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**HOW THE COOPERATION OF TWIN CITIES CAN
ENCOURAGE THE VIABILITY OF REGIONS AND
COMMUNES - THE UNION OF CULTURE AND
ECONOMY**

FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE TURKU CONGRESS

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UNION OF RUSSIAN CITIES' EXPERT GROUP

Union of Russian Cities (URC): current priority tasks of the Expert Groups and Project Offices

- ❑ Promoting sustainable development of cities by introducing innovative instruments of city economic and social growth
- ❑ Assisting to federal authorities in revealing and using the potential of cities as "locomotives" of growth for the social and economic development of the state.
- ❑ Promoting best practices and cooperation between municipalities in Russia and beyond
- ❑ Developing recommendations and advocating the municipal interests at regional and federal levels
- ❑ Helping cities to improve the living standards of the population in the Russian Federation.

◆ URC integrates the best practices in municipal development and growth



Challenges and Opportunities for twin-city cooperation development

- ❑ The 4th industrial revolution and the main challenge for the next 5 years is technological progress,
- ❑ Continuing tendency of compression (urbanization)
- ❑ City as an investment space
- ❑ The era of the cities of SUPER large data (Big Data Cities)
- ❑ The transformation of cities into special intellectual "ecosystems"
- ❑ Digital technologies change the face of the city - the city becomes a kind of computer program with its data processor that integrates all the basic directions of its functioning: healthcare, technology, education, energy, transport, water resources management and space, human capital, investments and other development resources

Cities twinning – channel for economic and cultural development of municipalities



Exchange of best international expertise and practices: participating at panel's discussion on city and business development all around Russia and globally

- ◆ The goal is a mutual enrichment for each participating twin-city's own development
- ◆ Exchange of development resources, which are not only finances, investments, but also knowledge, technologies, best practices, creative ideas, etc.
- ◆ The twin-city cooperation platform secures trust and progress allowing faster prosperous development by involving international expertise, encouraging livability as well as competitiveness
- ◆ Our priority is youth for it is very important to secure its better livability in the current unstable global economy

Current trends of importance at twinning cities level

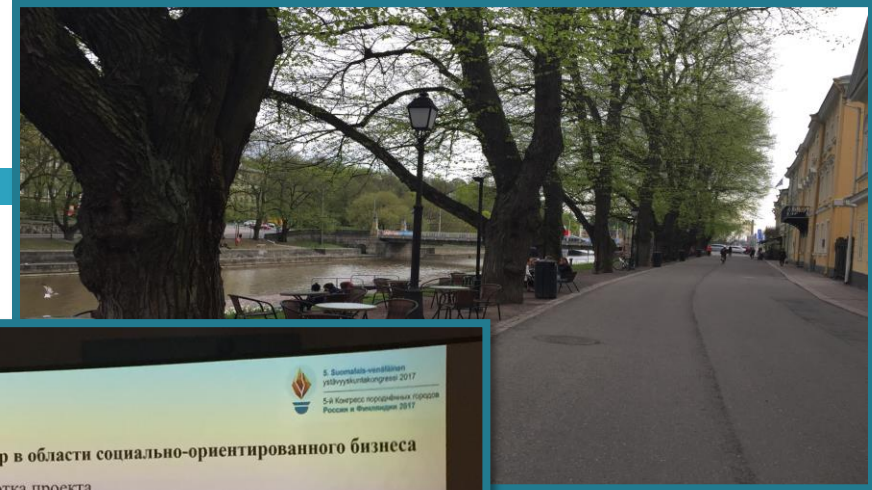


URC conducted 5 Forums on Best Practices exchanges that have encouraged livability and facilitated further economic and cultural development

- ◆ Practical experience vs theory discussions
- ◆ Emphasis on building a favorable space for development, smart urbanization (managing a *quality of sustainable growth*)
- ◆ Introduction of new forms of cooperation between municipalities (clusters, agglomerations, special zones for advanced development, etc)
- ◆ cross-border cultural resources mapping as an economic asset to be used for twinning cities development
- ◆ Urgent need for harmonization for development of capital and peripheral cities: new agenda includes evolution of national policy and new territorial reform (Finland is example)
- ◆ Twinning cities are able to fill the vacuum created by sanctions, which have closed the traditional channels of interstate cooperation
- ◆ long-term cooperation is what we need to value and care of

Areas of mutual concern

- not well developed mechanisms (if any) for quick respond to different challenges of nowadays
- lack of the best practice dissemination activities (both local and internationally)



In the world where over 50% of the population lives in cities, the future of a person is largely determined by the future of the city

URC Forum on the Best Municipal Practices

- ❑ Modernization of the housing and communal services system
- ❑ Interaction of local self-government bodies with NGOs, volunteer and other organisations
- ❑ Establishment by local governments of effective communication resources for interaction with the population
- ❑ Effective solutions for municipalities in the current economic situation. (Financial and Budget Optimization: Development of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, PPPs, Investment Projects for Import Substitution, Outsourcing, Concession)
- ❑ Participation of local governments in the regulation of interreligious and interethnic relations
- ❑ Cultural identity and identity of Russian cities.
- ❑ Cities that are friendly to children



Ideas to promote

- ❑ twin-cities technology transfer
- ❑ Russia-Finland (Inter-territorial) Educational Cluster*(to treat as if it is an integrated macroregion)
- ❑ Russia-Finland Twin-Cities Expert Group (first tasks could be: cultural resource mapping, development of complex inter-territorial investment programs/project portfolios, preparatory activities at the context of forthcoming “Industrie 4.0”, etc)
- ❑ Project of children education in Russia
- ❑ Regular photo gallery, exhibitions in each twin city
- ❑ Prepare together the Russia-Finland Forum on the Best Municipal Practices and Challenges for Development



URC at the meeting of Interparliamentary Assembly's Committee on best municipal practices of CIS-countries in St.Petersburg

Union of Russian Cities and its Expert groups are ready for close cooperation and we're result-oriented

