

City of Kristiansand and International cooperation

City of Kristiansand and the City council in March 08 endorsed a communication on international cooperation. The communication also included a list of planned and ongoing project activities where the city plays a role. It was strongly communicated that all international activities should support the focus areas in the City Masterplan 05-15.

City of Kristiansand has a strong presence of people with a foreign background. More than 130 nationalities constitute nearly 12 % of the population.

The city has always been international with strong links to the rest of the world. In the past shipping was important for the whole region. Later the oil and gas supplier industry developed in the 70`s and made the foundations for the highly competitive equipment and engineering companies targeted at the oil and gas industry worldwide. This industry represents a lions share of the exporting income alongside the advanced processing industry in the region. Also important economically is construction industry and tourism. All international by nature and putting Kristiansand and the region on the map.

For more information on the city and region we recommend you to study the booklet "Kristiansand – City full of energy" which gives a picture of the city and region for people or institutions interested in relocating.

Municipal international activities

The City council Communication on International cooperation draws up the framework of how the municipality should undertake its different activities and projects with our different partners in Norway and in rest of the world.

The Municipality will initiate international project activities and continue a long term relationship with our friendship and sister cities in Namibia (Walvis Bay) and in Bangladesh (Rajshahi) which goes back to late 70s.

Municipality of Kristiansand will initiate activities and projects in Europe with sister cities and collaboration partners in other cities in the framework of EEA or European programmes.

The sister cities of Kristiansand are the following (2009):

Münster (Germany)
Trollhättan (Sweden)
Hjørring (Denmark)
Kerava (Finland)
Gdynia (Poland)
Orléans (France)
Letchworth (UK)
Reykjanesbær (Iceland)
Rajshahi (Bangladesh)
Walvis Bay (Namibia)

Among other cities we have established informal relationships with are Austin (Tx), Aalborg (Dk), Herceg Novi (Montenegro).

Networks where the Municipality is a member

Union of Baltic Cities (UBC)

The Union's aim is to promote and strengthen cooperation and exchange of experience among the cities in the Baltic Sea Region, to advocate for common interests of the local authorities in the region, and to act on behalf of the cities and local authorities in common matters towards regional, national, European and international bodies, as well as achieving sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region with full respect to European principles of local and regional self-governance and subsidiarity. Union of the Baltic Cities a voluntary, proactive network mobilizing the shared potential of over 100 member cities for democratic, economic, social, cultural and environmentally sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region. Mr Jørgen Kristiansen from the City Council is a Member of the Board of UBC.

www.ubc.net

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments as well as national and regional local government organizations that have made a commitment to sustainable development.

Over 1107 cities, towns, counties, and their associations worldwide comprise ICLEI's growing membership. ICLEI works with these and hundreds of other local governments through international performance-based, results-oriented campaigns and programs.

Kristiansand is also currently in project cooperation in the framework of the EEA and Norwegian Financial mechanisms:

City of Narva , Estonia (co-funded by EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms)

The frontier location of Narva (share border with Russia) is the most characteristic feature of both the past and the present of the town with a population around 66.000. However, the border is not a mere line that separates, but also a place where two cultural worlds meet, mutually influence and interpenetrate each other. The town's economy is currently based on textile industry and power engineering. The largest employers are the two local power stations and Kreenholm Holding. Traditional fields of activity also include clothing manufacture, metal-working and wood-working, as well as the production of furniture, building materials, controlling and measuring apparatuses, and industrial equipment.

A few years ago a delegation from Narva visited Kristiansand and introduced an idea of a common project in the framework of the EEA and Norwegian mechanisms. The proposal was granted support in early 09 and the first meeting was held in Narva in February 09.

The project has the title: "Strengthening of the administrative capacity of local governments, improvement of the quality of public services via exchange of experience and benchmarking in cooperation between Narva and Kristiansand local governments". The background for the project is: Low administrative capacity, competence and cooperation capacity of the Narva Municipality officers, and big difference in social and economic development in comparison with the EU and EEA regions.

