



YOUNG VOICES

CONFERENCE

15-18 OF MAY 2003, KALMAR, SWEDEN



FINAL REPORT

Young Voices of the Baltic Sea Region

Kalmar, May 15-18 2003



I. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Young people comprise nearly 30 % of today's population. It is crucial for all societies to establish a dialogue between the generations. It is necessary to involve their young citizens into the decision-making processes and to ensure the youth an access to the information and to the public participation. The youth work is an important aspect also in the international cooperation, and especially within the Baltic Sea Region – one of the most dynamic parts of the world today.

Being aware of the above, the City of Kalmar, together with the Union of the Baltic Cities and the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs decided to launch a project having as the main objective to promote the youth participation in the Baltic Sea Region, within the UBC structure and member cities of the Union.

II. SUBJECT OF THE PROJECT

The task was to organise a youth conference to which there were invited **young people** aged 15-25 **and civil servants** responsible for youth issues coming from all 104 UBC member cities. The young participants, chosen by the UBC cities to take part in the event, were supposed to be active locally at schools, in the youth councils or in the local NGO's, Also regional organisations active within the Baltic Sea Region were invited as observers.

The Young Voices of the Baltic Sea Region conference was held in Kalmar, Sweden on 15th- 18th May 2003. The event hosted around 100 youngsters and civil servants dealing with youth issues from 8 countries and 34 cities in the countries around the Baltic Sea. In the framework of the UBC's co-operation project with the Lake Victoria Regional Local Authority Cooperation (LVRLAC) in Africa also 7 young people from the countries bordering the lake Victoria were invited to, and participated in the conference.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The main aim of the conference was to **put a light on the youth participation** on the local and global level and to **discuss the possibilities of the youth participation in the UBC**. The primary objective was to make a stand on what kind of connection there should be in the future between the Union of the Baltic Cities and young citizens in the member cities, in order to find methods to include young peoples opinion and secure their important issues on the agenda of the UBC.

From the very beginning it was also important to **show 'best practice' on the youth work** and youth initiatives in the UBC cities. The objective was to inspire the cities in their daily work and thus support the local youth action within the Baltic Sea Region. Therefore it was also important to create a kind of arena where civil officers dealing with youth issues could meet with other department workers but also with young people and discuss difficulties and possibilities for their influence and participation.

Furthermore, it was crucial to listen to the "young voices", to **find out what issues are important to young people** and what kind of problems they tackle on day-to-day basis - as there are no better experts on being young in the Baltic Sea Region as the young people themselves.

IV. CONFERENCE PROGRAM

From the very beginning the objective was not to organise one more traditional "official" event with a lot of boring speeches and no interaction between the participants and speakers. Therefore, Young Voices combined different forms and methods. Traditional seminars and workshops as well as brainstorming "Open Square" form, were used. The conference program was as follows:

THURSDAY, 15TH OF MAY

- 18.00 ♦ Official opening of the conference
- 19.00 ♦ Welcome buffet
- 20.00 ♦ "Get to know" activities for young participants
- 20.00 ♦ Meeting of the civil servants

FRIDAY, 16TH OF MAY

- 9.00 ♦ Introduction to the conference
- 9.30 ♦ Open square discussion (including a break)
- 12.30 ♦ Lunch
- 14.00 ♦ Workshops (including a break)
 - How can you influence your city and school?
 - How can you affect the Union of the Baltic Cities?
 - How do you deal with politics and political organisation?
 - What is a youth friendly city?
 - What are your priorities in life?
 - How does the EU influence your daily life?
- 18.00 ♦ Meeting of the developing groups
- 19.00 ♦ Dinner
- 20.00 ♦ "African hour"
- 21.00 ♦ Music/entertainment

SATURDAY, 17TH OF MAY

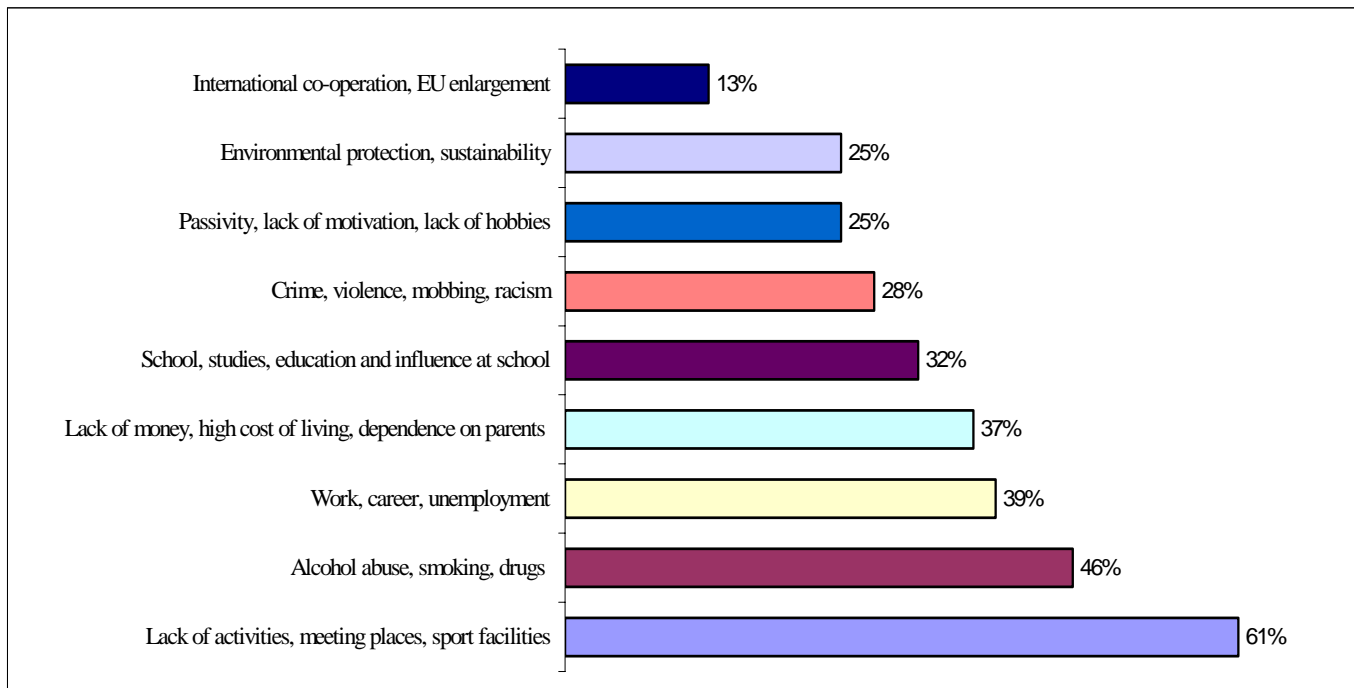
- 9.00 ♦ 'Best practice' seminars (including a break)
 - Youth and equal opportunities
 - International youth work
 - Youth at the labour market
 - Young peoples' quality of life- stress, dependence and dreams
- 12.00 ♦ Lunch
- 13.30 ♦ Reports of the developing groups - summing up of the conference,
- 16.00 ♦ "Kalmar Game" - sightseeing
- 20.00 ♦ Closing dinner and Farewell Party

