




BERGEN IN THE WORLD

An International Strategy for the City of Bergen



CITY OF
BERGEN



On June 20, 2018, the City Council of Bergen:

1. adopted the ‘Bergen in the World – an International Strategy for the City of Bergen’
2. requested the City Government to prepare an action plan to follow up the goals and priorities of that strategy
3. requested the City Government to ensure that Bergen becomes a Human Rights City

The Tall Ships Races 2014.

Photo: Eivind Senneset / City of Bergen

FOREWORD

Bergen has always had an international outlook. Today, our business community and institutions are part of an international and diverse world – and they compete in global arenas. The pace of globalisation is steadily increasing, which makes it necessary, for us as a municipality, to coordinate our international responsibilities. We must think globally, but we can also act locally. As a city, we take international initiatives for a number of reasons.

The City Government wants Bergen to strengthen its position as an international city. The International Strategy is threefold: Bergen in the World, the World in Bergen and the internal coordination of the City of Bergen's international aspirations. Bergen is open to the world, situated as it is with its back to the mountains and its gaze beyond the horizon.

As the largest city in Western Norway, Bergen has an important role to play in marketing the region as a whole in the increasingly international world. Municipalities and regions are key players in the international commitments enshrined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. Integrating these commitments into its own master plan for local services can ensure that Bergen actively contributes to achieving these objectives.

Bergen is a diverse city whose inhabitants come from many different countries and cultures. The city Government wants Bergen to remain an open and inclusive city. The city must therefore take steps to ensure that it is easy to get to Bergen, and to make it attractive to settle here.

The city welcomes many guests every year. In this context it is vital that it is perceived as professional and well coordinated, both internally and in collaboration with relevant parties in Bergen. This will enable it to take full advantage of the possibilities as an important international actor and ambassador for the Bergen Region.

*May 2018
Bergen City Government*

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Summary

Because of globalisation and technological innovation the world is rapidly getting smaller. Goods, services, capital and people are crossing national borders more frequently than ever before. Cross-border collaboration can lead to better local solutions to global challenges. Collaboration and shared experiences give access to new expertise, spread knowledge and develop new, innovative solutions.

This triggers a need for a holistic approach and coordination of the City of Bergen’s international relations. The City of Bergen’s International Strategy follows up the goals of the municipal master plan, and its international activities are based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The strategy defines the framework for the City of Bergen’s use of international collaboration as a tool for the development of its own services. The City of Bergen shall be a driving force in the region, and promote the Bergen Region internationally, and further develop Bergen as a diverse and inclusive city. Steps to achieve the goals in the International Strategy will be determined in a separate action plan.

The City of Bergen’s responsibilities for community development, as facilitator and host are important in the international context. The City of Bergen will ensure that the municipality is well coordinated internally and with the rest of the region. The strategy identifies the main priorities for the City of Bergen’s international activities, within three arenas: ‘Bergen in the World’, ‘The World in Bergen’, and the internal coordination of ‘The City of Bergen’s International Aspirations’.

Bergen – an international city

Bergen and the Bergen Region have a long history as an international trading and shipping hub. The Bryggen wharf and its Hanseatic merchants were a vibrant centre from an early age. The Hanseatic merchants left their mark on the character and development of the city, its language and culture. During this period Bergen cemented its position as one of the most important trading centres in Northern Europe. Industry, trade, culture and the exchange of knowledge provided fertile ground for a wide range of international operators in the region.

This outward-looking tradition has strengthened the city as host to international cooperation and a diverse community development. Businesses in Bergen are wide ranging, the art and cultural scene is vivid and varied, the academic and research institutions are held in high regard on the world stage and are in some areas world leaders within their respective fields.

Globalisation and the exchange of information, trade and culture bring the world closer together, despite great geographical distances. The internet, digitalisation and modern communications increase internationalisation, ensuring better organisation, involving more countries. International relations have become part of our everyday lives. Technological innovations have made transmission and sharing information simpler and cheaper. Increased trade and investments between countries, emerging markets and regions provide new opportunities for the business community in the Bergen Region.

A more integrated world means that global challenges also affect the Bergen Region, and have consequences for its development. Climate change, marine waste, food safety, economic development, public health, social inclusion and technological innovations are examples of challenges that are global in nature and require international cooperation. Businesses and labour

markets are increasingly influenced by international processes. Increased internationalisation also puts the City of Bergen's own development in a global perspective.

Bergen has become an intercultural city. Immigrants and their descendants have played and continue to play an important role in Bergen's history, and have made important contributions to the political, economic and cultural development of the city. Immigrants come to Bergen because of work, love, studies, war or conflict, or for numerous other reasons. Immigration gives access to a significantly more varied experience and knowledge base than is available in more closed, homogeneous societies.

Diversity in the population and in the labour market has been and still is important to the development of the city and the region. Focusing on openness, generosity and building relations has been an important prerequisite for creating a sense of belonging in the city's intercultural society. Diversity in terms of culture and life stance, qualifications and skills makes the city better equipped to meet new challenges, both locally and internationally. To benefit fully from this diversity all inhabitants must be able to participate actively.

Background to the international strategy

The City of Bergen has an extensive international engagement, through its twin cities, membership of the West Norway Office in Brussels, membership of networks and organisations, delegation visits and participation in various projects. The City of Bergen's international affairs reflect the city's international and intercultural population.

International relations affect all policy areas and all City Government departments, and highlights the need for a holistic approach to the city's international engagements. The International Strategy shall contribute to better coordination of these efforts.

The City of Bergen uses its international involvement to further develop its own services, and in relation to community development to secure the region's competitiveness and sustainability. The strategy shall ensure that its involvement internationally shall help to achieve agreed goals locally as expressed in the municipal master plan, within the international context.

