

**Short status report of the UBC Task Force on Migration/Refugees Issues
to the 77th UBC Executive Board Meeting
10 November 2016 in Stockholm**

Within the frame of the 76 UBC Executive Board in Kaunas 06 June 2016, with participants from Naestved, Kaunas, Växjö, Turku, Gdansk, and, Rostock the issue, thoroughly treated at the Conference on the impact of the European Refugees Crisis 14-16 March, 2016 in Rostock, was discussed to be followed-up.

The idea was to meet and share experience on good practices. This should take place in a daily format not making follow a big event immediately. The main purpose should be to encourage those who have a good base to do so, and to ask them to share their results with others.

The first initiative was taken by three Nordic cities, taking advantage of not having to use the English language as bridge between them: Naestved, Kristiansand and Växjö, They agreed to meet in order to show and to discuss in each of these cities. The first meeting in Naestved ha staken place already, the second one is planned to be in Kristiansand, and the meeting in Växjö ist to follow.

The idea to create a space on the website in order to place links, files etc (like Gdansk Conference, recordings, voice and presentations, from Rostock, statements, ..) that could be helpful to inform about experiences of others has not been not put in practice so far, but within the structure of the new website it would be possible to do so.

Another task was to create visibility on the political level. For this purpose, Karin Wohlgemuth from Rostock visited two meeting where she was invited to talk otr to inform herself about the situation. **Meeting of the Reflection Group on Refugees and Migration** within the Current Affairs Committee of the Congress of the Local and Regional Authorities within the Council of Europe, on 16 June 2016. The working group has the task to prepare a report named: *From reception to integration: the role of local and regional authorities facing migration. as well as to propose a resolution*. The group had done study visits to Bergen/N and Vienna/AU, which consisted the main information they had from the base level, the cities. So the input from UBC was a appreciated, referring to the situation of several cities from different countries in the Baltic Sea region. UBC could be offerend as a platform for further exchange of experiences, examples as well as expertise. Other invited guests, so from the Swiss Region of Aargau or the Greek Region of Attica, delivered very interesting details and opinions as well.

German Briefing on the Meeting of the 28 EU Government Representatives (CoR) on 30 June 2016, participation on invitation of the European Movement in Germany. The European Refugees Crisis was one of the topics. The Rapporteurs came from the Representation of the European Commission in Germany, the German Foreign Office/ Department on EUROPE and the Federal Ministry for Economy and Energy/ Chargé on Europe.

It was informed about conversations concerning the evaluation of the influx of refugees, on the debate how to safeguard the EU borders, and it was touched the EU-Turkey Agreement from 18 March 2016. The discussion was lively. The panelists also reflected on the question if a new wave

wave of refugees should be expected saying that they would not see this happen again. The UBC intervention pointed out the role of the cities in receiving, sheltering, feeding war refugees from the road, as well as their integration them for the time they need to stay, which may be undefined. Cities or city organizations should be included earlier in these political processes in order to avoid that they were drawn by surprise and from one day to another into situations of massive arrival of persons in need.

10 Nov. 2016, Karin Wohlgemuth, Hanseatic City of Rostock