SUNDAY, 18TH OF MAY

Departure

A. PRE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

One of the main aims of the conference was to listen to “young voices” and enable youth to discuss issues that they consider important. Therefore, the topics for workshops and seminars were based on a pre-study, conducted in 20 UBC member cities in 10 countries around the Baltic Sea. In the questionnaire, 364 persons aged 15–25, were asked to mention what they consider to be the 5 most important issues for youth living in their city. The results came as follows:



B. OPEN SQUARE DISCUSSION

Open square (åsiktstorg) discussion is a method quite commonly used in Swedish non-governmental organisations. The method enables all the event participants to express opinions on each of the particular topics and is a good basis for the workshop work.

The method bases on gathering of participants in smaller groups. The number of groups should be equal with the number of questions/problems, which are to be tackled during the meeting/conference. In a special room, which must be considerably big, each of the corners is devoted to different issues, where a moderator leads the discussion with the groups, writing down all the ideas and opinions expressed. Each group spends equal time in each of the corners. The discussion bases mostly on brainstorming and the results of it are usually further worked on during the workshops following the open square or elaborated by developing groups.

During Young Voices of the Baltic Sea Region conference, we specified youth involvement and influence and current issues for young people of the region as 2 different topic areas that we wanted to be discussed by the participants. Those topics have become the basis for our open squares with four particular issues each. The participants were divided into eight groups.

SQUARE 1 - YOUTH INVOLVEMENT AND INFLUENCE

1. CITY LEVEL

- In what ways, and why, should the development of a city be young citizens business?
- What should the city do to involve young people in decision-making processes?
- What do young people have to do to get more involved in developing their city?
- Is that true that very few young people are interested in being active on a city level?

2. SCHOOL UNIVERSITY

- Do young people have any say in their school? How can they have the influence?
- Is it important that pupils and students have influence in their schools? Why?
- On what kind of issues should the students have an influence?

3. UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

- How can UBC support the youth work in the member cities?
- How can the young people change UBC? How to embed the youth structure in UBC?
- Is there some common Baltic Identity for young people of the Baltic Sea Region?

4. POLITICS

- What are your associations with the word "politics"?
- When is politics interesting for the young people?
- How can young people make themselves heard and get involved in (local) politics

SQUARE 2 - CURRENT ISSUES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE REGION

1. WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR HAVING A GOOD LIFE?

- What would you consider as a success in your life?
- What is good education?
- How do you imagine your future?
- In what areas do you need help from the adults?

2. WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST THREATS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

- Do you consider drinking and smoking as a problem?
- What are the reasons for violence and crime among young people?
- How this the civilisation and the rat race influences on you?

3. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS COMMON FOR TODAY'S GENERATION OF YOUTH

- What kind of past time is most popular in your city?
- What kind of activities, possibilities do you expect from your city?
- Are the young people willing to show their own initiative on their local levels?

4. YOUTH IN INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

- Do you think that it is important to meet and work on an international level? Why?
- Do you think that youth are interested in what happens on the international arena?
- What kind of chances/threats can the enlarged EU bring to young people?

C. REPORTS FROM THE CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

HOW CAN YOU AFFECT THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES?

*Co-chairs: Sandra Weidemann, Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs, Germany
Charlotte Gustafsson, Youth Advisor, City of Kalmar*

The workshop united young people from EU member and EU accession countries as well as civil servants and young people. They discussed the necessity and possibilities about establishing a youth structure in the framework of UBC and the topics that are interesting for young people when looking for cooperation on the local level. Much focus was put on involvement of youngsters in the decision making process.

The workshop participants developed a proposal to UBC concerning the involvement of young people. It asks for: **an annual conference for the youth** from UBC member cities, **a youth network** and a **commission on youth cooperation and participation** within structures of the UBC . Furthermore they ask the members of the **UBC executive board to meet young people** in every city they meet in with the aim to receive an impression of the views and ideas of young people towards their city.

It was pointed out that the main aim and benefit for young people concerning the cooperation possibilities is to be able to meet other youngsters from foreign cities, to have youth cooperation in different field like art or sport and to have the opportunity for concrete projects, e.g. school exchange, drama group exchange or meetings across country borders.

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES IN LIFE?