The International Strategy sets a general and coherent direction for the City of Bergen's international affairs, and forms the main framework for twin city cooperation and networks participation. It is important to have an active approach to EU policy, in order to influence framework conditions with consequences for the region. This reinforces the need for a strategy. A clear role description and mapping of the scope and opportunities are important in this context.

Bergen is an international city with an open economy, strong international research and educational communities, a large, professional cultural scene and humanitarian engagement.

The City of Bergen wants to be a driving force for further development of the Bergen Region by using international tools and instruments to strengthen the region's position and visibility internationally.

The business community and other stakeholders in the region expect the City of Bergen to be a door opener and ambassador for the region, which further reinforces the need for a strategy. Through its International Strategy, the City of Bergen will contribute to broader regional cooperation, to ensure that the whole region pulls in the same direction.

Better cooperation and coordination will increase people's understanding of the need for international relations. The strategy will help to increase the awareness among politicians and within the city administration for active participation in international affairs, the possibilities international cooperation represents, and to exploit the potential of existing cooperation. It will also help to prioritise new agreements.

The International Strategy is a management tool for the City of Bergen. It identifies the municipality's role in international affairs in cooperation with other stakeholders in the Bergen Region, such as academia, business clusters, the County Council and other public bodies. Specifying priorities of the strategy and criteria for participation will be described in the strategy action plan.

Requirements of the international strategy

The City of Bergen's plans

The City of Bergen's overriding plan is the municipal master plan, which comprises a social element and a land use element. The municipal master plan is set out in more detail in municipal sub-plans, sector plans and various strategies. Although these plans are more limited in scope than the master plan they underpin the overriding goals of community development as part of the municipal master plan Bergen 2030.

The International Strategy supports the master plan with its vision of Bergen as an active and attractive city. The plan describes how the City of Bergen aims to meet the most important social challenges up to 2030.

In the international context being an active city will raise Bergen's profile in the world, and help to strengthen its position internationally. The vision of an attractive city reflected in the development of a diverse and inclusive city for everyone, a city that focuses on equality, an inclusive public sector and facilitates cultural exchanges, open dialogue and participation.

The International Strategy must be seen in conjunction with other plans, such as the Green Strategy, the plan for inclusion and diversity, the public health plan, the strategic business plans, area improvement plans, the City of Bergen's cultural strategy etc.



Bergen 2030 – The social elements of the municipal master plan

The social element of the municipal master plan

As well as being a good service provider and developer of a diverse, forward-looking and sustainable urban society, the City of Bergen shall actively promote the Bergen Region in its international initiatives and ensure that delegations visiting the Bergen Region receive a warm welcome.

International relations are not a separate goal in itself, but a means of supporting the City of Bergen's role in its cooperation with other involved parties.

International activities in accordance with this strategy shall draw attention to the Bergen Region, to promote partnerships across national borders and increase tolerance and understanding of other cultures and peoples.

The International Strategy shall help the City of Bergen to realise the goals set out in the social element of the municipal master plan, thus making the Bergen Region a more attractive, sustainable and inclusive urban region. The main goals of 'diverse', 'driving force in the region', 'forward-looking' and 'engaged' are seen as particularly important in relation to international cooperation. More specifically, the International Strategies underpins the following focus areas in the social element of the municipal master plan in particular:

- Bergen will focus on qualifications and skills
- Bergen will invite to cooperation and participation
- Bergen will be a driving force for regional collaboration and regional development
- Bergen will be an attractive region to visit, move to, to stay and live in
- Bergen will be an active facilitator for new and existing businesses

- Bergen will be characterised by openness and inclusion and will provide good living conditions for everyone
- Bergen will be an intercultural city that puts its diversity to positive use
- Having a good life will not depend on social class, age, where people live or cultural background
- Bergen will strengthen the city's position as a promoter of knowledge, qualifications, art and culture

The UN Sustainable Development Goals

The City of Bergen undertakes to comply with global guidelines such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Among other things, these goals emphasise that democracy, a good system of government and legal culture are vital to sustainable development. Bergen has a shared responsibility to attend to the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A sustainable approach forms the basis for all activity, and is reflected in all of the municipality's service areas. The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals provide a framework that enables the city of Bergen to also put its own activities in a global context.

Regional, national and international framework

The International Strategy is based on overriding international agreements, such as the Paris Agreement and the EEA Agreement, and Norwegian membership in, e.g. the European Council, OECD, Unesco, UN agencies and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The International Strategy takes national expectations regarding regional and municipal planning into account. The national expectations include, e.g., guidelines for partnerships and cooperation with the business community and local players in municipal planning.



West Norway Office is one of the six Norwegian regional offices located in Brussels. The vision is to be an efficient, accessible, visible and useful tool to promote the interests of its members. Photo: West Norway Office

Regional plans, such as the County Council's International Strategy, the University of Bergen's action plan for internationalisation and the strategic business plan for Bergen Region 2015–2020 have been taken into account in order to ensure that the City of Bergen pulls in the same direction as the rest of the region in its international affairs.

Protecting and respecting human rights is important if the UN Sustainable Development Goals are to be reached. The International Strategy is based on the City of Bergen's membership in Transparency International and the Ethical Trading Initiative, and it will comply with fundamental, recognised standards in line with the City of Bergen's Procurement Strategy 2017–2020 and its fair trade efforts.

Follow-up of the international strategy

Action plan

The International Strategy forms the overall framework for the City of Bergen's international cooperation. The priorities set out in the strategy are nevertheless overriding. They highlight the municipality's responsibility for community development, both as a facilitator and a host. The strategy allows for measures to be refined as targets for departmental priorities.

