

REPORTS FROM THE
CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

- I. Social Policy from the Enlargement Perspective
- II. Labour Market Policy from the Enlargement Perspective
- III. Gender Equality
- IV. Participation of Children and Youth
- V. Health and Social Equality for Everybody

WORKSHOP I

“Social Policy from the Enlargement Perspective”

Workshop Leader: Mr Henrik Larsen, City Councillor, Kolding, Denmark

Mr Henrik Larsen welcomed everybody, stressing that Social Policy is a very broad issue and is difficult to separate from Labour Market issues. Social policy is very important for all citizens. In Scandinavia about half of the municipal budgets are allocated to the social sector. The amount will not become smaller in the future. The consequences of EU accession are unclear yet.

Ms Mari Hakkala, WHO Baltics Office, Turku

Social Policy is close to Health policy. In Finland, the health sector is delegated to the city level since 1972. So the competence regarding health is at the local authority level. In Sweden it is on the regional level, but in many countries it is on the state level.

This leads to what kind of problems can be handled at the local level. One key issue in the Healthy Cities Program is that cities would make a health profile and health development plan for the city. The purpose is to become conscious of the issues.

What are the cities problems? Can cities make impact that can alter the state of affairs? There is a problem when cities start to discuss for example European Union, it is a tendency that discussion is on a too high level. There is a risk that you miss important aspects. People live at local level, use municipal services, they get education and public services from the local level, work at local level. But decisions influencing our daily life is often made at the State level. One of the key issues regarding the enlargement is a continuing discussion between different levels of governance. The national level discussions with EU are about the national policies, which often are fairly elaborated but a bit abstract. It is important the local level has a permanent contact with the national level and the regional level.

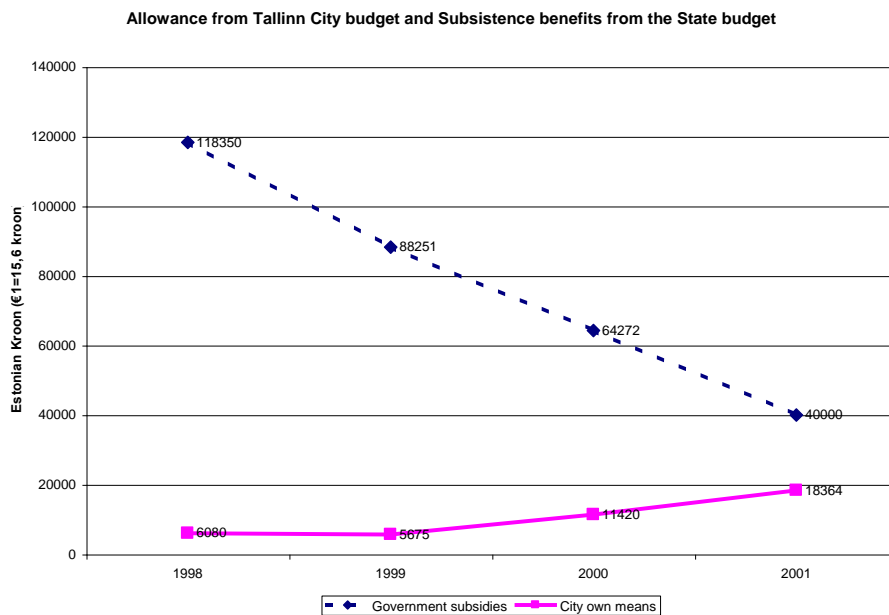
Article 152 of the Maastricht Treaty speaks about health. It was the first time public health was mentioned to become a task of the Commission. The public health strategy that was approved earlier this year being valid 2002 to 2004, will have a lot of bearing to the candidate countries. Public health shall not be looked upon as medical science or hospitals, but a very large entity of matters that influence us as humans. There are developed methods to measure human impact. The first of the three strands of public health is **information** on the status of the health of the citizens. Which indicators that are important depend on the local circumstances in the city. The second is **health threats**, we must have systems that react very rapidly on threats, which is accentuated today with for example the threats from Athrax. The third strand is **health determinants**, which is the common ground between the social policy, city economy and public health. What is the most determinant for your health? It is air, water, food and traffic. They must be managed properly otherwise they threaten our lives. You need information to manage the health determinants.

