition).

There is a strong need for coordinating different fields of the settlements’ life – a kind of responsible contact person who could integrate urban planning with social, cultural and economic issues, to stimulate own development projects and implement them more in own responsibly. Rostock needs an interdisciplinary approach and long-term strategy for the NW.

In addition, modern public transport and pedestrian connections between the five settlements should be thought through and strengthened as, meanwhile, urban space has grown and interlinked community already has existed.

The Rostock Heritage conservators may begin with the preservation of individual monuments as well as entire building ensembles, especially in Schmarl district. The five settlements are developing into more than just large housing estates in prefabricated construction, this trend should be strengthened.

On Wednesday, the results were presented to **Claus Ruhe Madsen**, the Mayor of Rostock, who expressed the satisfaction with the results of the workshops and thanked the participants for the successful seminar.

Further information:

• <https://vimeo.com/641069671/4a87176cd8>



# First Intensive Study Program in project NEEDS

by Kaspars Vārpiņš | kaspars.varpins@liepaja.lv

# NEEDS

November 1 to 5, for the whole week took place the first Intensive Study Program in the Erasmus+ funded project “Needs-based education and studies in societal security” (NEEDS). Because of the pandemic, the ISP took place virtually. More than 30 participants – teachers, students and practitioners – from the Baltic Sea Region during the 1st ISP learned about various societal security aspects.

During the ISP the students learned about the societal security in general, furthermore deepening their knowledge about crisis diagnosis, climate change and various intergovernmental organizations and their role of strengthening collaboration and trust in societal security. The highlight of the ISP was the analysis of the case study.

During the project, it is planned to develop four case studies around various societal security topics. In the first ISP the analyzed case study was about climate change. Students were provided with four different scenarios of the climate change. In the supervision and input of teachers and practitioners, students executed their gained knowledge and prepared crisis diagnosis for their assigned scenario.

During the project until year 2023 there will be few more ISP's. But at the end of the project two main outcomes will occur – created short online course on societal security in the Baltic Sea Region for students and practitioners, as well a “community of professionals” network and an interface for collaboration will be established.

Two of the project NEEDS partners are from the UBC Safe Cities Commission – Liepaja Municipal Police and Hamburg Fire and Rescue Service. In addition few more UBC Safe Cities Commission members were involved in the successful run of the first NEEDS ISP.







# UBC Sustainable Cities Commission actively involved in shaping the new strategic framework

by Mariia Andreeva | [mariia.andreeva@turku.fi](mailto:mariia.andreeva@turku.fi) & Agnieszka Ilola | [agnieszka.ilola@turku.fi](mailto:agnieszka.ilola@turku.fi)  
Photo: UBC Sustainable Cities Commission

**The autumn of 2021 has been very active for the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission: entering the new decade and equipped with inspiring examples from member cities, we have been involved in the development of two strategic frameworks of the Union.**

The Commission contributed to the co-development of the UBC Strategy 2022–2030 adopted at the XVI UBC General Conference after a year-long preparatory process. The General Conference also announced the launch of the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2022–2030 prepared by our Commission in cooperation with other UBC stakeholders.

## UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2022–2030

The UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2022–2030 is the guiding document for the whole UBC network. It was developed in collaboration with all UBC bodies and member cities, based on their interests and goals for the starting decade. Climate change and localisation of UN SDGs take the central role in the Programme and are integrated in all five topics of our future cooperation: water, mobility, energy, biodiversity and resource efficiency. Each topic includes a set of concrete measures which cities can implement to advance their progress towards more sustainable urban environments.

Launching these documents, UBC commits to awareness-raising and partnership, actively reinforcing knowledge and distributing know-how in the region by providing tools for better communication, close collaboration and dissemination of information on sustainability. The strategic visions of UBC for 2030 are an important step towards building a more inclusive, result-oriented, impact driven and dynamic city network.