In connection with follow-ups to the strategy it is important for the city to review existing memberships and participation in international networks, organisations and twin city cooperation. Assessment of the twin city scheme, the effect of existing collaborations and strategic priorities for new collaboration are important elements of this follow-up.

An action plan will specify the strategy's main priorities and concrete measures to meet strategic goals. The priorities of these concrete measures must be assessed during work on the action plan.

Relevant initiatives that influence international activities will be attended to by the City Government departments and expert networks in the municipality. See the Appendix for an overview of the City of Bergen's memberships and networks participation. The strategy forms the basis for better interdepartmental cooperation, to ensure better internal and external coordination, a seamless flow of information and better resource utilisation. This also applies to work on the action plan itself and its implementation. The Chief Commissioner's Department will have a particular responsibility for follow-up and coordination.

The knowledge, experience and participation of internal and external parties will have a decisive role in work on the action plan. The City of Bergen will build on existing initiatives and engage-

ments that underpin the strategy, and contribute to creating new ones. The priorities will be specified during work on the action plan.

Cooperation

International cooperation involves a range of different topics and administrative levels, and extensive internal and external cooperation is required to ensure that efforts are coordinated and targeted.

A common superstructure with regional players is important for international cooperation. Good regional cooperation is a prerequisite for success, and the City of Bergen aims to facilitate broad regional cooperation to strengthen regional development at home and raise its profile abroad.

The City of Bergen also cooperates with parties outside its own region. Cooperation with regions and cities in Norway and other countries will enable the city to acquire know-how and inspiration for the development of Bergen and the Bergen Region. This cooperation can also contribute to international development through shared experiences.

Interfaces between and cooperation with other parties in the region are important means of reaching the objectives of international cooperation. This does not just apply where mutual cooperation is necessary just to exploit the region's own possibilities, but also when the City of Bergen helps other players to realise their potential.

Dialogue and cooperation with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) will also be important in the follow-up of the International Strategy, since KS represents the interests of the municipal sector in relation to the state.

Goals of the International Strategy

The International Strategy is threefold – Bergen in the World, the World in Bergen, and the internal coordination of the City of Bergen’s International Aspirations – which highlights and describes the City of Bergen’s role in international affairs together with other parties in the region. One main goal has been set for each of the three parts of the strategy:

GOAL FOR ‘BERGEN IN THE WORLD’

The City of Bergen is an active driving force, a good ambassador and door-opener that promotes the Bergen Region internationally and influences policy formation in relevant international forums, in cooperation with others.

GOAL FOR ‘THE WORLD IN BERGEN’

The City of Bergen contributes to ensuring that Bergen is an inclusive and attractive city to visit, stay, live and work in.

GOAL FOR ‘THE CITY OF BERGEN’S INTERNATIONAL ASPIRATIONS’

The City of Bergen is a good host, and is coordinated internally and externally with other parties.



The Pride parade is the highlight of the annual Rainbow days in Bergen. Photo: Eivind Senneset / City of Bergen



Fargespill is an ensemble consisting of children and youths from all over the world. Fargespill focuses on what happens when differences meet through traditional music and dance. Photo: Håvard Holme

1. Bergen in the world

‘Bergen in the World’ highlights the City of Bergens’ role in international affairs, as an active participant in cooperation with others. The clarification of roles is important to build on each other’s strenghts and secure the municipality’s participation where necessary.

As a public player and the largest municipality in the region, the City of Bergen plays a role in promoting the Bergen Region to the rest of the world. In an increasingly globalised world, the City of Bergen’s ability to influence international policy development and decisions that have consequences for the region will become more and more important. It is natural for Bergen to strengthen and further develop its cooperation with neighbouring, like-minded regions and players in Scandinavia and the rest of Europe, but it is also important to learn about and engage with other regions and parts of the world.

Through its plans and strategies, the City of Bergen has undertaken to follow up the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The City of Bergen will work actively to incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into its international cooperation agenda, and help ensure that the world arrives at good solutions for a sustainable future. Human rights issues are closely linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the City of Bergen’s ambition is to become a Human Rights City based on the model used in other countries.

GOAL FOR ‘BERGEN IN THE WORLD’:

The City of Bergen is an active driving force, a good ambassador and door-opener that promotes the Bergen Region internationally and influences policy formation in relevant international forums, in cooperation with others.

The goal is supported by the following three priorities:

- 1.1 The City of Bergen will be an active driving force, ambassador and door-opener for the Bergen Region
- 1.2 The City of Bergen will influence European policymaking of importance to the Bergen Region
- 1.3 The City of Bergen will play an active part in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals

1.1 The City of Bergen will be an active driving force, ambassador and door-opener for the Bergen Region

The City of Bergen wishes to act as an ambassador and door-opener for key partners in the city that are in the process of establishing, or wish to strengthen, existing international cooperation. The City of Bergen supports important initiatives in the Bergen Region, and will be a driving force for ensuring that such initiatives succeed internationally. At the same time, the City of Bergen, in cooperation with others, must prioritise its efforts and focus on initiatives with the greatest potential.

The City Council, the City Government and the administration of the City of Bergen have important functions relating to the municipality's role in community development. This role is pursued and developed at all levels, both locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Full time politicians have an important role as door-openers and ambassadors for the business sector, cultural and academic institutions. Elected representatives participate primarily in international arenas where they meet elected representatives from other countries to discuss their roles and functions. However, they could also act on behalf of and represent the City of Bergen in international forums, based on their active participation in community development.