You have to know the social and physical environment. WHO General Director Gro Harlem Bruntland said that depression is the largest burden of disease in Europe, the two major reasons for premature pensions is mental health problems and problems with the muscular and skeleton system. Neither one is not very well dealt with by the medical profession, instead a social approach is needed, so if we want to give good health services we need to deal with the determinants of health.

At present there is a high level commission meeting in Brussels on health and enlargement. The topics are mainly communicable diseases like HIV and tuberculosis. It is not enough to concentrate on those issues only. We have a lot of other health problems as well.

Mr Anders Tsahkna, Vice Mayor, Tallinn

Tallinn Welfare Services Development Plan for the Period 2001-2005



Mission of welfare system in Tallinn:

- Prevention of, and immediate and comprehensive assistance on subsistence difficulties of the inhabitants of Tallinn, with a guarantee of subsistence on minimal level acceptable by the society.
- Main target groups: Children and families with children, the elderly, the disabled and homeless people rejected by society. Other target groups: Drug addicts, opening of an emergency aid telephone line, launch self-aid groups and financing hospital treatment for persons not covered by Health Insurance.
- Client-focused approach and preference of open care services to care at special institutions
- Just distribution of services through uniform and objective assessment of subsistence capability

Children welfare for children living with biological parents:

- Development of the network of services (counselling, day activities and day-care, support of recreational and leisure activities, the support person service, support and rehabilitation services for families, temporary care at institutions) necessary for preventive family-work.
- Optimization of the workload of child protection workers, introduction of common procedures.
- Development of a child protection system.

Children living with foster parents:

- Support the welfare of children without parental attention living in foster families.
- Make living conditions at institutions as comparable to living conditions in a family as possible.
- Assistance at the beginning of responsible life (suitable abode and counselling)

Children with behavioural disorders (risk children):

- Network operations to guarantee safe growing environment.

- Social programmes for children ignoring compulsory school attendance, for children with behavioural disorders, for delinquent children and for children and young people addicted to drugs.
- Rehabilitation of drug addicts.

General principles:

- Guarantee of access to public services and of equal opportunities for the disabled
- Support independent subsistence with as little external help as possible.

Ms Stefanie Hofmann, Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald

Education as a Basis of Social Policy

The community is responsible for the equality of educational opportunities in the Baltic Sea Region. The aim of education is to expand the individual's capacity within the community to perceive and to participate, to experience, to empathise and to excel. The Greifswald University is working according to the Statement of Aims, which was adopted on the base of the Haga (Stockholm) Declaration 24th march 2000. It was created as guidelines for education in the development of the international community. The Nordic Council has created a model at a conference in Copenhagen 22nd of September 2000 in Copenhagen together with the University of Greifswald and the Ministry of Education in Norway. For further information on the content, please turn directly to Ms Stefanie Hofmann at the University of Greifswald.

Mr Hubertus Arndt, Ministry of Labour, European and International Social Policy, Germany

I have more questions than answers. People working at European level work with very abstract level, but people from cities work at a very concrete level. It is difficult to establish a dialogue between these levels, you have to make a real effort.

It is easy to define what is Enlargement, but what is Social policy?

Many think that Europe is not a very social thing – Social and Europe do not go together. One reason is that Europe is bound together by a treaty, and there is not so much about social matters in the treaty. The European Union has some instruments, namely:

1. legal instruments
2. financial instruments
3. Benchmarking

Benchmarking is not legally binding, it creates political commitment. This may be a problem for local authorities; your national negotiators come home from Brussels, and you suddenly discover that they have committed themselves and the local authority must do the job.