Chair: Bjarne Rasmussen, Nykøbing F, Denmark

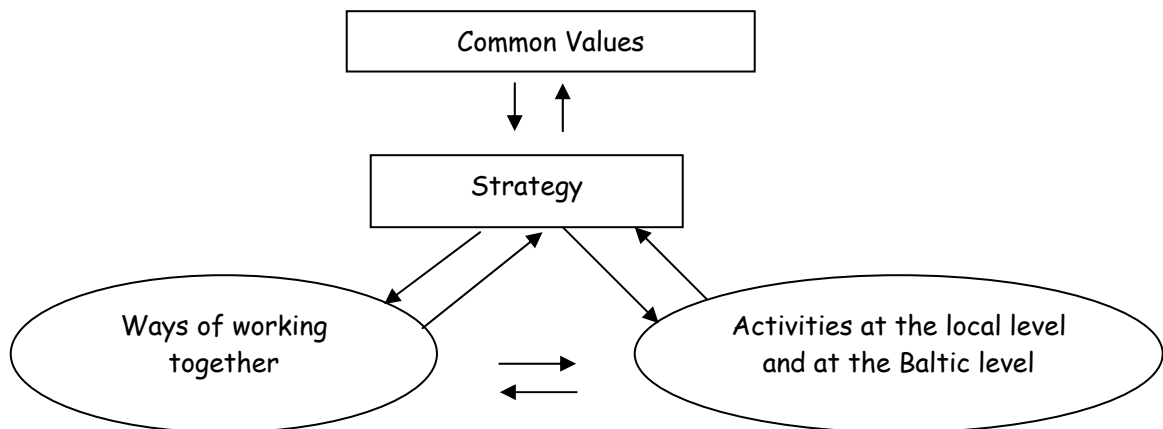
Initially it was decided to expand the theme of the workshop from focusing just on "your priorities in life" or "your values" to also comprising "our priorities in life" or "our values". We followed this logic development process. The participants split into smaller groups

- **Personal values** - each participant thought about one personal core value (this is valuable / important to me) - then this personal value was presented to the other group members - and finally the personal values were presented to the other groups :
 - Education / knowledge
 - Friendship
 - Independence
 - Exploration
 - Self-realization
 - Self-determination
- **Group values** - based on dialogue principles (active listening, mutual respect, common understanding, consensus etc.) the groups developed at set of common values :
 - Friendship and love
 - Health
 - Social security - stability
 - Independence - freedom
 - Knowledge
 - Mutual understanding
 - Tolerance
 - Exploration
 - Support
 - Belonging - feeling of identity

- Community values - the community could be the local one, in which you live, and/or the more global community like the Baltic Sea Region - in dialogue the groups developed at set of core values for the future youth cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region
 - Friendship
 - Learning from each other / experience exchange
 - Knowledge - improvement of understanding and skills
 - Exploration
 - Tolerance
 - Belonging - double identity: common BSR identity interacting with individual identities

EXPLANATORY COMMENTS BY THE WORKSHOP MODERATOR

Friendship turned out to be to overarching value, the value that seems to be the most important one in the field of Youth Cooperation, at least if we are listening to the outcome of this workshop. It should be stressed that the list is a result of a consensus seeking process; everybody agreed on the items included in list No 3, and especially the importance of friendship, prior to all other values. By focusing on not just "my own personal value", but on "our common values" list No 3 should be considered a recommendation for preparing a strategy or action programme for the future Youth Cooperation in the BSR.



Furthermore I learned from the dialogues - both in this workshop and in the square, in the corner "What is important for having a good life?" that the engagement behind commitment and cooperation among young people is closely linked to concrete activities that reflect their own personal values. This could be said to be the case for all persons, despite age, sex and culture. But I am convinced that especially in the case of young people, their core values should be in focus when developing the Youth Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. The determining factor behind the motivation lies in the emotional intelligence of the young people !

Or to put it in another way. The cooperation structures, work modalities as well as the activities, should not simply be a copy of those being used or carried out by other, non-young organisations. Basically because they might be driven by other values, and perhaps having more so called rational objectives.

HOW CAN YOU INFLUENCE YOUR CITY AND SCHOOL?

Co-chairs: Carl Bengtsson, Calmare Youth Council, Sweden

Marcin Piatkowski, Polish Scouting and Guiding Association, Sopot, Poland

The workshop participants were mainly young people deriving from different countries around the Baltic Sea Region. During the workshop the participants got the possibility to exchange their experience and opinions concerning different ways and methods enabling young people to have a say on their local level. Together, we have come up with some proposals for good forums where young people can have an influence on decision-making processes within their city or school.

Forms for participation:

School:

- Student councils
- Student boards
- Parents boards

Municipality:

- Youth council
- Youth Parliament
- Youth Co-ordinator
- Non-Government-Organisations

We also discussed different problem areas for youth participations, those where:

- That there was a sense among youth that their opinions were ignored
- That there was a lack of opportunities for the young people
- That there also was a lack of encouragement and enthusiasm for youth work
- That a lot of people does not treat young people seriously
- That social issues is a problem area high on the young peoples agenda where HIV and drug problems was a few of them

The discussion led to one problem area that was overlapping everything, and that was:

- **How do we reach everyone?**
- **How to include everyone in the youth participation forums?**

After finding this overall problem the discussion was aimed in the position of trying to solve this problems:

- We must raise young people's awareness concerning the possibilities of the influence on their local level
- It is important to organise open workshops in perhaps city squares aiming at awaking of interest
- Education in schools concerning the democratic aspects, knowledge how and why to express the opinions and try to influence is essential already from the first school level
- Making concrete projects is important to be able to show what has been done and achieved
- Advertising what has been done and what is happening is a key to raise interest and awareness
- It is useful to send out different forms of questionnaires to find out the interests of the youths in the different areas

WHAT IS A YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY?

Co-chairs: Annelie Gustavsson, Calmare Youth Council, Kalmar, Sweden
Anna Ohlsson, Calmare Youth Council, Kalmar, Sweden

The participants in this workshop were mainly young people from Poland, Africa, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany and Sweden but also civil servants from Poland, Germany and Estonia.

The workshop was divided in three parts, in the first one we discussed what is a youth friendly city for you. The conclusions from this part were that youth friendly city is a city which:

- Invests in youth
- Gives the youth the opportunity to develop their ideas
- Have a forum where youth voices can be heard
- Building a structure that shows a concern to young peoples needs
- Pays attention what youth needs
- Provides good education
- Provides good entertainment for young people in different ages
- Respects the young people's rights
- Supports the development of talented young people
- Enables the young people to express their own lifestyle
- Enables the youth to be a part of whole system (school, municipality)

In the second part we shortly talked about what the problems of young people are today in their cities. After that focused on what we want to see in a youth friendly city and the conclusions were:

- Investing in education (a horizontal relationship between pupils and teachers)
- A good Social care system
- A Youth Centre
- School-councils, Crisis-group
- Youth coordinator
- A good relationship between adults and youth. The youth need adults everywhere
- Sports and music events
- A youth radio station
- "Youth friendly districts" (Start at a level we can change tomorrow if we want to)
- Different-Generation Centre (where people from different generations meets)
- Whenever something is planned for the youth, they must be a part in the process.

HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH POLITICS AND POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS?

*Co-chairs: Desiree Liljevall, Kalmar, Sweden
Przemyslaw Marchlewicz, Gdansk. Poland*

The main goal of the workshop was first of all to give a message: “what young people think about politics” and to change the way young people think about politics. At the beginning of the workshop we all agreed that everything is politics and that democracy can be sometimes a bad political system but nothing better has ever been invented and therefore democratic tools should be used. We started from different opinions about politics, and through a discussion we came to the common decisions. The process went as follows:

BAD ATTITUDE *DISCUSSION* *DECISION*
A lot of ideas and opinions *coming to conclusions* *acceptable for everyone*

All participants agreed that opinions that politics is nothing more than corruption and false promises, which came from the open square discussion, were not totally correct. We realized that politics is a hard work of decision making with plenty social limits, although there are of course negative examples within the world of politics. Finally we elaborated the common statement about the young peoples’ opinion concerning the politics and politicians, which was the final “political” decision of the group:

We, young people from Baltic Sea Region think that politicians of all levels are there for us although we can’t leave the responsibility only to them. The voice of young people should be listened to. To fulfill promises, politicians should work hard to make satisfying changes.

We do not always trust the politicians because they talk more than they act, often give false promises and therefore we very often get disappointed with them. This is because politicians very often take care of their own interest and they do not think about the mission they have.

Politicians very often do not respect, listen and encourage young people to take part in the political work. They create an image that young people do not have any influence on decision making processes and young people believe they do not.

Politicians should not forget that they decide for the society. Therefore, the politicians, especially on a municipal level, should meet the needs of youth, listen to their opinions and encourage youth to take an active role in local politics. Meetings with youth, involving them in municipal work, establishing political youth projects, should be the key issues for local politicians.

HOW DOES THE EU INFLUENCE YOUR DAILY LIFE?

Chair: Anna Golec, BSSSC, Gdansk, Poland

The workshop participants were mainly young people from candidate countries; only 2 of 10 participants were representing the EU member country (Sweden). In the workshop we discussed 3 basic themes:

1. Do we know enough about the EU?
2. Does the EU influence life of young people?
3. What will be the results of the enlargement for young people in the Baltic Sea Region?

To get to know opinions of young people we used different methods: discussions, activating games, brainstorming. Since the majority of the participants were representing candidate countries, then we also had controversial discussions on the negative influence of the EU after enlargement. The conclusions of the workshop are as follows:

1. EU has an influence on almost all fields of young people's life: education, work, social status, travelling abroad, financial possibilities, international contacts, ethnical issues, health and social care.
2. The EU has mainly a positive influence on young people's life, especially in the following issues: free movement, international exchanges, access to bigger funds, recognitions of degrees, bigger labour market, more chances for higher standard of life.
3. Apart from positives we found also negative influence the EU has on young people: drugs, alcohol and crime movement, increased costs of life, ethnical problems, domination of bigger countries.
4. Still we think that there is not enough knowledge about EU among young people – we think that EU should use more innovative methods on information and promotion so as to make ideas of EU more popular and easy to understand for young people.
5. Concerning the EU enlargement– we believe that young people are for the enlargement, but we also are aware of the threats it might bring. Still, we think that after enlargement the co-operation of young people in the Baltic Sea Region will remain important for us.

D. CONFERENCE SEMINARS

As one of the main objectives of the event was to support the local action by inspiring the cities on the youth work at the local level showing the best practice and experience floating around the Baltic Sea, the last day of the conference was devoted to the "Best Practice" seminars. The participants could choose one of the four seminars dealing with different spheres of life which proved to be high on young peoples' agenda due to the pre-study questionnaires.

YOUTH AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Moderator - Ann Sofie Lagercrantz, Kalmar Municipality, Sweden

The city of Kalmar has done a lot in order to make the city friendly to all its people and all the groups living in it, regardless their sex, ethnic background and physical problems. There are a lot of good examples of the actions against all kinds of discrimination and intolerance that can be shown as inspirational best examples. The main aim of this workshop was to answer the question: What can the city / organisations / schools do in order to support the equal opportunities, as it comes to:

- Equality between man and woman (school, work, different organisations)
- Possibilities of the handicapped people.
- Minorities and the multicultural societies

The participant had also the possibility to discuss how different the city /community can be assessed from the point of view of different people and to compare the actions taken in Kalmar with the activities on their local levels.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK

Moderator - Helena Engvall, Juventum, Eksjö. Sweden

Juventum is a voluntary association leading the European Youth Centre in Eksjö, which was founded in February 1996. The association's primary aim is to create an international meeting place for young people and youth organisations in Eksjö. Juventum arranges also a range of different international events, and coordinates several projects. The main topics of the seminar, besides showing the activities of Juventum as one of the "best practise" was to discuss the following aspects:

- Good examples of the international youth projects active within the region
- Good advice on how to start an international initiative or a co-operation project
- International projects and possibilities for young people both within the sphere of work and studies

A part of the workshop was also devoted to the program Youth for Europe and the possibilities for young people, which are carried by it.

YOUTH AT THE LABOUR MARKET

Moderators: Anders Nilsson, Malin Haraldsson, Communicare, Karlstad, Sweden

Communicare is a Swedish organisation, which works towards helping young people to find their place at the working market. The organisation arranges a range of training courses and diverse support for young people willing to start their own companies or who want to develop their qualifications. The issues discussed at the workshop were:

- Threats and opportunities of the working life
- How to help young people find a good job
- How to support youth entrepreneurship

YOUNG PEOPLES' QUALITY OF LIFE- STRESS, DEPENDENCE AND DREAMS

Moderator - Rafal Kasprzak, Warsaw School of Economics

Rafal Kasprzak is a scientist dealing the issue of life quality and social policy, working for Warsaw School of Economics. The workshop focused on the following problems:

- What is the quality of life, what measures can use when assessing it?
- What is important for young people
- What are their objectives and targets
- How to support young people in achieving their goals?
- What can be done in order to make young peoples' life better and to help them develop themselves?