Both the mayor and the chief commissioner can represent the City of Bergen as an organisation and thus market Bergen as a city in international contexts. The mayor has a special responsibility to represent the city at official occasions. The City Government and its administration represent the municipality and the city in arenas that have a clearly professional content.

1.2 The City of Bergen will influence European framework conditions for the Bergen Region

The City of Bergen has many tasks that are affected by EU policy through the EEA Agreement, such as its exercise of authority and its role as employer, service provider, owner and procurer. Important decisions made by the EU relating to local government, facilitation of regional cooperation or the development of urban policy have long term effects. The City of Bergen does not seek to engage in foreign policy, but to have a more proactive role in influencing European framework conditions. This will also help to strengthen the position of regions and cities in the EU's governance system.

Through the EEA Agreement, Norway has access to the Single Market, securing the same opportunities and restrictions as EU member states. It is therefore important to contribute to regional and municipal policy development at the international level. As a non-EU member, however, Norway has fewer formal channels through which to exert influence. This makes the informal channels offered by international organisations and networks even more important. The EU 2016 Urban Agenda is one of a number of platforms that give cities an opportunity to influence the EU system through partnerships with the European Commission.

The City of Bergen wants to actively influence and contribute to municipal policy development at the international level, rather than just passively implementing policies adopted by the EU. Early access to information is vital. As a city municipality, Bergen has a number of arenas in common with other Norwegian cities, and cooperation will make the city's voice more widely heard in relation to the EU. The municipality is an active participant in several joint arenas together with the County Council. Good cooperation will help to boost the region's impact in relation

to the EU. Active use of its membership in the West Norway Office and KS European Office Brussels will be important in this connection.

The City of Bergen is represented in a number of international organisations and networks. The City Government is the city's formal representative in most such contexts.

By participating in international organisations and international cooperation, elected members of the City Council will help to strengthen and further develop a network of political contacts. One important objective is to develop and maintain political know-how in international affairs and help to put issues of local democracy on the agenda.

The City of Bergen participates in expert networks to build competence and to share experiences with other cities, but also networks that provide insight into administrative processes in the EU and that welcome input from network members. These arenas are important meeting places.

1.3 The City of Bergen will play an active role in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are a joint plan for all countries in the world to eradicate poverty, combat inequality and stop climate change by 2030. The UN Sustainable Development Goals comprise 17 goals and 169 targets. Through the municipal master plan for community development and the Green Strategy the City of Bergen has undertaken to play an active role in helping to reduce global warming and facilitate sustainable development in Norway.

Municipalities and regions play an important role in helping to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, an international agreement to ensure that all countries in the world succeed in limiting climate change. Green and sustainable development is an overriding principle in the City of Bergen's planning and activities. The City of Bergen actively pursues the UN Sustainable Development Goals in relation to the business sector, research communities, organisations and associations etc, arts and culture, and in a public health perspective.

To achieve good, lasting results, solutions must be developed by learning from and cooperating with others. Bergen has world leading technologies and research players and environments that can contribute to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. The City of Bergen supports initiatives that promote the Sustainable Development Goals.

The action plan for the International Strategy must specify how the City of Bergen, in cooperation with others, can help to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



The UN Sustainable Development Goals

2. The world in Bergen

‘The World in Bergen’ highlights the City of Bergen’s role in creating an attractive city for all its inhabitants. Bergen shall be an open and inclusive city for all its inhabitants regardless of their ethnic background, religious affiliation or sexual orientation. The City of Bergen shall make it easy for people to settle in Bergen and to quickly become part of the community.

It shall be attractive for families as well as companies, investors, entrepreneurs, researchers, students and others to settle in Bergen. From the Bergen Tourist Board’s systematic and coordinated marketing of the city and region to the municipality’s facilitation of public services, the common denominator is that Bergen is at its best when everyone pull in the same direction.

Good welfare arrangements, cultural provision, schools and kindergartens can be competitive advantages in the labour market, but the city must ensure that the public administration is not perceived as fragmented and difficult to access for people coming to Norway. The action plan for the International Strategy must specify what is necessary for Bergen to be an attractive city for all its inhabitants and for visitors.

GOAL FOR THE WORLD IN BERGEN:

The City of Bergen actively contributes to ensuring that Bergen is an inclusive and attractive city to visit, stay, live and work in.

This goal is supported by the following three main priorities:

- 2.1 Bergen will be an intercultural and inclusive city
- 2.2 Bergen will be attractive to innovative international businesses
- 2.3 Bergen will be a world-class city of knowledge



*Bike day at Solheimslien Kindergarten.
Photo: Andrew M.S. Buller*

2.1 Bergen will be an intercultural and inclusive city

The City of Bergen shall ensure that Bergen is an open and inclusive urban region by building relations, providing adapted municipal services, and by being a driving force for a holistic approach to inclusion in the Bergen Region.

Down through the ages the experiences and traditions of the city's intercultural population have provided important cultural impulses. Bergen has become a heterogeneous city, and around 48,000 of the city's around 280,000 inhabitants have an immigrant background. A diverse city provides good services for all sections of the population and promotes tolerance and inclusion. This affects a number of the City of Bergen's service areas.

The municipality has a clear role to play in integration and inclusion. The City of Bergen also has means at its disposal to create an urban development that facilitates dialogue and common meeting places. Cultural experiences, housing policy and jobs are a vital part of making Bergen an attractive city for all its inhabitants.

Much of the migration that takes place in the world is the result of people fleeing from war or other disasters. There are also a large number of labour immigrants in Bergen looking for work on better terms. The municipality promotes cultural diversity and helps refugees and immigrants to participate in different social arenas. Learning through kindergartens, schools and further education, housing arrangements, work and recreational activities are important elements of the City of Bergen's inclusion efforts.