A number of delegations will visit Kristiansand in order to benchmark the services provided in Narva with similar in Kristiansand. Mapping is implemented in 6 different fields: Tourism (with Inspiration Sørlandet), planning and reporting, living environment and environment, culture, education and youth.

The visits will mostly take place in Kristiansand in 09 and the last ones in 2010 which is also the final year of the project. The groups have visited municipal and other facilities and met

with a number of people representing different areas in Municipality of Kristiansand. Contact person: Bjørgulf Bergh Torjussen

Jaworzno, Poland (co-funded by EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms)

“The modern Municipality – the program of complex training courses focused on strengthening of local government administration and enhancement of the process of democracy in Jaworzno. The partnership consist of Municipality of Jaworzno, Municipality of Kristiansand together with Centre for equal opportunities (UiA) and KS. The Partnership’s aims are: improvement the quality of public services in Poland, increase the professional qualifications of the Jaworzno Town Hall employees and local non-governmental and socioeconomic partners’ representatives.

Project started in 09 and will terminate in 2010 after a number of work shops in Poland focusing on equal opportunities and NGOs in municipal work.

Contact person: Anne Karen Aunevik

EU co-funded projects

Smart Cities, (Co- funded by Interreg IVB North Sea programme)

The general aim of the Smart Cities project is to create an innovation network between governments and academic partners leading to excellence in the domain of the development and take-up of e-services, setting a new baseline for e-service delivery in the whole North Sea region. Smart Cities will create:

a network of North Sea e-Government leaders with ambitious transformational e-Government Strategies aiming to deliver innovative and excellent public services with documented improved quality of life and enhanced competitiveness;

an academic and research network which will support and help local and national authorities in realising and focusing their ambitions;

a unique approach of developing e-services by combining the academic approach, the government view and proven practices and knowledge in a powerful process of co-design.

This will result in a transferable methodology useful for EU innovation networks and authorities and a model for the NSR;

a new baseline of customer-centred, personalised, information-rich and geolocated services in the North Sea Region combining existing solutions already developed by the partners and co-designing new customer services, wireless applications and strategies for take-up and multi-channelling

The project aims to understand which e-services services work best and why; it will facilitate transfer of e-Government successes across national borders; it will identify and support the real transformational impacts of such transfer of good practices on local government; it will equip decision makers with the knowledge and ambition to achieve further innovation in the delivery of e-enabled public services; and will engage national authorities in this ambition. At the European level, the project will support the creation and growth of communities of practice across the NSR building organisational commitment to and capacity for inter-regional government service sharing. Smart Cities will raise the bar in many aspects.

Lead partner: Intercommunale Leiedal, Belgium with a number of partners from Belgium, netherlands, Germany, UK, Sweden and Norway (Municipality of Kristiansand and Lillesand). Contact person is Bjørgulf Bergh Torjussen.

Nordic Bicycle Cities, (co-funded by Interreg IVA Kattegat Skagerak programme)

The Kattegat/Skagerrak region is facing environmental, health and transport challenges due to the increasing traffic in the Scandinavian cities. Through the project Nordiske cykelbyer

(Nordic cycle cities) Norwegian, Danish and Swedish municipalities participate in the project forming a network of Nordic cycle cities as an environmental friendly and salutary solution to the problem. This concept includes a common strategy, a common process plan, continuous exchange of knowledge and experiences as well as common development of methods and benchmarking.

All participating partners will develop local policies and action plans for cycle traffic as well as develop annual accounts for their cycle traffic. During the project period a common campaign will be implemented - «The Nordic way» – where a number of activities will take place. The common, but locally performed actions are divided into four main activities:

- Biking to work
- Better services for cyclists
- Children on bikes
- Safety for cyclists

Apart from the direct outcomes such as campaigns, information material and increased knowledge, the project intends to increase the use of bikes six percent during the project period. In a long term perspective the health care sector will save a lot of money as a result of less pollution and better public health. Project partners: Mölndals Kommun, Viborg Kommune, Randers Kommune, Silkeborg Kommune, Mariestad Kommun, Varberg Kommun, Tranemo Kommun, Svenljunga Kommun, Kristiansand kommune. Contact person: Siri Gilbert