V. CONFERENCE RESULTS

When evaluating the overall results of the Young Voices of the Baltic Sea Region conference, several dimensions and aspects can be discussed, as there are a lot of levels on which the conference outcome can be analysed.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The first tangible result of the project can be the fact that we managed to invite to Kalmar almost 100 people from 11 countries, who were willing to share their experience and ideas and were open for establishing future co-operation and projects. We succeeded in gathering people that are active on the local level and deal with different spheres of the youth involvement and participation - representing city structures, non-governmental organisations and youth councils. This already can be assessed as a success as one of the three main objectives of the project was to put a light on the youth participation on the local level and to enable the conference participants to exchange their experience within this field.

Unfortunately, not as many cities as we had expected decided to send their civil servants to the conference in Kalmar. Majority of the cities present there had decided only to send the young participants as the representatives and generally the response for the conference was considerably smaller than we had expected – especially as it comes to the Nordic countries. One of the reasons for this situation turned to be the not effectively enough working UBC contact persons' network. The information about our conference was sometimes not forwarded to the people dealing with youth issues at all or it was forwarded considerably late. Therefore, the final number of conference participants was approximately 30% smaller than expected. All this gives us unfortunately a considerably weaker possibility to affect the city structures as such. Also the background for creating of the future UBC commission on youth co-operation and participation is considerably weaker but we deeply hope that in future the youth work within the UBC, more cities will be involved.

THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

We have a feeling that the cities, which have sent their representatives to the event, are going to benefit from the project. This is not only due to the fact that we had put a lot of efforts in organising "best practice" seminars and inviting people with wide experience within the field of youth work as the workshop and seminar moderators. This is also due to the fact that the participants could share their own knowledge and create basis for future partnership and cooperation. Surely, all the new ideas the participants have come up with and all best practice they have become acquainted with will contribute to their day-to-day work on the local level.

The choice of issues tackled at the conference can be considered successful, especially with regard to the evaluation forms we have received from the conference participants. A significant majority of the persons present at the conference evaluated the conference content and the issues discussed as something that managed to live up to their expectations from before the event. This proves that, by conducting the pre-study concerning the workshops' and seminars' themes, we managed to find topics interesting for the youth of the region.

LISTENING TO THE YOUNG VOICES

Another important objective of the project was to enable young people to meet their peers from other countries around the Baltic Sea Region, to discuss the issues, which they consider important; to exchange experience and make new contacts. Undoubtedly, this aim has been achieved, as the conference program tackled several spheres of topics, starting from politics or functioning of the city structures to friendship and family relations. What is also essential is the fact that young people not only had the possibility to discuss their opinions them between, but the dialogue was also led with the adult participants. Besides, all the opinions and conclusions from the conference will be presented to the wider public, through distributing the conference results to the UBC member cities and UBC commissions. Therefore, we can state that the "young voices" will be listened to.

YOUTH IN UBC

Last but not least, the conference was targeting at making a stand on what kind of connection should be between the structure of Union of the Baltic Sea and the young people in the UBC member cities. This objective has the most visible results as the conference participants elaborated an official statement to the UBC concerning the possibilities for embedding the youth participation within the organisation.

The statement, further enclosed, was already presented at the UBC Executive Board meeting in Rostock in June 2003 and will be discussed at the General Conference in Klaipeda in October 2003. The future will show to which extend the youth work within UBC will be implemented, as it mainly depends on the will of the UBC member cities' authorities, but the interest shown as far as for proves that there is a need for such the action within our region.

PROPOSAL OF
THE YOUTH CONFERENCE "YOUNG VOICES"
CONCERNING A YOUTH STRUCTURE IN UBC

We, the participants of the conference appreciate the work of the UBC and the principals and ideas behind the Union. We are recognising the value of the UBC member cities as a basis for increasing co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. The youngsters participating in the conference propose a youth structure in the framework of the UBC in order to improve their possibilities to influence their local society and everyday life.

1) Youth network

The tasks of the network are to promote youth co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region and to work towards youth involvement, youth exchange and youth participation in the UBC member cities. It should serve as a basis for contact making and information distribution. It will also be a reference point for the *Commission on youth co-operation and participation*.

The network builds upon existing youth networks of local youth structures as well as upon one youth organisation as a contact point in each member city. It is also open to other cities and youth interested in co-operation, and with other existing youth fora in the region. The network co-operates closely together with the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs, which is to become a co-ordinating body for the network, as well as with the UBC Secretariat.

2) "Commission on youth cooperation and participation"

The Commission will be included in the existing structure of UBC and will serve as a support to the network of young people in UBC. It will consist of young people as well as civil servants dealing with youth issues on the local level. Existing youth networks of the Baltic Sea Region will be taken into account. The commission will monitor the agenda of UBC from a youth perspective. The first task of the Commission would be to organise a seminar at the General conference in Klaipeda in October 2003 with a topic of youth participation within UBC and local youth actions, to which the members of the UBC youth network will be invited.

3) Annual UBC Youth Conference

The focus of the annual conferences is on questions important for young people of the Baltic Sea Region. It represents a forum for young people of the UBC member cities as well as other cities willing to join in, to exchange experiences, finding partners and discuss common issues such as youth participation, EU and Baltic Sea- co-operation and youth influence on local levels. The conference is to be organised with regard to the UBC General Conference as well as to other fora addressing youth issues in the Baltic Sea Region. In the framework of the conference youth representatives will be elected for the "*Commission on youth co-operation and youth participation*".