Cultural exchange and inclusion are of great importance to people's well-being and enjoyment of life. Cultural experiences are important to people's quality of life and for ensuring good conditions for children to grow up in. Bergen has a rich and lively voluntary cultural scene, which is an important arena for formative education, learning and experiences for all age groups. The expertise and efforts of the voluntary cultural sector are important contributions to the city's cultural breadth, diversity and democracy.

Art and culture are also key to the further development of Bergen as an intercultural and inclusive city. The City of Bergen wishes to strengthen its cooperation with relevant parties in the region who contribute to these arenas. The action plan for the International Strategy must specify how the different policy instruments best can be coordinated.

The professional art and cultural sectors are important to Bergen in a local, regional, national and international perspective. The City of Bergen makes active efforts to raise the international profile of the art and cultural sector in Bergen. Bergen City of Culture is well known far beyond Norway's borders and attracts renowned artists from all over the world. Bergen sends its art and artists into the world, and bring the world to Bergen. This must build on good information and networking, but also on artistic quality and innovation.

Bergen City of Culture is already at the international forefront in several cultural areas, as demonstrated by the art itself and discussions about it. The City of Bergen continues to develop an internationally oriented cultural scene, to strengthen Bergen's voice internationally.

2.2 Bergen will be attractive to innovative international businesses

The City of Bergen helps the region attract international businesses with leading expertise in order to increase the region's competitiveness by pursuing active business policies. Access to sufficient relevant labour is vital to the competitiveness of the business sector. Access to international expertise, capital and relations is important for the region's innovative capability.

The Bergen Region has an export oriented business sector, whose expertise and products are in demand in the international market. The ocean and 'the blue industries' have always been important to the Bergen Region. Ocean City Bergen has the richest, most diverse and concentrated ocean and coast business cluster in Norway, and a complete chain in the energy, marine and maritime industries.

Bergen's strength does not lie in *one* initiative or *one* industry – its strength lies in the region's *diversity*. World leading companies and media technologies and digitalisation environments are based in Bergen. Cluster formations and cooperation across these sectors generate synergies and effects from which the region reaps great benefits.

The City of Bergen cooperates, among others, with 'Invest in Bergen', the Country Council, business clusters and the Bergen Chamber of Commerce to promote the Bergen Region internationally. The City of Bergen shall ensure that the city is an attractive place to visit, stay, live and work in for a growing international population.

2.3 Bergen will be a world class city of knowledge

In the City of Bergen you find educational institutions that are attractive to international students and researchers, with strategic relations throughout the world. These institutions are at the forefront in many fields. International cooperation helps to strengthen the region's innovative capability and competitiveness, and provides access to new knowledge and technological experience, markets and leadership.

The international competition for talents, expertise, resources and projects is becoming increasingly fierce, as a consequence of globalisation. In conjunction with the development of Bergen as a world class city of knowledge, and to secure expertise for the future, children and young people must be given more opportunities to participate in international programmes, cultural exchanges and work that creates new contacts.

To secure the jobs of the future and a diverse business sector, the expertise the region has to offer is very important. The educational institutions in Bergen are involved in extensive international cooperation, and have bilateral agreements with universities, research institutions and expert environments in large parts of the world. The City of Bergen cooperates with the above and other parties in the region to promote Bergen as an attractive place to learn, conduct research and study in.

A great deal of Norwegian research funding comes from the EU research and innovation programme Horizon 2020. The City of Bergen wishes to foster increased cooperation between the educational institutions, the business sector and public bodies to strengthen the region's position in the competition for EU funding.

3. The City of Bergen's international affairs

'The City of Bergen's international affairs' highlights the importance of internal coordination and the development of the role of host for international visits. Good coordination internally and with other involved parties is vital for the city to be a good host for delegations visiting Bergen and to exploit new opportunities.

GOAL FOR THE CITY OF BERGEN'S INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS:

The City of Bergen is a good host, and is coordinated internally and externally with other parties.

This goal is supported by the following three main priorities:

- 3.1 The City of Bergen will ensure that its international affairs is coordinated within its own organisation
- 3.2 The City of Bergen will endeavour to ensure that the region is coordinated when welcoming delegations
- 3.3 The City of Bergen will use participation in international projects to gain new expertise and share experiences

3.1 The City of Bergen will ensure that its international affairs is coordinated within its own organisation

In order to ensure that resources are used correctly and that international efforts produce results, the initiatives must be coordinated and awareness of its importance must be improved within the organisation. Coordinating and professionalising services relating to project development and reporting, and creating an arena for those engaged in international affairs in the municipality, will ensure a better overview and better use of resources.

The City of Bergen must be alert to the opportunities that international cooperation represents, among other things raising competence and securing a good flow of information. The objective is to encourage the organisation to engage in targeted use of international arenas for experience exchanges, project development and opportunities for influencing policy where relevant.

The municipality's areas of responsibility are divided into sectors that do not necessarily correspond with individual initiatives or the organisation of the sector areas elsewhere. Cooperation across departments and sections is important to ensure good information flow and better coordination. Tools and interfaces for cooperation across departments and sections must be specified in the action plan.

3.2 The City of Bergen will endeavour to ensure that the region is coordinated when welcoming delegations

The City of Bergen has an important role as a host for international delegations visiting the city. It welcomes an increasing number of delegations and visitors wanting to learn how the City of Bergen is run, its organisation and political system. Delegations coming to Bergen to establish contact and relations with other parties in the region also contact the City of Bergen. Business organisations, academic institutions, art and cultural scenes and other parties in the region are also experiencing a lot of interest.