The benchmarking process is carried out in steps:

- 1st step: Agreement on common objectives, which are agreed upon in the EU.
- 2nd step: The member states write reports that show they are reaching the objectives.
- 3rd step: The Commission assesses the reports and comments
- 4th step: Negotiations, and finally there might be recommendations to a specific country.

There are at least three positive effects with the process:

- 1st: When a country makes its report, it has to look at its own situation, and perhaps think of its policy.
- 2nd: A discussion on the European level, exchange of experience.
- 3rd: The law enforcement capacity of EU is very low. The EU can only write letters, or sue a country, but with a big time-gap.

Legal action is not efficient. Instead you can work with ranking, with indicators, bench-markings. Low ranking might lead to action. How can regional and local levels participate and assist in the national assessments? Maybe UBC and other representative organs can play a role there.

Ms Marjetta Oksanen, DG for Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission

EU legislation in the social field

The legislation of EU in the social field means defining a minimum standard. More than 75 directives cover many areas of employment legislation. The aim is to evolve in a structural and stable environment on a working place and to conducive to growth and competitiveness. The largest substance is about health and safety at work. The candidate countries are not only facing this mountain of legislation, there is also a significant investment implication that will bring benefits in terms of improved working environment and assures that companies work not at the expense of the social dimension. Also equal opportunity for men and women in employment and social security is assured.

Article 13 of the European union gives power to combat discrimination on racial, ethnic, religious, disability or sexual orientation grounds. The candidate countries have to ensure they give way for the principle of mainstreaming of these discrimination aspects and counter indirect discrimination.

The social dialogue is thought of in wider partnerships, like NGO's, local authorities, which are active in many aspects of the social dialogue. Good administration and capacity to implement it, to monitor it and to co-ordinate it is also needed. The legislation shall also be operational to citizens.

The European Social Agenda

The European Social agenda starts the process to fight against poverty and social exclusion and is an element of a social inclusion program that was recently agreed upon by the Council, the Commission and the Parliament, together allocating 75 million Euro to the social inclusions funds.

The Agenda has three fields: firstly about participation in employment, and about access for all to recourses, rights, goods and services. Secondly it is about preventing the risk of social exclusion and thirdly about helping the most vulnerable.

The working method is the process of opened co-ordination. On the basis of guidelines every member state makes a report how it has progressed and how has responded to the EU regulations. After processing in the Commission it comes out as a report with recommendations that are accepted by the European politicians. The process of open co-ordination involves not only the government level but it shall be so wide and broad so the NGO's, local authorities and others can take part. It is an important aspect especially in the Nordic Countries where the cities are very involved in the social field. This open method of co-ordination is a decentralised process and the partners' role is very important. It comes up to the European level through the mentioned reports.

On the beginning of October the commission adopted the Joint Conclusion Report. The report will continue to the Council level and then will be sent back to the member states and to the Social Protection Committee. In the Laeken summit it will hopefully be accepted. This is the first report where the Commission has assessed all the social protection systems to find out the innovative activities and best practices in all of the countries. The candidate countries should start creating such reports already now in order to prepare for the process

The Social Fund

The social fund is a financing instrument at the Union level to promote the European employment strategy. The aim is to get people ready for the labour market by training and re-education. It allows more innovative methods in the labour market. The social fund is also a very good element to the partners, like NGO's and local authorities to work together and solve problems in new ways.

The preparation for the Social fund in accession countries has already started. There will be one central document for the accession countries covering all the structural funds. The responsibility for

human resource and employment matters should be clearly stated. There should be one strategic view on the development of employment and human development in each country in order to give a proper frame for starting projects financed by the Social Fund. The programs can be used for improving employment services, training and institutional strengthening. The Phare funds are available for the accession countries for that, too. The social funds also finance the community initiative "Equal" for transnational projects.

Conclusions

Mr Henrik Larsen, City Councillor, Kolding

Mr Anders Engstrom, the UBC President, mentioned that the social field is the largest items in the city budgets. Social policy is also a huge subject for a workshop of about two hours.

It is difficult to talk about social policy without talking about labour market policy. Our first conclusion is therefore that we have to see them as one subject. But we talked also about a lot of other subjects: Culture, Public Health and other matters.