DC Noise, With Knutepunkt Sørlandet, the intermunicipal cooperation around Kristiansand. DC NOISE is an Interreg IVB North Sea Region project. [9 regions from 5 countries in Europe](#) work together to deal with the consequences of demographic change. The project runs from June 2008 until June 2011. Demographic change is recognised as one of the three most significant challenges facing Europe and its regions. The others being climate change and globalisation. All developed countries, sooner or later, will have to deal with processes of demographic change. It consists of different trends: a population decline, a shrinking labour force, decreasing number of young people, an ageing society, etc.

Demographic change is foremost a result of low birth rates, which are a direct consequence of cultural and socio-economic changes such as growing prosperity, emancipation of women, secularisation, etc. Facing the demographic challenge through means such as increasing employment rates, integrating legal migrants and shaping infrastructures and services in response to ageing are now widely stated, but have not yet consistently put into practice. The demographic challenges require different, but often integrated solutions Together the partners of DC NOISE are seeking to develop new approaches in practice and to share the lessons they learn throughout the North Sea Region (NSR). Contact person in Municipality of Kristiansand is: Ragnhild Bendiksen and in Knutepunkt Sørlandet: Svein Øderud.

Cooperation within the field of Culture and Youth

Samsen cultural center is member of the Youth 4 Media network, which has 28 members from 20 European countries, included some countries from the Mediterranean region. The mediacentre Bennohaus in Munster, Germany is coordinating the activity, network administration and has the chairman of the board. All projects are based on grants from the EU. The next project, “Art&media – ways out of poverty”, will have participants from Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Bulgaria, Jordan and Samsen cultural center from Norway. This project will go on for 2 years from November 2009.

The Section of Sport in the Municipality of Kristiansand, is a member of the UBC; Union of the Baltic Cities, Section of Sport.

Information and news about updated projects, as well as recent science within physical activities are exchanged between member cities of this network.

<http://www.ubc.net/commissions.31.html>

The Municipality of Kristiansand, Section of Sport, will during a week in June/July 2010, arrange The Annual Nordic Twin City Sport Competition. We will host youngsters from Trollhättan, Reykjanesbær, Hjørring and Kerava. About 90 athletes at the age of 14, will join us to play soccer and take part in social activities..

The International Cities of Refuge Network and guest writers

The Municipality of Kristiansand is a member of ICORN; The International cities of Refuge Network, an association of cities and regions around the world dedicated to the value of Freedom of Expression. Writers have consistently been targets of politically motivated threats and persecution. To help writers whom find themselves in difficult conditions Kristiansand joined ICORN in 1998, the second member city in Norway. Currently there are 26 member cities with the Administration Centre located in Stavanger, Norway.

In April 2009 Kristiansand welcomed a new guest writer. The Vietnamese writer and movie director Le Ba Diem Chi (age 44) arrived together with her teenage daughter, becoming the fourth guest writer in this city. Ayad Ibrahim Rikabi (Syria), Carlos Sherman (Uruguay) and Salah S.Ali (Iraq) were the former guest writers.

Information and news about ICORNs activities and projects can be found here:

<http://www.icorn.org/history.php>

Norwegian PEN is responsible for the coordination of the Norwegian section of the international Cities of Asylum-network. For further information on Norwegian PEN:

http://www.norskpen.no/php/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

Artist in Residence

The City of Kristiansand offers a residency to professional artists, preferably fine artists and craft artists, who wish to live and work in Kristiansand for a period.

The aim is to strengthen, promote and develop collaboration and network between contemporary artists in Kristiansand and other national and foreign artists, and to enrich the cultural stage of our town. Agder Artcenter administrate the residency.

Next deadline for the residency is 1st of February 2010.

For more information:

<http://www.agderkunst.no/?mkat=91&editio=USQQNYyHRZTGFB>