Overall coordination is required for visitors to perceive Bergen as an attractive place to visit. This will help to professionalise the role of host and ensure that Bergen is attractive both for people who move to the city and to visitors. The host role includes cooperation with other organisations in the region, and the City of Bergen will take initiatives for an organised 'welcoming' system with a clear understanding of roles.

The City of Bergen also receives delegations visiting Bergen in connection with projects or events. Large events can act as door-openers for parties in the region and create synergies for the Bergen Region. The City of Bergen endeavours to create good arenas for this type of network building, which should be seen in conjunction with large events that are organised in the city.

3.3 The City of Bergen will use participation in international projects to gain new expertise and share experiences

The City of Bergen shall take advantage of the opportunities offered by participation in international projects. Participation in EU projects and other international project collaborations contribute to the development of municipal services. The municipality can also acquire additional expertise, knowledge and best practice, as well as innovations in its service provision, and thus increase the quality of its services.

International cooperation is vital if the municipality is to succeed in developing innovative and forward-looking services. Participation in international research projects will trigger funding for the further development of municipal services. This will enable the municipality to ensure quality and modernisation, and contribute to the sustainable development of the Bergen Region.

The City of Bergen shall not just participate actively in international networks, organisations or projects to increase competence in the region, but also to share its experience and innovative solutions for sustainable development in areas in which it is a driving force. The City of Bergen wishes to achieve an international position in areas where it has a leading role, in order to spread its experience and competence.

Internationalisation can take many forms and involves a wide range of activities and funding sources. Writing applications and reports is very demanding, however. The framework, scope and ambitions for the different activities and projects may vary. In any case, project participation requires human resources, investments and familiarity with the processes. Securing and drawing on sufficient expertise and resources will therefore be important when following up the strategy.



Municipal tasks and services are further developed through involvement in EU projects and other international cooperation efforts.

Criteria for participation in international networks and organisations

The strategy sets out a few overriding criteria for international participation. The strategy must not be so detailed that it limits the political room for manoeuvre.

European organisations, networks, EU and EEA funding schemes are important tools in the City of Bergen's international affairs. In general, the City of Bergen's international participation should underpin existing goals and strategies, so that experience from the projects can more easily be channeled back into the organisation to generate added value.

EU and EEA funding schemes are relevant in all service areas. Together with other regional and international organisations, the City of Bergen shall actively apply for project funding that can boost the efforts to achieve the goals of municipal plans and raise the quality or innovativeness of the services.

Membership in organisations and participation in programmes must be clearly relevant to the City of Bergen's role in community development, and as a service provider or host. Membership in networks, organisations and cooperative alliances shall improve competence, potentially increase the City's impact in relation to European authorities and form the basis for targeted project work.

The focus areas specified in action plans should not be chosen because they are of an international nature, but because they enable the municipality, through its international affairs, to strengthen its competence and implementation capacity, and improve the quality of its services. The municipality shall also make contributions to international networks in areas where Bergen leads the field. The City of Bergen supports good initiatives through partnerships and memberships that underpin its goals.

The elected members of the City Council have played an active role in laying the groundwork for cooperation with the twin cities at the political level. They have a particular responsibility for further developing twin city cooperation, and meetings and experience exchanges must be considered in the individual areas. The contact and cooperation must be seen in light of the City Council's administrative and professional cooperation with the twin cities.

An appendix showing the City of Bergen's twin cities and participation in networks and organisations follows.

The City of Bergen's participation in international networks and organisations

The City of Bergen is a member of many international networks and organisations. A list of twin city collaborations and the main arenas in which the City of Bergen participates are included below.

The Cooperation Programme on Health and Related Social Issues in the Barents Euro-Region and the Northern Dimension in Public Health and Social Well-Being

Website: <http://www.barentscooperation.org/en/Working-Groups/Joint-Working-Groups/Health-and-Social-Issues>

The cooperation in brief: The Department of Health and Care (Agency for Health Services) participates in a joint Norwegian-Russian initiative through bilateral cooperation with Kaliningrad. The cooperation is funded through the programme in the title.

Responsibility: Department of Health and Care

Covenant of Mayors: Mayors adapt

Website: http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/index_en.html

The cooperation in brief: The Covenant of Mayors is a political cooperation that aims to implement the EU's climate policy. Nine cities and towns in Norway, including Bergen, participate in the cooperation.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

Eureau

Website: <http://www.eureau.org/>

The cooperation in brief: Eureau is a lobby organisation for water-related issues in Europe. The City of Bergen is a member through the organisation Norsk Vann.

Responsibility: Department of Urban Development

Eurocities

Website: <http://www.eurocities.eu/>

The cooperation in brief: Eurocities, which was established in 1986, comprises 135 of the biggest cities in Europe, in addition to 45 partner cities. The organisation represents 130 million people in 39 countries. Bergen joined the partnership in 2002 and participates in all of the six thematic forums; knowledge society, culture, environment, mobility, economy and social affairs. Eurocities is a platform for sharing knowledge and exchanging ideas. Projects and events are developed through the cooperation forums and pertaining working groups. The organisation lobbies EU institutions in areas that affect the everyday lives of people in Europe. The goal of the lobbying

efforts is to ensure that the local governance level shall play a role in multilevel governance.

Responsibility: Head of the City Government's Department

European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)

Website: <https://www.enisa.europa.eu/>

The cooperation in brief: The European Network and Information Security Agency is an EU agency working in the field of cyber security. The agency acts in an advisory function in relation to the European Commission.