From an enlargement perspective, how do we get a common social policy? One conclusion is good communication. UBC has a certain role in this, facilitating the communication between different levels, like non-governmental organisation, cities, governments and the European level. The cities are implementing the social policy, but the European level working on the strategic level and a far away from realities in the cities. It would be beneficial with a better cooperation between those levels. We discussed also influence in Brussels. We used football as a metaphor: The cities should play the ball and be offensive. The ball is not given in football, it is taken.

We should use our common Baltic Sea Region cultural heritage as a joint starting point. The University of Greifswald here in Germany is the oldest Swedish University, founded more than 500 years ago when Sweden occupied this part of Europe.

We also discussed benchmarking, to learn from each other, and one speaker mentioned that we sometimes do things in our cities because we always have done in that way. We don't ask ourselves why we are doing it that way. We think benchmarking between cities in different countries could be very nice and get us further. If a benchmarking process say that for instance Denmark, where I come from, only ranks as number 13 in a certain field, you can be sure the minister of that field wants to do things in an old way.

We agreed on what Mr Lönnroth said this morning about the social model. The value democracy, human rights, solidarity and equal opportunities are basic. You should earn your living from working, and that's why we even did not try to talk about the labour market.

One conclusion is that for the time being there are more questions than answers. There are difficulties, but also great opportunities. It is a good idea that UBC is taking part to create this communication to work for better cooperation. That was the conclusion of our group.

Other remarks:

The participants were encouraged to go to the website of DG for Employment and Social Affairs website http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg05/index_en.htm where people can read about foundation-possibilities.

Rapporteur: Mr Juhan Janusson, UBC-EU Coordinator

WORKSHOP II

“Labour market policy from the Enlargement perspective”

Workshop Leader: Mr Kent Andersson, Vice-Mayor of Malmö, Sweden

**Ms Claudia Neu, University Rostock, Institute on Sociology
Mecklenburg - West Pomerania - Forgotten Country?**

17.5% long-term unemployment and high out-migration in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern as a result of the German reunification and the structural change that followed caused journalists to proclaim that East Germany should experience natural and cultural growth instead of economic growth.

The East German Sociologist, Wolfgang Engler advocated to stop the East German race to reach the West German standard of living and to find a specific East German way. It is nearly a consensus that the less productive arable land will be eliminated from the agricultural production and many farmers will lose their farms.

What will happen to this “lost land”? Three possibilities are suggested:

- Giving the less productive arable land back to nature (new wilderness)
- Re-settling of protected wild animals such as bison and auroch to prevent bush- and woodland (extremely extensive agriculture, wildlife parks)
- Building up national parks or “Disney Parks”

These problems of deserted landscapes are existing in other European countries like France, Ireland, Finland or Poland. The most mentioned idea to achieve sustainable economic development is the extension of the tourism sector. But tourism is locally concentrated at the Baltic shore and the Mecklenburger Seenplatte. Market saturation in this sector can already be observed. Change from “traditional” farming to organic farming is another option. Organic farming highly depends on subsidies paid by the EU, and a decrease is expected. A more innovative strategy is the creation of competence centres like the Universities of Rostock and Greifswald and corresponding research institutes. Another possibility is to strengthen the Rostock harbour as the port to Germany's Baltic neighbours. It is uncertain if any of these strategies will be able to reduce unemployment and migration in the North-East of Germany. Perhaps we have to expect deserted landscapes as a consequence in the future.

Mr Karl-Johan Lönnroth, Deputy Director General, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission

Introduction

This intervention addresses:

- European level processes to steer economic reform, employment and social cohesion – the Lisbon strategy
- Preparing the candidate countries in the employment field
- Implications for labour market and employment development in the candidate countries.

The conclusions of the Lisbon European Council March 2000 created a new framework for making "Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world capable of sustained economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion".

The broad objective of Lisbon cannot be reached unless the **economic, employment and social inclusion** policies interact together.