4) UBC Executive Board

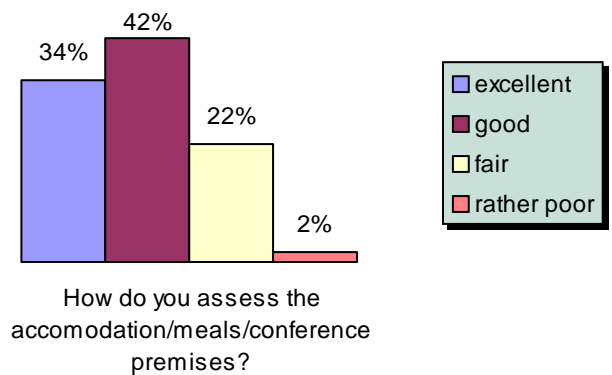
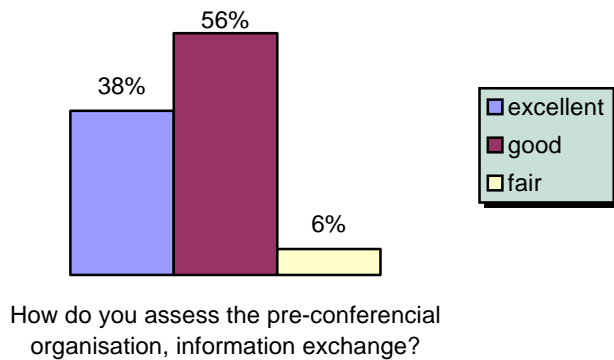
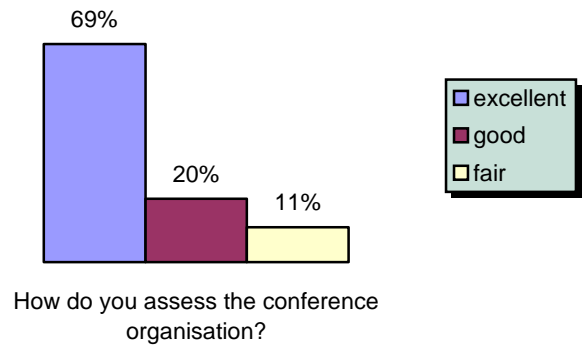
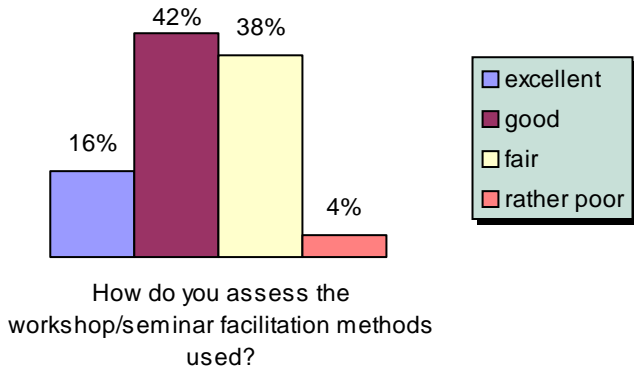
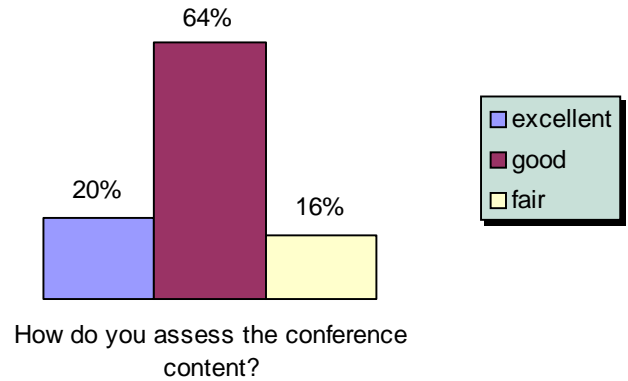
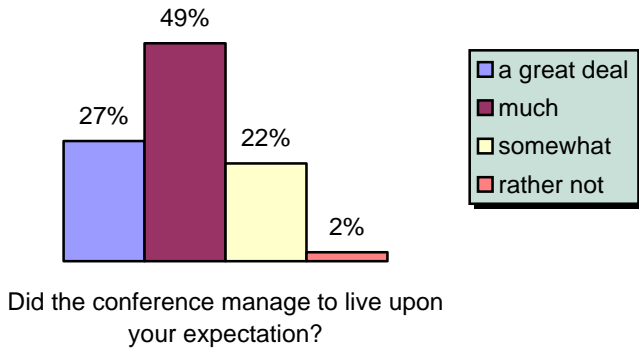
The young people of the Baltic Sea Region consider it of great importance that the UBC Executive Board gets in contact with young people of every city they meet in, with the aim to learn about the views and ideas of the young generation concerning the life in and the future of that very city.

5) Cooperation between UBC and the youth

We call upon the UBC Executive Board and the UBC Secretariat to work towards the nomination of a youth contact officer in every UBC member city and to promote the activities of the "*Commission on youth co-operation and youth participation*".

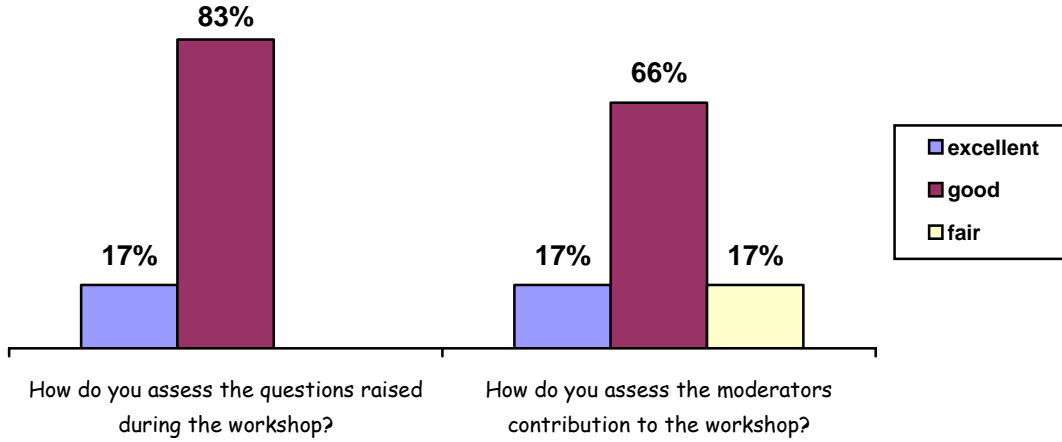
VI. CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Based on the evaluation forms filled in by the participants after the conference.