Responsibility: Department of Finance, Innovation and Property Management

Global Climate Forum (GCF)

Website: <http://globalclimateforum.org/>

The cooperation in brief: The European Climate Forum was founded in 2001 to represent European research institutes, voluntary organisations and enterprises through a European climate forum. The network has gradually expanded far beyond Europe, with connections to the USA, China, Australia and other regions. The members' assembly in 2011 therefore decided to change the organisation's name to Global Climate Forum – GCF.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

Hansa city network

Website: <http://www.hanse.org/en/>

The cooperation in brief: The Hansa city network is an active network of cities and towns with historical connections to the Hanseatic League. The network, which was established in 1980, works on promoting the historical cooperation, cultural

exchanges and sharing experience, as well as increased cooperation between the member cities.

The Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development took over responsibility for following up the Hansa city network cooperation from the Head of the City Government's Department in 2017. Practical responsibility has now been transferred to Museum Vest – the Hanseatic Museum from 2018.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

ICORN

Website: <https://www.icorn.org/>

The cooperation in brief: The International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) is an independent organisation of cities and regions offering shelter to writers and artists at risk, advancing freedom of expression, defending democratic values and promoting international solidarity.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

Intercultural cities

Website: www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/

The cooperation in brief: The City of Bergen has been part of the Council of Europe's 'Intercultural Cities' project since 2014. Intercultural cities is a project that endeavours to identify good solutions for using diversity to generate positive developments in local communities. The programme started as a joint initiative by the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

Responsibility: Department of Social Services, Housing and Inclusion

International Congress on Archives (ICA)

Website: <https://www.ica.org/en>

The cooperation in brief: Bergen Byarkiv (the city archive) is a member of the International Congress on Archives. This is a worldwide organisation for archives. Byarkivet is a category C institutional member of the organisation.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)

Website: <https://www.ifla.org/>

The cooperation in brief: Bergen Library is a member of the International Federation of Library Associations. This is a worldwide organisation for libraries. Conferences are held every year, which are attended by around 4,000 delegates.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

International Water Association (IWA)

Website: <http://www.iwa-network.org/>

The cooperation in brief: The International Water Association is a worldwide water management network. IWA has a national committee in Norway that is led by the City of Bergen.

Responsibility: Department of Urban Development

Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)

Website: <http://www.iclei.org/>

The cooperation in brief: Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network of more than 1,500 cities and regions that have pledged to develop a sustainable future.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

Memory of the world

Website: <https://en.unesco.org/programme/mow>

The cooperation in brief: The UNESCO programme Memory of the World works to preserve and disseminate the world's documentary heritage. The Leprosy Archives under Bergen City Museum became a member in 2001.

Ansvarlig: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

Nordisk Redning Innsats til Sjø (RITS)

The cooperation in brief: Together with the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, Bergen Fire Service is represented in Nordic RITS (sea rescue initiative), which is based on the NORED agreement. The declaration on Nordic cooperation was adopted at a Nordic ministerial meeting in 2009.

Responsibility: Head of the City Government's Department

Nordisk Veiforum

Website: <http://www.nvfnorden.org/hemsida/hva-er-nvf/>

The cooperation in brief: A Nordic cooperation with members from the private and public sectors with around 320 member organisations. Its objective is to promote the sustainable development of roads, road traffic and the transport sector through cooperation between enterprises in Denmark, Finland, the Faroes, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

Responsibility: Department of Urban Development

Mayors for Peace

Website: <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/>

The cooperation in brief: Mayors for Peace is a network of cities and municipalities that cooperate to ban nuclear weapons. Mayors for Peace is a global network of cities and municipalities working to promote solidarity and to coordinate members' awareness and interests on behalf of civil society in order to exert political pressure and abolish nuclear weapons. Ninety towns and cities are members of Mayors for Peace.

Responsibility: City Council Administration

The Organisation of World Heritage Cities

Website: <https://www.ovpm.org/>

The cooperation in brief: The Organisation of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) is a global city-to-city network for cities across the world that host world heritage sites. The mayors of these cities sit on the board and general assembly, and are accompanied by the most senior members of the administration.

Bergen was one of the cities that founded the organisation in 1993, and was represented on the board until summer 2007. Bergen had the president of the organisation from 1999–2001 and general secretary from 2000–2001.

Responsibility: The Department of Urban Development

Rainbow cities network

Website: <https://www.rainbowcities.com/>

The cooperation in brief: The Rainbow Cities network is a European network of cities with an active LGBT policy. The Department of Social Services, Housing and Inclusion follows up LGBT policy in cooperation with the Section for Human Resources.

Responsibility: Department, of Finance, Innovation and Property Management

Scandinavian Society for Trenchless Technologies (SSTT)

Website: <http://www.sstt.se/>

The cooperation in brief: The Scandinavian Society for Trenchless Technologies is a Scandinavian society for wastewater issues.

Responsibility: Department of Urban Development

UNESCO Creative Cities Network

Website: <https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/home>

The cooperation in brief: In 2015, the City of Bergen became a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. Bergen is one of 25 cities cooperating on facilitating food, creativity and gastronomy. These cities are called 'Creative Cities of Gastronomy'.

One of the advantages of the network is that it provides many opportunities for expanding the collaboration to include a number of other cities all over the world in gastronomy and other creative industries. Parma (Italy), Phuket (Thailand) and Chengdu (China) are examples of other cities in the network. The UNESCO network gives the Creative Cities of Gastronomy an opportunity to share experience and collaborate with all of the other cities in the network. A range of collaboration projects are already being planned.

Responsibility: Department of Climate, Culture and Business Development

Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC)

Website: <http://www.ubc.net/>

The cooperation in brief: The Union of the Baltic Cities is a network of cities around the Baltic Sea. The network has around 100 member cities in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. Bergen has been a member since its foundation in 1991.