Four processes ensure the interaction:

1. The annual **Broad Economic Policy Guidelines**
2. The **European Employment Strategy**
3. The so called **Cardiff process**
4. the **Nice Process**, a new **process to promote social inclusion**

There are in principle three types of means of action that the European Union uses in order to promote its common objectives:

- **Legislative action**
- **Financial** support,
- The **"Open Method of Coordination"**

The actions are supported research, dissemination of information, training and networking.

Preparing for accession

The Commission carried out **Employment Policy Reviews** with the candidate countries. They served as a basis for the **Joint Assessment Paper** (JAPs) which is drafted jointly together with the Candidate countries. Their objective is to identify fundamental challenges in the field of employment.

Enlargement of the Union

Much focus has been given to the likely migration flows from the candidate countries to Member States (MS). The migration flows will be determined essentially by two factors: The difference in income and the prospects of "catching up", and the employment situation in the home country as well as in the country of destination. Many studies show that the migratory would be fairly limited. There are currently 830 000 residents from central and Eastern Europe in the Union. Projections indicate that the number could reach 2.9 million in 2010 and 3.9 million in 2030. These figures would remain very small in comparison with the 254 million people of working age that the Current Union would have in 2010.

Structural changes affecting the labour markets of candidate countries

Convergence will take more than two generations, so it is important to dwell on some of the key aspects affecting the labour markets.

From recent studies, it appears that:

- Employment in the agricultural sector amounts to 22 % in the candidate countries compared to less than 5% in the EU- 15.
- Human capital endowments are below those of most EU members. The quality of education falls short of the average standards in the EU.
- Enlargement will entail in the EU MS a marked shift in production and employment away from resources intensive industries.
- Shocks associated with the enlargement may be concentrated in specific regions.
- Convergence of candidate countries to the income per capita levels prevailing in the EU will be a fairly long process.

What types of policies are required?

- Economic policies should accommodate structural change both in candidate countries and in the current EU Members.
- Institutions should cope with structural change rather than opposing it.
- Greater investment in education will in the long term also pay off.
- The accession process will offer new opportunities to the candidate countries to reduce regional imbalances.

Conclusions

In order to ensure that growth is sustainable, the applicant countries need to maintain their efforts at transition in these directions:

- Maintenance of a macro-economic policy for controlling public finances and stability,
- Reforms of goods and services markets in order to create a framework that is stable and open to the creation of new activities,
- A determined strategy of investment in human resources that makes it possible to derive maximum benefit from the innovation and productivity potential of workers, thanks to lifelong training and effective social protection institutions.

Mr Ole Bondo Cristensen, Chief Adviser, Ministry of Labour, Denmark

The Danish government is very eager to strengthen the co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. Trade and investments have increased tremendously during the last decade. Investments from Denmark to the BSR countries have created approximately 30 000 new jobs in these countries. It leads to access to new markets for Danish companies. This leads to a higher employment also in Denmark – we have a win-win situation.

How can well functioning labour markets be defined?

1. Low unemployment rates.
2. Skilled workforce which meets the demands of the labour market
3. High standard of working conditions and employment environment, high safety standards
4. Institutions that can encourage entrepreneurship
5. Social dialogue between key role players at the labour market: Labour unions, employers unions, and public employers including local authorities
6. Labour market institutions, such as job agencies, which can serve employers and job seekers and also provide placement and basic training and guidance

Closer economic co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region should go hand in hand with closer co-operation on labour market issues. The European Employment Strategy, the employment guidelines and the ongoing implementation of the aquis is an excellent framework for shaping this co-operation. We have also launched a Danish labour market sector program that entails cross-border co-operation in the region. One area, which we will promote more in the future, is employment development at the local and regional level, especially at the countryside.

The Danish Ministry of Labour has recently produced a report on the possibilities of establishing a joint labour market in the Baltic Sea Region, focusing on growth employment and social affairs. The main conclusions of the report are as follows:

- Danish enterprises find it difficult to attract labour with the appropriate qualifications. Training and re-training is therefore needed as well as capacity building.
- There is a lack of structure for partnerships in the social dialogue including labour market actors, for example trade unions.
- Danish enterprises can often serve as inspiration for labour safety standards.