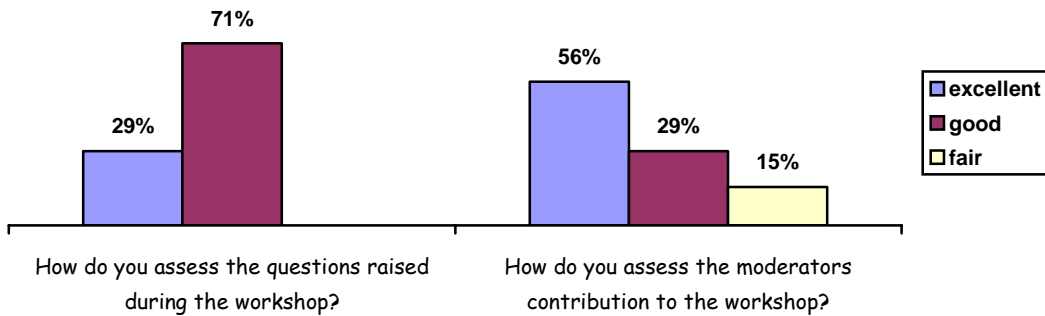


VII. EVALUATION OF WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS.

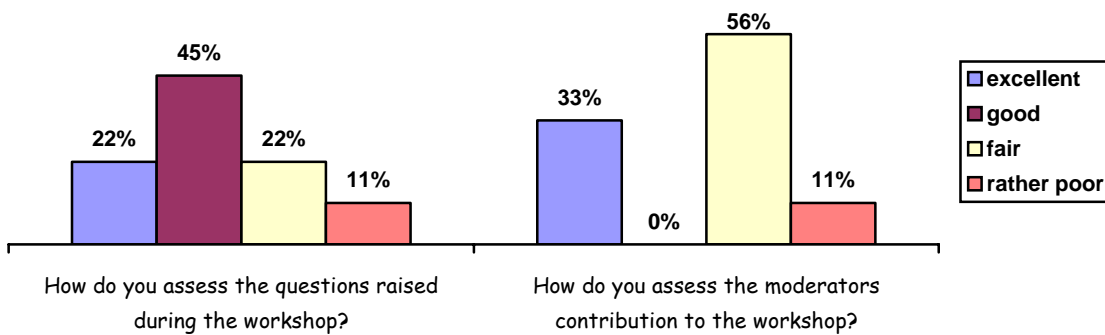
HOW CAN YOU INFLUENCE YOU CITY AND SCHOOL?



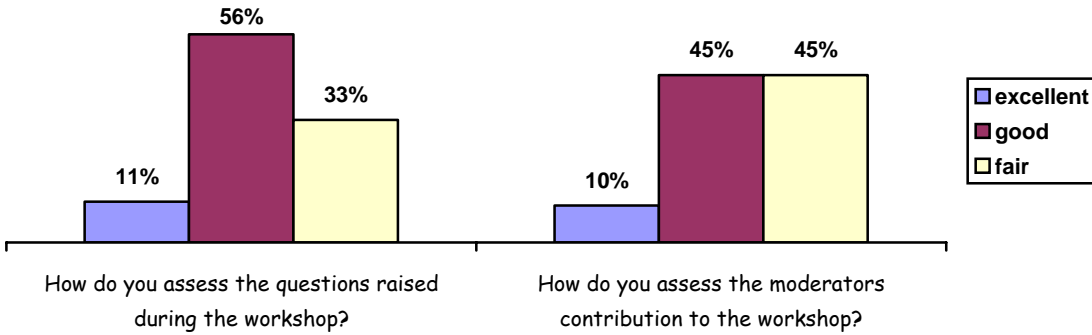
HOW CAN YOU AFFECT THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES?



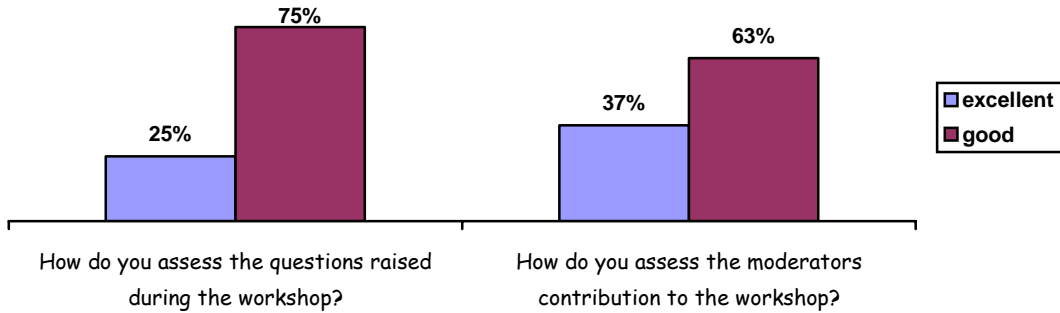
HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH POLITICS AND POLITICAL ORGANISATION?



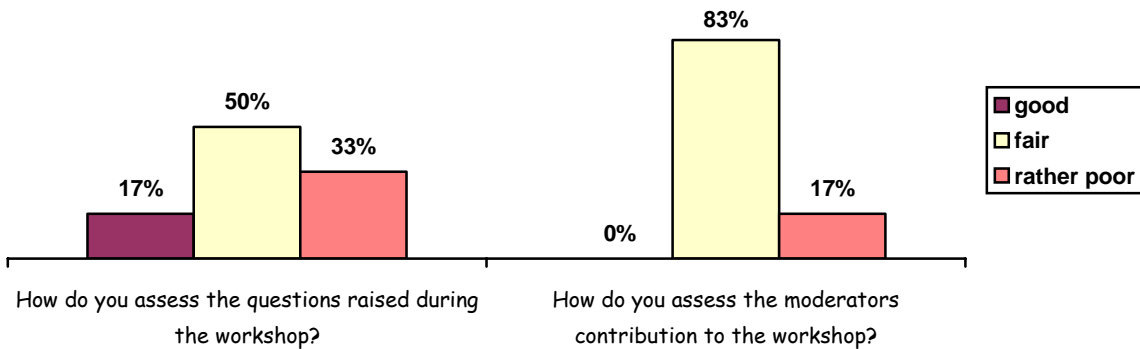
WHAT IS A YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY?