The organisation facilitates exchanges of experience and collaboration between cities around the Baltic Sea, and pleads the cities' cases in its work with the EU and its Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The work is organised in seven different commissions – cultural cities, inclusive and healthy cities, planning cities, safe cities, smart and prospering cities, sustainable cities and youthful cities. In the City of Bergen, heads of sections serve as contact persons on each of the different commissions.

Responsibility: Head of the City Government's Department

The West Norway Office

Website: <https://www.west-norway.no/>

The cooperation in brief: The West Norway Office is one of six Norwegian regional offices in Brussels. Its vision is to be an efficient, easily accessible, known and useful tool for promoting the West Norway Office Foundation's interests and marking Western Norway as a region with common economic and cultural ties.

The West Norway Office (VNB AS) is owned by the West Norway Office Foundation, which currently comprises 18 municipalities (Austevoll, Austrheim, Balestrand, Bergen, Eidfjord, Fedje, Førde, Gaular, Gloppen, Haram, Høyanger, Jølster, Fjaler, Kvam, Naustdal, Samnanger, Voss and Øygarden), three county authorities (Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane and Møre og Romsdal), the power company BKK, the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences and Botnaneset Industriselskap AS.

Responsibility: Head of the City Government's Department

WAPR – World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation

Website: www.wapr.org

The cooperation in brief: The City Government's Department of Social Services, Housing and Inclusion are engaged in the World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation (WAPR). This is a worldwide organisation where experts, users and next-of-kin cooperate to develop community-based and user-oriented services for people with mental disorders.

Responsibility: Department of Social Services, Housing and Inclusion

World Urban Parks Association

Website: <http://www.worldurbanparks.org/en/>

The cooperation in brief: The Green Management Agency under the Agency for Urban Environment is active in the World Urban Parks Association. This organisation works to promote sustainable urban environments such as parks and open urban spaces.

Responsibility: Department of Urban Development

Twin cities

The idea of twin cities arose after World War II as a peacekeeping initiative. The original idea was that cooperation would enable cities to get to know each other and forge personal ties that would lead to greater interpersonal understanding. A twin city agreement is the formalisation of a long-term binding cooperation, which should preferably involve most municipal sectors as well as both political and administrative levels. The most common areas for cooperation have been culture, sport, school exchanges and sharing administrative and political experience in a range of areas. In recent years, it has also become increasingly common to cooperate on projects.

Bergen was assigned the Nordic twin cities Gothenburg, Århus and Åbo in 1946 as part of a national strategy to strengthen cooperation between the Nordic countries after World War II.

Bergen was linked to the second biggest cities in these countries. The contact between the cities consists of meetings at both the political and administrative levels to discuss common problems and exchange experience. Cultural exchanges, school exchanges, an annual inter-Nordic school camp and equality conferences (every second year). The annual meetings between the heads of business development in the four Nordic cities have resulted in valuable input on the formulation of our own business and industry policy, and corresponding meetings are held between the heads of the culture departments and heads of health and social services etc. The mayors and full-time politicians meet the political leadership of the four Nordic cities every second year. The four cities are also members of international organisations and networks, such as UBC and Eurocities, as well as a range of organisations at the political and administrative levels. The four cities' Brussels offices have also established formalised meetings for the twin cities and have cooperated on a number of occasions in connection with Open Day events.

Gothenburg

Gothenburg is Sweden's second biggest city with a population of almost 500,000. It was granted city status in 1658, it has the biggest harbour in the Nordic countries, and is situated on the west bank of the mouth of the Göta river, which marked Norway's southernmost border until 1658. The city is sometimes referred to as 'Little London' or 'the front side of Sweden', because it was industrialised by the Scottish and English in the 19th century, and its extensive trade with Great Britain has left its mark on the city. Bergen has cooperated extensively with Gothenburg in the areas of education, recreation and welfare.

Åbo/Turku

Turku/Åbo is the oldest city in Finland, founded in the 13th century. Until 1812, it was the capital of Finland, which became an independent country (from Sweden) in 1809. Three quarters of Åbo were destroyed by fire in 1827 – a kind of destruction its Norwegian twin city is no stranger to. Turku was a European City of Culture in 2011 and had a cultural cooperation with Bergen. As regards the Nordic twin city cooperation, Turku/Åbo is most



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Seattle



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Århus



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Gothenburg





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Åbo/Turku

active in the teaching sector. Every year, teachers from Turku head for its three Nordic twin cities, as part of a cooperation that has lasted for more than 25 years. This year, a group of teachers from Turku will be heading for Bergen at the end of September.

Århus

Århus, Denmark's second biggest city, is situated on the east coast of Jylland. The city was granted market town privileges in 1441. The remains of simple 'grubehus' buildings dating from around 900 have been found in the area. Århus, like Bergen, has experienced many big fires. Despite this, Århus was an important trading city during the 17th and 18th centuries, and it traded for centuries with the rest of Denmark, Norway and many other European cities and countries. Århus has a lot in common with Bergen. We both have universities, have an ocean base, and face challenges linked to the development of our harbours and public transport.



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Newcastle

Seattle

The twin city connection between Bergen and Seattle was established in 1967 as a direct result of the airline company SAS starting a service between the cities in autumn 1966. The cooperation between Seattle and Bergen has largely consisted of exchange schemes, including for teachers in primary and lower secondary schools (one teacher per year both ways) and students in upper secondary school (4-5 each autumn).

Newcastle

The twinning with Newcastle is based on the more than 100-year-old shipping service between Bergen and Newcastle, and the commercial interests associated with it. Bergen has sent a Christmas tree to Newcastle every year since 1949, and it has become tradition that the mayor of Bergen takes part in the lighting ceremony.



CITY OF
BERGEN