Denmark will give access to the labour market for labour from the applicant countries from day one of EU membership. At the moment there are about 16 000 workers from the applicant countries. This figure is estimated to arise to about 50 000 in about ten years time.

Mr Urmas Uint, Manager of Paldiski Business Support Centre, Paldiski

Paldiski is a very new member to UBC, we are member # 99. Three fourths of the population of a little more than 4000 are Estonian, the rest are mainly Russian speaking. Until 1994 Paldiski was completely closed as a Soviet and Russian garrison town. There were 16 000 soldiers and officers of the soviet army.

When the Russians left Paldiski there was only one operational industry, with 200 female employees. There were no civil workers or workplaces and no know-how of Estonian language in Paldiski. For these people it was very hard to get a job. So we started a project to include them in the ordinary

labour market. Today we have 63 working enterprises and 2 300 inhabitants in working age but 1 600 working places.

After six months many work co-operatives had started, offering simple services for municipality offices and other customers. The co-operatives work at our two islands, clean our territory from the remnants of the Russian military, and start services at the islands. In a survey only 7% of the Estonians stated that they could think of working abroad after EU accession. Among the Russian speaking youth the proportion was 24 %. Among the Russian speaking citizens, many do not have roots in Estonia, they are looking for better conditions elsewhere. The development of IT technology will allow high educated persons to stay and work with foreign companies from Estonia – there are already examples on that. We are engaged in a co-operation project to establish business support centres, with partners in Finland, Germany and other countries. Two foreign companies have already located activities in Paldiski. One is a boat factory and the other a big greenhouse company.

Conclusions

Mr Kent Andersson, Vice-Mayor of Malmö

Ms Claudia Neu illustrated how we inside Union already have some migrating problems in the development of the large urban areas and the hinterland, which is deserted. Within the Union we have problems with people's mobility. Mr Lönnroth talked about the necessity to have local contacts on the horizontal level as well as the vertical contacts we have from the European to national to regional level down to the local level. Mr Bondo Cristensen discussed what we need to do and stressed the possibilities or the urge to work with the skilled workforce working for a good working environment, entrepreneurship, and as well as partnership on the local level between business, trade unions etc.

Mr Uint from Paldiski in Estonia told us about the specifics of his city. They have a lack of work power, and he concluded that the Union should not be afraid of a large migration movement from the new candidate countries into the Union.

Our workshop changed the picture of the development of the labour market from the enlargement perspective. Today's discussion had very much put the emphasis on big migrating groups from the applicant countries. Now we can see another picture. We have already within the European Union migration problems. Mr Lönnroth pointed out that all analyses showed that maybe 4 million will move in a period of 30 years which might not be that big problem. On the other hand Mr Bondo Cristensen from Denmark said that Denmark has declared that they will open the labour market for new members and not discussion of some kind of period here.

Rapporteur: Mr Juhan Janusson, UBC EU-Coordinator

WORKSHOP III

“Gender Equality”

Workshop Leader: Ms Hjordis Hoglund, UBC Women's Network, Sundsvall, Sweden

Gender equality, which means equal rights and opportunities for women and men, is a prerequisite for shaping good and social sustainable societies. For the participants of the workshop Gender Equality it is totally clear. But we also know that not all of you agree.

Why is it so important? It's a democratic question. Half of the citizens are women and demand to be

equal represented. We often get comments like we have also handicapped, immigrants' youth and other groups who want representation. Yes, it is right. But even here we have women and men. In each of these groups women and men get different life experiences. A lot of research and studies have shown these facts.

Women and men are living partly different lives in our cities. We all know that. We get different experiences, demand and needs from the society As women often experience the world in a different way from men they make other priorities in economic decision-making.

The statistics indicate that in too many policy-making fora, women are simply absent or only few. The voices of women are missing from key decisions on budgets and the setting of investment priorities. Women's skills and viewpoints often remain unheard, underrepresented, or overlooked.

In the EU enlargement process, in the negotiations between EU and the candidate countries, knowledge about gender equality issues is of great importance. These issues must be integrated in the work and they must be there from the start. Decisions within this field are mostly taken at the national level, which is necessary. We need the same legislation, rules and organisation. But for being a reality and not only words on a paper, we must have interested and engaged people at all levels of the society, not only at the national but also at the regional and local level. People, who make the decisions, are reality. The EU is calling for better legislation, rules and organisation within this field in the candidate countries. We must make this more visible for politicians and other actors at all levels in the preparations for the EU membership.

The gender equality discussions are in many ways identical in our countries. We, the women, are recognising the basic part of the question, the subordination of women in all our societies, even if it is shown in different forms.

About 30 persons participated in the workshop, representing most of the UBC countries.

Rapporteur: Ms Hjordis Hoglund

WORKSHOP IV

“Youth participation”

Workshop Leaders: Ms Stefanie Samland, Butzow, Mr Przemyslaw Marchlewicz, Sopot, Ms Magdalena Marchlewicz, Sopot, Ms Ina Werner, Kiel

Introduction

- Presentation round
- Aim of the workshop: to present tools for the every-day work with youth
- Youth participation: taking part in society actively, not only going to schools
- Youth issues: education, culture, entertainment, but also many other fields (like security, transport, environmental protection, NGO's, city infrastructure...) youth is concerned in all the fields of society, there are no specific youth issues
- Youth policy: cross-sectional policy of the city / government concerning youth; problem: many countries / cities do not yet have a youth policy

What does the city can offer to young people?

- Agenda 21, chapter 25: "The youth comprises nearly 30% of the world's population. The involvement of today's youth in environment and development decision-making and in the implementation of programs is critical to the long-term success."
- Group work – brainstorming: tools of youth participation offered by the municipality
- Presentation of group results

Projects	Decisions	Attitude	Bodies
Website for youth (Dialogue)	Budget	Information (what, how) → Realisation	City youth council
Twining – best practice		Own experiences	Youth advisor (district level)
Dream workshop		Awareness raising	Children department council
Youth networks		Education about democratic system	Youth representation
Youth influence in planning processes		Acceptance of youth as true partners	Youth scout – youth pilot (person responsible for dialogue with young people)
Children mapping their way to school (realisation critic points by municipality)		Support to NGO's	Youth officer
		Representation of youth	
	Listen to the youth (6-27)		
	Give the youth the problem and let them solve it		
	Give the youth the responsibility, support and tools		
	Go out to the youth, meet them in their place		
	Easy and cheap access to facilities		

Discussion

- Presentation of different creations of youth councils:
 - Sopot, Poland: initiative by young people from Scout's Organisation, asked municipality for list of NGO's, contacted NGO's, creation of a youth council with representatives of NGO's and schools who are elected, problems: no legal basis for contribution of youth council to city's decisions, no really support by municipality
 - Bützow, Germany: initiative by city council to create a youth council, information given to schools, pupils built up the first youth council (20 youths), work similar to that of city council (president, board, working groups), concrete projects chosen by youths themselves, financial support by municipality and foundations, since half a year changing rules, less formal, young people are meeting, discussing projects and managing those projects on their own way, starting influence in decision-making of municipality, asked for attitude to city's issues
- Discussion about ways of creation of youth councils, important points, how to involve all the interested young people, change of experiences
- Presentation of participation process in Lübeck, Germany: problem of participation: youth just want to have fun, lot of violence because of melting pot of nationalities among youths: search for solutions to offer alternatives to youths, for example committee for rearrangement of schoolyards, children and youths involved in planning processes (method: future workshop, three steps: critics, imagination, realisation; different models of school yards, decision by youth, realisation together with young people)