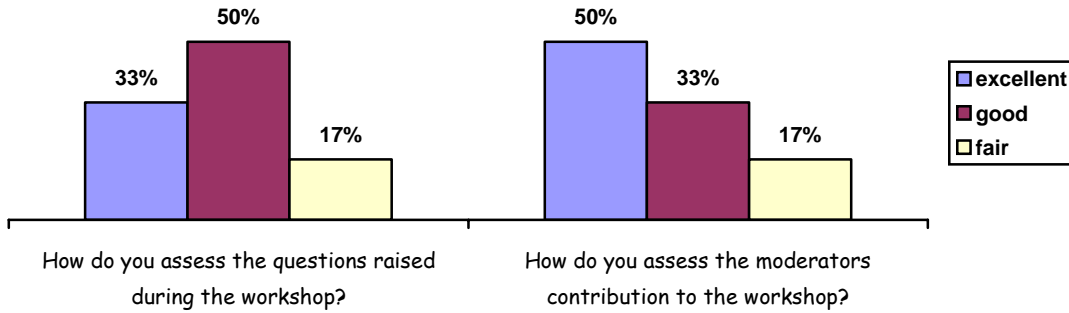
WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES IN LIFE?



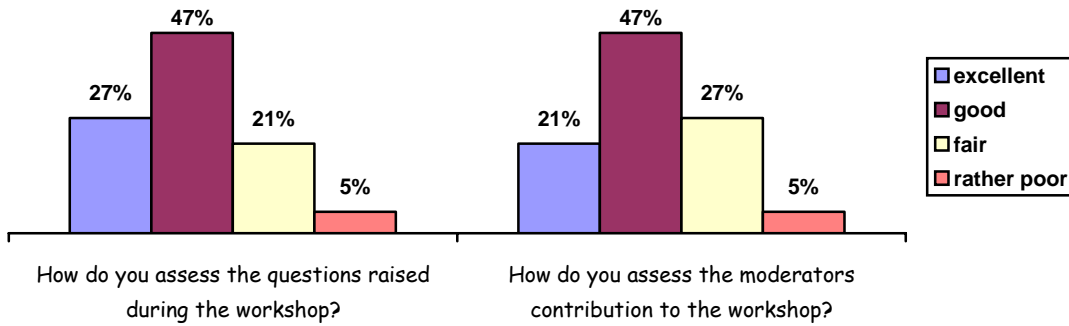
HOW DOES EU INFLUENCE YOUR DAILY LIFE?



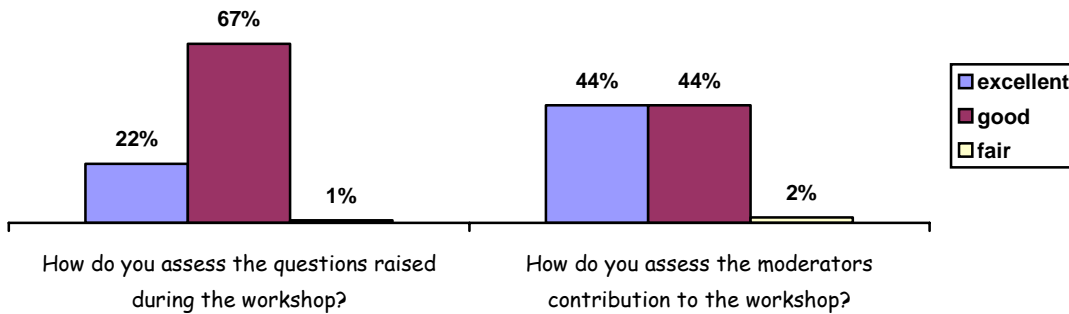
YOUTH AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.



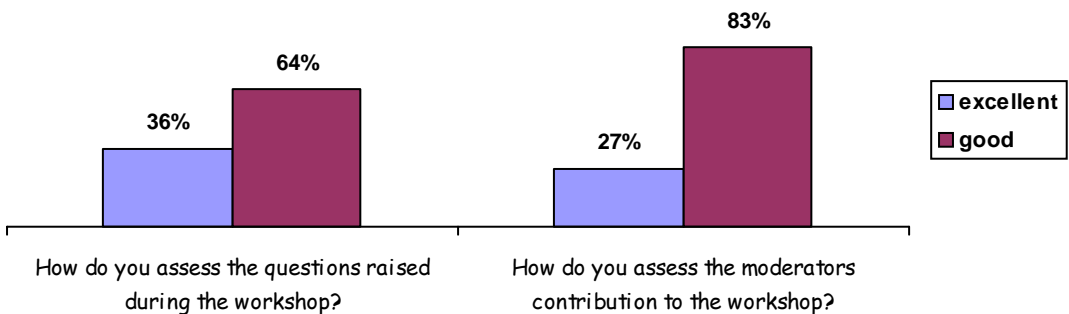
INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK.



YOUTH AT THE LABOUR MARKET.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S QUALITY OF LIFE



VII. CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

To the conference there were invited young people and civil servants dealing with the youth questions, coming from all the member cities of the Union of the Baltic Cities, coming from all the ten countries around the Baltic Sea Region. Also all other interested cities and organisations within the Baltic Sea Region could join the conference.

As observers and potential partners in the future we also invited young people from countries around the Lake Victoria in Africa. Altogether there were 97 people, coming from 37 cities present at the conference. The distribution of the participants was as follows:

