

Meeting report

SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY - Trends and Challenges in the Baltic Sea Region

UBC Sustainable Cities Commission meeting, Klaipėda, Lithuania

The UBC Sustainable Cities Commission meeting was cordially hosted by the City of Klaipėda and took place at the Klaipėda Castle's conference center.

Thursday, 13.09.2018

The first day was all focused on the topic "Trends and challenges in sustainable mobility in BSR cities" and accidentally fell on the same day when the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for the city of Klaipėda was adopted in the city council! What would be a better timing to gather 60 experts from all over the Baltic Sea region to discuss sustainable mobility?

After warm welcome words from Deputy Mayor of Klaipėda Mrs Judita Simonavičiūtė and Mr Björn Grönholm, Head of the UBC SCC Secretariat, we dived into the situation of our host city:

Mr Tadas Jonauskis presented the ambitious Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the city and the process until the adoption in the city council. Three organizations/companies (urbanists, university and consultancy) had the task from the city to develop a plan, reflecting the current biggest challenge in Klaipėda: the demographic change of the city and the decrease of population of the city center and the following urban sprawl to the outskirts of the city.

The plan was prepared within one year and had a very thorough participation process included. Citizens and other stakeholders were taken into account to discuss different scenarios and to choose suitable measures for the action plan. The overall vision for Klaipėda is to be a healthy, environmental friendly, fast and comfortable city – based on this vision the plan was developed and will now (hopefully) be implemented successfully.

Ms Indre Butienė gave us an insight to the current mobility situation in Klaipėda. She also stressed the specific challenge with people moving away from the dense city center to suburbs and outskirts of the city. This causes an increase in congestion, as people move to their work places in the city centers. Also services and facilities such as kindergartens and schools remain in the center and require children and parents to travel. Also living in an old city with a protected old town poses challenges for mobility planners: cobblestone streets and old infrastructure makes some parts inaccessible for elderly, persons with special needs and persons with small children and prams.

Dr. Audrius Senulis, from the University of Klaipėda introduced the tendencies and possibilities for electrical transport in the Klaipėda region. He presented current options for electrical busses, the needed infrastructure as well as an outlook on autonomous vehicles. In Klaipėda, electric vehicles are for now mainly used by private persons, but he points out a potential when it comes to public transport, both with converted busses and trams.



After these insights to Klaipėda's situation, it was time for the international speakers to share their experiences and messages:

Mr Steffen Nozon, from the Hanseatic City of Rostock presented his city's mobility situation and the actors involved to develop it further. Compared to Klaipėda's plans to build a tramline, Mr Nozon shared the experience that Rostock has from expanding their tram line.

As a lead partner for the [cities.multimodal project](#) (together with 16 other partners in the BSR) Rostock is implementing multimodality aspects actively in their mobility planning, through establishing multimodal mobility points.

Ms Johanna Palomäki, from the city of Lahti, brought us the perspective of a spatial planner and architect. Lahti has a very ambitious and comprehensive master plan and a bold vision for the future. Quoting urban planning "guru" Jan Gehl, "spatial and transport planning cannot be separated", which also underlies the planning in Lahti. Transport and mobility planning aspects are deeply integrated in the master plan. Ms Palomäki stresses especially the approach "planning for the people", of having people at the center of attention and at the core of all activities. Lahti is consistently involving all stakeholder groups and creates a very transparent process, which encourages people to get engaged and participate.

Mr Michael Haufe, from the Hanseatic City of Greifswald, presented how the city is working actively with the UN Sustainable Development Goals as well as with an ambitious master plan for climate protection and how these activities are closely linked with mobility and transport. One concrete project concerning sustainable mobility is the CoBiUm Project, exploring the potential of electric cargo bikes in city mobility.

After a coffee break, leg stretching and discussions, all speakers gathered on the stage for a **panel discussion** and questions from the audience

"Remember to have the people at the core of your activities. From car-orientation to people orientation!"

In the discussion between the panelists and also the audience it became clear that a change from car-focused transport planning to sustainable urban transport in fact means a change towards a people-focused planning practice! To put the citizens at the core of all planning activities, to create livable spaces instead of functional spaces for cars/transport will transform a city.

Even if this is not yet put into practice in most cities, there are practical activities to support citizens in the change from using individual cars to more sustainable modes, e.g. car sharing, bike sharing systems, combined with bike storing systems, bike highways and campaigns aiming at a behavioral change.

There we got right to the core: a behavioral change among people is needed, taking into account also the mentality and historical context of the cities.



Supporting kindergartens and schools in sustainability education will help to achieve a change of mindset at an early age – and this will affect also the parents!

The way how we communicate about the topic is from utmost importance, especially for us as civil servants/mobility practitioners: if we want people to change, we need to start with that change by ourselves. We need to communicate in a way that citizens understand, skip the project and expert jargon and also be active good examples e.g. when it comes to sustainable urban mobility.

After lunch, we left in a bus for the awaited **site visit**, so see the city of Klaipėda and specific, mobility related stops all over the city. The site visit was guided by Tadas Mezinys, Head of Transport Infrastructure Division of Klaipėda and a tour guide. Through this combination, the participants also learned some (fun) facts about the history and sights of the city, which was highly appreciated.