## New Head of Secretariat in the Sustainable Cities Commission

**Agnieszka Ilola** has been nominated the new Acting Head of Secretariat of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission.

The end of the year marked a change in the UBC SCC leadership: as the previous Head of Secretariat **Björn Grönholm** has stepped aside from the post, the new Head of Secretariat was nominated – **Esther Kreutz-Hassinen**. With Ms Kreutz-Hassinen currently being on parental leave, the Acting Head of Secretariat of the UBC SCC as of 19 October 2021 is Agnieszka Ilola.

Ms Ilola has been working in the Commission as project coordinator for over 15 years and before the nomination she was involved in development, coordination and implementation of international projects focusing a.o. on integrated urban water management, Baltic Sea and marine environment protection, climate change adaptation, resource efficiency and green growth.

“UBC and its commissions for 30 years have been successfully participating in important policy development forums highlighting urban dimension of EU policies, and this direction will continue in the future. In UBC SCC, our main ambition is to provide cities with opportunities, tools and methods for collaboration and exchange, and to connect them stronger within the network and beyond towards a sustainable, green and climate resilient Baltic Sea Region by 2030. We are on a good way to achieve it and I’m extremely happy to be the part of this journey,” states Ms Ilola.





# Baltic Sea Youth Platform

UBC Youthful Cities Commission:

## Baltic Sea Youth Platform keeps mainstreaming youth participation in the BSR

by Dmitrijs Zverevs | [Dmitrijs.Zverevs@riga.lv](mailto:Dmitrijs.Zverevs@riga.lv)

**As the Baltic Sea Youth Platform (BSYP) project was approaching the end of its second year, the partnership met in Stockholm in November to discuss what has been already accomplished and outline plans for the remaining year of the project.**

Even though this was just our second meeting in person due to the pandemics, BSYP has been utilising online collaboration opportunities at their full potential throughout its whole duration.

The concept of empowering youth and fostering real participation in decision and policymaking in the Baltic Sea Region has been at the heart of the project. Involvement of three key networks uniting public bodies of the BSR (CBSS, BSSSR and UBC) and two youth organisations (LijOT and ESN Finland) allows the partnership to transform its ambitious mission into diverse and visible events in the region.

Many more youth organisations and individual youth has joined the platform as associated partners and members of the working groups, since they share our passion for youth participation.

Among the achievements of the partnership so far, one should mention development of the Baltic Sea Youth Declaration that was presented at the EUSBSR Annual Forum in 2020 and “Youth Vision Statement Beyond 2030” that was presented at the Council of the Baltic Sea States’ Ministerial meeting. Alongside with that, the partnership supported organisation of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Youth Forum – a side event to the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference.

In the remaining year of the BSYP project we plan to focus on finalising planned intellectual outputs and promoting them in the BSR area (also among UBC member cities). One of them – a virtual toolbox – will contain diverse background materials, tips & hints, as well as success stories from the region that young people can use to make their voice better heard in their local environment and beyond.

Furthermore, we will promote the newly designed online collaboration platform for individuals, organisations and communities - ACTER.

Being an open platform that the partners plan to sustain after the end of Erasmus+ funding, the network is willing to welcome new stakeholders who would like to join our journey for a more youth-friendly region. If you are pondering whether to be one of them, please check our web page [www.bsyp.eu](http://www.bsyp.eu).



# UBC Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being: Steaming around the Baltic Sea

by Matti Mäkelä | matti.makela@turku.fi



Photos: Jaska Poikonen

**The title of this article was also the title of the webinar held in November. Webinar – arranged by the Task Force Supporting Youth Employment and Well-Being – covered some of the best STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) education practices in the Baltic Sea Region (for example, Finnish STEAM activities in Turku and in Oulu, Fablabs in Lithuanian Schools).**

This webinar brought together 23 experts from different countries around the Baltic Sea. Even more popular was STEAM Turku Online Study Visit on May with as much as 58 participants. This study visit presented STEAM Turku in a nutshell: aims and goals, values, activities, results and best practices from pre-school education to secondary level.