Youth issues in UBC

- What happened so far in UBC? topic supported very strongly by President of UBC, Anders Engström; youth network "Youth Concerning a Sustainable Future" (YCSF) for change of experiences in youth participation on the local level, also willing to act in the Baltic region; questionnaires about youth policy in UBC member cities, only six answers
- Ideas for handling youth issues within UBC:
 - Creating of Commission on youth policy
 - Either consisting of people dealing with youth issues
 - Or consisting of youth
 - Creating of youth network
 - Network of youth city councils (school councils)
 - Network of youth NGO's
 - Representatives of youth in each commission of UBC
- Electronic library of good practices in youth participation
- Statement of Anders Engström: UBC is willing to manage youth participation, need for people working full-time with the field of dealing youth issues within UBC, to build up networks and change of experiences
- Use existing infrastructure, recent youth councils and contacts
- Work together with Agenda 21 Working Group
- Discussion of ideas of commission / network
- Need for decision of UBC Board how to handle youth issues (based on three ideas).

Rapporteur: Ms Stefanie Samland, City of Butzow

WORKSHOP V

"Health and Social Equality"

Workshop leader: Mr Michał Guć, Member of the City Board, Gdynia, Poland

Speakers:

Tonu Karu, Project Manager, Tallinn, Estonia

Ulf Schiller, Social Ministry of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Horst Gildemeister, Project Manager, Handicapped Tourism, Rostock

The workshop was attended by 17 participants from the Baltic cities. Michał Guć in his introductory speech, raised the issue of democracy and equality. The transformation processes going on especially in the post communist block attracted our attention to the issue if democracy means equality and to what extent. Further, he pondered upon the subsidiarity issue, local authorities' responsibilities towards their communities, the role of NGOs in the social sphere, and what should be done.

The workshop participants listened to two interesting examples of projects. Tonu Karu's project was related to the disability (from the technical point of view). He presented further standard rules of United Nation's project and the community-based rehabilitation for the barrier free Europe and the world.

Horst Gildemeister talked about the disability from the tourist point of view. He also highlighted his relationship with the National Disability Associations in the Baltic Sea Region.

Ulf Schiller presented German social system in general and stressed pillars of social security: social insurance, pension, and public welfare, strengthening his point with figures.

The discussion

- NGOs were compared in size to „inflation”, meaning big in numbers. The local authorities are responsible for the local community’s well-being, and should fight against social exclusions.
- Each country should have its own policy to solve own problems. About 60% of laws are influenced by the EU decisions. there is a great must for a cohesive European social system. Social policy is about the scope of responsibility the society wants to adopt. It does not matter too much who does the job, be it a municipal administration or an NGO.
- UBC Social Charter could be a step forward with the European efforts.
- The workshop participants expressed their critical view on the contents of the Social Charter for Member Cities of the UBC.

Recommendations to the Executive Board and to the Health and Social Affairs Commission:

- UBC should develop a project together with our African colleagues who have good knowledge and practical expertise in the social sphere.
- UBC Strategy should be extended to include more text on the social field.
- Best practices should be available and presented as a piloting forum.
- UBC website should be accordingly amended to include the social field information.

Conclusions

In the cities of the accession countries the introduction of market processes, along with structural changes within labour markets are inducing tendencies familiar in the EU. A particular challenge is then to prevent social segregation and concentration of exclusions. Meeting the challenge requires a comprehensive approach, which can combine preventive actions with remedial measures that integrate existing such areas into social and economic and obviously physical fabric of our cities. A few Baltic Cities try to develop area-based policies. equal opportunities and social and economic integration and improved living and working conditions for people belonging to low-income, discriminated and other socially excluded groups should be part of such policies.

What can be done in our cities? The basic objective is to strengthen local capacities to respond to the specific needs of cities in an integrated way; to provide accessible and reasonable services.

Other remarks:

The participants were encouraged to go to the website: www.rehab-international.org -Rehabilitation International; Tomas Lagerwall, Secretary General, e-mail: sec-gen@rehab-international.org.

Rapporteur: Ms Ewa Kurjata, Senior Officer, Bureau for International Relations, City of Szczecin