Friday, 14.09.2018

The second day of our meeting focused on the UBC as a network and facilitated discussions among member cities about a variety of activities.

Mr Mantas Jurgutis, member of Kaunas city council and Vice-President of UBC visited the meeting and sent greetings from UBC presidium. Mr Jurgutis has been following the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission closely and is happy about the work, results and proceedings of the Commission. In particular, Mr Jurgutis was happy to see representatives from St Petersburg at the Commission meeting.

Mr Björn Grönholm started the day with introducing the Commission's work, especially to all the “newbies” in the room. We were really happy to have many new faces in our group, as well as very experienced UBC activists.

The secretariat's work was presented by Ms Esther Kreutz, Project coordinator at UBC SCC. The commission and its around 20 international employees are involved in a variety of different projects on sustainability: sustainable urban mobility planning, water and waste water management, urban planning and many more. The main projects and their recent outcomes were introduced. Through a variety of activities, the member cities have a chance to get in contact with the commission and the secretariat and already in autumn several webinars will be organized to provide updates, information and information to member cities, straight to their desk!

We made a short brainstorming on wishes for webinar topics, speakers etc. that UBC SCC will try to realize in the future:

Sustainable Urban transport	Sustainable transport and promotion of public transport to citizens
	Cargo bike-sharing
	City bikes experience, challenges and future ideas
	Public water transport
	How is health and wellbeing related to mobility? Experiences on correlation of health and sustainable mobility in companies - what difference does it make in costs of sickness leaves etc.
	Civil protection regarding climate adaptation
Climate change	Climate friendly everyday life
	Climate adaptation
	City center development
	Jan Gehl as a speaker (or one of his associates)
Urban planning	Development of GIS for city planning purposes
	Playground environment (non-toxic environments for kids)
	Urban planning from a child-perspective
Data and digitalization	Big data collection for cities (with focus on GDPR)
	How to make use of big data?
	Open data platform development in cities
	How to use smart technologies wisely
Strategic topics	UN Sustainable Development Goals
	How to get support from citizens?
	How to see the big picture in a complex world? Towards holistic development strategies
	A good speaker on holistic well- being is Timo Hämäläinen from SITRA
	Behavioral science expertise
	Al Gore as a speaker
	Waste management tools for reuse
Sustainable use of resources	Reducing plastics
	Ecosystem services
	Green investments
	Energy transition from a citizen perspective



Afterwards, we had an open round, where cities were invited to share their greetings, projects, experiences and ideas in an open informal setting:

St Petersburg

Ms Svetlana Ivantsova from St. Petersburg talked about how the public transport was organized during the FIFA World Cup in Russia.

Lahti

Ms Anna Huttunen from Lahti spoke about the [CitiCAP Project](#) which is currently on-going in Lahti. The project's main focus is on reducing congestions, collecting mobility related data and redevelopment of transport services.

Jurmala

Ms Iveta Kelpė and Mr Tomass Beikullis from Jurmala informed that they have recently launched free public transport in Jurmala.

Linköping

Ms Erika Weddfelt presented news from Linköping, a city with appr 160000 inhabitants. Linköping is to become carbon neutral by 2025 a challenging goal! Furthermore a new web portal to engage citizens and organization has been built. For more see [Klimatsmart \(Climate clever\)](#) Linköping

Turku

Mr Risto Veivo presented the latest steps in the work for City of Turku to become more sustainable and Carbon neutral in 2029, when the city will celebrate its 800 year anniversary.

After lunch, we continued with a short mini-workshop to discuss and develop ideas for possible cooperation projects:

Outcomes Mini-workshop: Project idea development

- Rain water management, heat and draught management - Climate adaption
Gdansk, Rostock, Örebro, Kalmar
- Sharing of best practices and networking
- Eco smart solutions for Resilient Cities - ecosystem services in the city
Turku, Klaipeda, Liepaja, Tallinn, Riga
- Development of climate adaptation measures
- Creation of an umbrella for smart eco solutions for resilience
- GIS system showing/simulating how the eco-system is affected by changes
- Development of environmentally friendly transport and increasing of public transport popularity in cities
St Petersburg
- How to begin changing the mobility behavior in St Petersburg?
- GIS for city development planning
Riga, Jurmala
- Partner search help wanted!
- Joint development planning and budget planning system
Jurmala
- Creating knowledge bases for projects on budget planning systems
- Non-toxic children's environment
Örebro
- Collaboration with NonHazCity project?
- Includes playgrounds etc.
- Sustainable education for kindergartens and schools
Greifswald
- Environmental governance in cities
City unknown

UBC SCC will take these topics into account when researching about open calls for funding as well as discuss internally about possible cooperation. All cities are encouraged to get in touch with ideas and willingness to cooperate.

The participants agreed unanimously to accept the invitation from the city of Jurmala, Latvia for the next US SCC meeting in May 2019!



Mr Risto Veivo, Mrs Irena Šakalienė and representatives from Jurmala; Iveta Kelve, Tomass Beikullis and Laura Anteina.

All the presentations from the meeting can be found on ubc-sustainable.net