These and other forms of STEAM cooperation in BSR made apparent that there is a real demand for more cooperation and exchange of best practices in the field of STEAM education. TF has accepted the challenge and will arrange more STEAM webinars and study visits next year and support other STEAM activities in the UBC network.

In addition to STEAM, Task Force concentrated on two other major themes during the year 2021: Basic Skills and Attractiveness of Vocational Education and Training. Under these themes TF arranged two webinars (one in May and one in September) under the title Today's Truants – The best practices to manage school attendance problems. In these webinars participants learned what are school attendance problems, how to identify them and how they manifest in basic education. Three keys to better deal with SAPs turned out to be Attention, Attendance data and Assessment.

Furthermore, during the year 2021 TF also planned two workshops to the UBC General Conference workshops, which will be held in 2022/23:

- VET Goes Hybrid: Developing Resilient, Equitable and Attractive Solutions to Vocational Education and Training
- Resilient cities through attractive education – STEAM education tackling global challenge







# YUPAD – YoUth PArticipatory budgets empowering young people

by Marko Paunovic | [marko.paunovic@ubc.net](mailto:marko.paunovic@ubc.net)

**The “YUPAD” project aims to enable young people to understand, practice, and influence youth participatory budgets across European cities.**

The objectives are to develop a comprehensive view of already existing grass-root and policy practices in youth participatory budgets combining the research, policy, and youth work practices; to create and put in place local policy mechanisms for participatory budgets; to develop the capacity of educators to provide quality non-formal educational activities for young people on topics of youth participatory budgets; to enable local authorities to put in practice youth participatory budgets using big data while addressing digital transformation; and to ensure the sustainability of project results by developing the community of practitioners from across Europe.

The activities will comprise Management and quality assurance (WP1); “Food for Thought”: Recipes, The Fair, The Cookbook (WP2); YUPAD Calculator, bees’ methodology and the platform: “Big Data Youth Budgets” & Piloting (WP3); Capacity Building for Educators and Local Authorities (WP4); and Policy and Sustainability (WP5).

The results will shed light on the capacity and skills of young people raised; capacity of educators to provide quality

non-formal educational activities for young people on topics of youth participatory budgets; capacity of local authorities to put in practice youth participatory budgets using big data tools; whether long-term cooperation between key stakeholders in all partners’ countries has advanced; and if political level cooperation and recognition of youth participation on local level paves the way for a systematic change towards the implementation of innovative participatory budget solutions.

The impact will be directly measured on targeted groups during the project activities (Consortia, Young People, Educators, Local Authorities, and Community of Practice), and indirectly on other stakeholders targeted only by communication, dissemination, networking, and sustainability activities. There will be a short impact during the project duration, which will also have effects in the medium and long-term (2 and 5 years afterward, respectively).

This project will be jointly implemented by 11 partners including Out of the Box International, Union of Baltic Cities, CESIE, CSI, SÜDWIND, RD IKSD, OPENS, IED, Homo Eminens and VM University. The project was developed by UBC Brussels Antenna and supported by Erasmus + programme of the EU.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# CITY NEWS



Photos: City of Mielno

## THEY WILL TAKE CARE OF THE SHORE IN MIELNO

**In Mielno, from the side of Unieście, works related to the reconstruction of shoreline reinforcements are underway. After the design phase, it is time for construction works under the project "Reconstruction and expansion of the existing system shoreline reinforcements at the level of the town of Mielno".**

The project will cost PLN 21.5 million and the works will be completed until January 31, 2023. The beach will be widened and will be better protected against the sea.

### Activities in stages

The investment has been divided into stages. In the first stage, preparatory works will be carried out, consisting in searching and extracting ferromagnetic materials from the area of the planned works, i.e. cleaning it of, inter alia, unexploded ordnance. In the next stage, an erratic band will be built of broken stones to protect the dune near Mielno (from the Unieście district) against the effects of the sea.

Three episodes of such bands have been planned. At the western end of the town, there will also be an erratic band for a distance of 250 m. The contractor will also complete the existing edging made of star blocks (places where they have collapsed), and later will demolish and dispose of old wooden shore spurs. They will be replaced by 33 new spurs (also wooden). There will also be an artificial beach power supply, which will wide it twice.

Olga Roszak-Peząła, Mayor of Mielno: "The beach in Mielno will undergo a real metamorphosis. This is an investment that we are very much awaited. We started our efforts to carry it out in 2015, when the councilors made a joint decision regarding the implementation of a project related to technical works and morphodynamics. This step cost the budget 150,000. PLN but it was necessary to be able to talk about this type of investment at all."

"The protection of the seashore and the safety of visitors and residents is a priority for the tourist commune. In addition, the scope of works will also make our seaside towns more attractive. I am glad that after many different turbulences, the Maritime Office in Szczecin is starting this project. Yes, there will be some communication difficulties, but the final effect is what counts."

by Radosław Sobko | [r.sobko@gmina.mielno.pl](mailto:r.sobko@gmina.mielno.pl)







Photo: Janne Mustonen

## TURKU WANTS TO BE A PIONEER IN EQUAL SUBURB POLICY

**Turku develops housing areas that are sustainable, pleasant, and support a good life in its suburbs. This vision, which also takes into account the New European Bauhaus initiative of the European Commission, is being carried out together with residents.**

Turku wants to be a pioneer in equal urban development and suburb policy. In the city's new mayor's programme, equal development of residential areas has been highlighted as one of the key projects.

Turku has also begun making a local vision for all suburbs, together with urban residents.

Turku on the coast of the Baltic Sea and by the river Aura is Finland's oldest city and the country's former capital. Turku has a dense centre, but two-thirds of Turku residents live in suburban areas mainly in blocks of flats. There are almost 200,000 people in Turku.

### No new, but repairing the old

**Timo Hintsanen**, Director of Urban Planning in Turku, says that the objectives of the European Commission's New European Bauhaus initiative are being implemented in the development of Turku suburbs. Its three key values are sustainability, aesthetics, and inclusion.

He recalls that about a hundred years ago the original Bauhaus modernised production, design, thinking, and science. They really wanted to make new things all the time.

"Now in the new Bauhaus, producing new things is not an absolute value, but resource wisdom and the circular economy are the starting points. For example, the old building

stock is maintained, modified, and repaired smartly."

Hintsanen points out that the old blocks of flats in the suburbs of Turku, the majority of which are about fifty years old, are of top quality in housing design. The basic solutions for rooms provide a functional framework for a good life, the rooms are large enough, and every square metre is utilised.

"It is easy to repair slightly broken ones. If larger renovations are needed, it is advisable to utilise at least the housing frames. If we continuously dismantle and build new concrete, it will have a huge carbon footprint", Hintsanen thinks. He adds that Turku's ambitious goal is to be carbon neutral by 2029.

### Experts and residents together

It is also important to increase the comfort in the suburbs, in line with the aesthetic objectives of the New European Bauhaus. Many people think that the old 1970s apartment block has rather rough beauty at most. The external appearance of the buildings can be developed, but there are plenty of other things that can be done to make the suburbs comfortable.

"The cheapest way is, of course, to increase the number of trees, shrubs, and plantings; to offer residents, for example, an opportunity for urban farming. It is also important to improve public spaces, squares, routes, and sports facilities."

Of course, inclusion means that urban residents themselves participate in the development of suburbs, together with experts.

"The development must take into account the wishes and views of the residents, but also, for example, the materials and megatrends of researchers on where the world and housing are going. Solutions can be influenced by, for example, the ageing of the population, climate change, and future energy solutions."

by Matti Välimäki  
contact: Irene Pendolin | irene.pendolin@turku.fi





# THE RENOVATED STADIUM NAMED AFTER JANIS DALINS HAS BEEN OPENED

**On August 13 a festive ceremony took place opening the renovated Stadium with a new track and field athletics arena named after Janis Dalins – the winner of the first for Latvia Olympic medal.**

“The trip to the first for Latvia Olympic medal has become a baton. It is up to us to receive it and pass it on, continuing the story that we can faster, higher, stronger!” Such a message at the opening ceremony was placed in a time capsule for future generations, symbolically represented as a baton and visible to every stadium visitor.

On August 3, 1932 Janis Dalins from Valmiera walked 50 km in Los Angeles. It was a racewalking for silver, the first Olympic medal for Latvia. Having started his incredible career only five years earlier Janis Dalins enchanted his fellow people with his talent, simplicity and tremendous ability to work. They bought tickets, climbed trees and sat on the fence just to see Janis Dalins walking. Along with his success a fan movement was born in Latvia. No other Latvian athlete has been able to launch such a people movement in sports as it was done by Janis Dalins.

It was the reason to start the construction of the Stadium named after Janis Dalins in the mid-1930s, as the previous sports garden had become too small to host international competitions and to be attended by everyone who wanted to see the Latvia's most popular athlete at the time - racewalker Janis Dalins. The Stadium was opened in 1938, and in 1993 it underwent a major reconstruction.

The Stadium named after the winner of the first for Latvia Olympic medal is a sports building of national significance with state funding, with the active participation of the Latvian Athletics Association in the design process. It is possible to train and organize competitions in 24 athletics disciplines in the stadium and the new arena. The area of the athletics arena including the building under the grandstand and the hotel for the athletes is 12,367 m<sup>2</sup>.

The biggest benefit for athletes will be the chance to complete their work both in the summer season and in winter, because the new athletics arena provides an opportunity to train representatives of running, jumping and throwing disciplines. Furthermore, the stadium and the landscaped area of the stadium will be freely available to all lovers of active recreation.

“The story of the Latvian queen of sports - track and field athletics - in Valmiera began with the first Olympic medal won for Latvia in 1932 by Valmiera's walker Janis Dalins. Let Valmiera become a place of growth for athletes, let new achievements be made, long live fan support!” so wished the Chairperson of the Council of Valmiera Municipality Self-Government Janis Baiks.

There are freely available three open-air sports courts in the area: a basketball court and a basketball court of the Bertans' brothers, dedicated to the memory of the legendary basketball player Kobe Bryant, as well as a universal court for volleyball and mini-football games. There will also be a children's playground in the area.

In the arena there are paintings by artist Vladislavs Lakse, depicting athletes who have brought Latvia's name to the world.

Both the arena and the Stadium have received a certificate of the World Athletics. It testifies to the quality of the athletics infrastructure and compliance with the technical requirements, highlighting Latvia on the international athletics stage.

by City of Valmiera | [info@valmierasnovads.lv](mailto:info@valmierasnovads.lv)





**1st place**  
Kaunas / Mantas Zinkevičius

### WINNERS

Aim of the contest was to showcase life in UBC member cities and celebrate UBC's jubilee year. We received wonderful photos from 12 UBC cities and the winners were announced during the XVI UBC General Conference.

The winning photos and at least one photo from all the cities that participated are featured in UBC social media during the rest of 2021, with the jubilee hashtag **#UBC30**.

The photos are also featured in UBC Flickr page at <https://bit.ly/3pTcpb6>

Thank you to all the cities who participated in the contest with your beautiful photos!



**2nd place**  
Valmiera / Jānis Ukass



**3rd place**  
Tartu / Mana Kaasik



**4th place**  
Karlskrona / Stefan Andersson









We  
wish  
you a  
Merry  
Christmas



✦ & ✦

HAPPY NEW YEAR