

Conclusions - Young and Active in the Baltic Sea Region

From 13-16th of October in 2005 young people from 8 Baltic Sea countries, representing their cities and youth organisations from the cities, assembled in Vilnius for the conference “Young and Active in the Baltic Sea Region” to discuss how to improve their future in the Baltic Sea Region.

The conference dealt with the issues of “**Youth influence at school**”, “**Youth influence at a city level**”, “**Priorities in life**”, “**Intercultural learning**”, “**Demographic changes**” and was supported by the Union of Baltic Cities (UBC), the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs, the Vilnius Pedagogical University, the city of Kalmar, the Kumulus project and the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs.

The participants exchanged their experiences and ideas from organising and conducting youth activities from the local to international level and presented good as well as bad practice examples. They used the opportunity to get to know new people and to develop contacts with each other. Living in the member cities of the UBC the participants wish to use the opportunity to speak up to their local politicians and officials of the UBC

Before that background they concluded the following:

- Young people throughout the region have similar priorities in life, namely a high valuation of the family, friends and education,
- Young people want to be active in their cities and want to be involved in the activities in their cities as well as have the chance to develop and implement projects of their own,
- Young people do not want to be seen as decoration for the society and the politics in the cities; they are the future of the cities. They want no symbolic participation but to be seriously involved in decision making processes on all levels and in all matters they are affected by.

The participants of the conference demand the following from all political decision makers in the UBC member cities:

- Enlargement of the possibilities and more financial support for intercultural learning and intercultural experiences for all young people in the region,
- Support for the organisation of youth events from the local to the international level,
- To strengthen the democratic education in the schools,
- To give the pupils and students the support they need, so that they and not only the teachers or other adults can feel ownership of the schools,
- To set up a youth council in every UBC member city with decision making competences in all matters affecting young people and with an own budget,
- To extend the support for and to strengthen the families in the UBC member cities
- To support the dialogue between the generations about the future of social, cultural and economic life in the UBC member cities,
- To encourage young people to take responsibility for themselves, for the development of their cities and for other groups in the cities,
- Implement the UN convention of the rights of child in the cities.



The Commission and Network on Youth Issues will strive to support the young people in their international activities and to provide help and advice across borders for young project workers.

It will take up the proposals and results of the conference "Young and Active in the Baltic Sea Region" to its own working plan for the upcoming years and calls upon other UBC actors and members to do the same.

Vilnius, 16th October 2005