

UBC Resolution on United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals

In autumn 2015, 193 member states of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN's Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals outlines comprehensive goals and targets that aim to protect the planet and people, ensuring that no one is left behind. The Goal 11; "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" is explicitly addressing cities. In June 2016, the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development elaborated Baltic 2030 Action Plan, specifically tailored for the BSR to guide macro-regional stakeholders through the implementation of the SDGs.

The Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) has during the whole existence, for 25 years, been focusing on making the Baltic Sea Region more sustainable, attractive and more resilient to challenges in our environment. Sustainability will be elaborated through active co-operation between cities and innovative companies, third sector and citizens.

In 2007 the UBC General Conference decided on the first UBC Resolution on Climate Change. Since then many improvements have taken place and the UBC member cities have step by step become more aware of climate change risks as well as have taken concrete actions to lower the emissions and adopt to climate change in best possible way. In 2017 the UBC started a strategic cooperation with the world's leading organization on voluntary Climate reporting. This cooperation is planned to continue in 2018 and will hopefully support cities in the transformation to become fossil fuel free cities.

Upon 25th anniversary of the Union of the Baltic Sea Cities organization (UBC), we realize the importance of further mobilizing the potential and cooperation in achieving common goals. As outlined in our sustainability action programme 2016-2021 "Stairway towards Sustainable Baltic Cities", cities are the key actors in making a positive change, therefore, with the experience of our member cities and the 7 UBC commissions, we must fully contribute to creating more resilient and climate smart cities and regions. It is time for the cities to take the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals on everyone's agenda and demonstrate the full, unprecedented action in order to achieve a higher level of sustainability and thereby fulfill the goals of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The Union of the Baltic Cities commits to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and will continue to focus on responding to climate change in alignment with the Paris Agreement by implementing and heavily promoting the concepts of the green growth, circular economy, industrial symbiosis and sharing economy. Our prime target is achieving low-emission and resource-wise Baltic Sea Region through smart city planning, capacity-building and sharing of best practices. At the same time we will continue to work for more efficient use of our water resources and more efficient water treatment. By working together, using our own potential we can achieve good results.

The Union of the Baltic Cities will focus on using its potential even more and will help its members to benchmark and support each other in order to set and reach ambitious goals. Our region is identified as a region of utmost strength to fulfill its regional and global responsibility by cooperating, raising the awareness, sharing good practices and effective actions. With our open house approach, the UBC will enhance active multi-stakeholder partnerships and find steps for successful cooperation as a key to the implementation of SDGs.

This is a call for Baltic Sea Region city leadership! Global leadership of macro-regional sustainable development can be best filled through active co-operation between cities, civil society and innovative private companies. Our network of active members, with desire to improvement of our strategic partnerships and common actions, will strive to become leaders in the sustainability and set an example for the rest of the world on the way to reaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It is our firm belief that UBC cities are to become climate change leaders in Europe and globally, implementing one of the most innovative and sustainable urban projects.