

Final conference in Mollet del Vallès, Spain

Diet for a Green Planet

9–12 March, 2015



Diet for a Green Planet final conference in Mollet del Vallès, Spain.

March 9-12, 2015

Main responsible for conference program and execution:

Sara Jervfors, project coordinator and head of the Diet Unit, Södertälje
Albert García Macian, project manager, Mollet del Vallès

Responsible team from Södertälje, the giving city:

Sara Jervfors, project coordinator and head of the Diet Unit, Södertälje
Daniel Dworetsky, communication and project leader support
Christine Strandberg, strategic advisor
Hans von Essen, thematic expert
Helena Nordlund, lead expert

Local coordinators from receiving cities:

Loreta Stelbiene, Molétai
Daria Lutrzykowska, Łomża
Agnieszka Buckowska, Łomża

Participants

In total 38 persons who formed the "main" participants. In addition, about 40 participants from the city of Mollet del Vallès participated in parts of the conference. See attached list of participants.

Södertälje: 16 persons.

Łomża: 8 persons.

Molétai: 7 persons.

Mollet del Vallès: 7 persons.

Objectives for the conference:

The goal of the conference was twofold: to disseminate the project results and to have concrete group work sessions with the aim of identifying new ideas and partnerships for coming applications. Monday March 9 was the dissemination day, whereas Tuesday and Wednesday contained study visits and working group sessions.

Program

See attached documents (full program) for more detailed information.



Summary

The final conference in the Diet for a Green Planet Pilot Transfer Network was held in Mollet del Vallès on March 9-12, 2015. Södertälje Municipality is the Lead partner and the “giving city”. Its Diet Unit has implemented the concept Diet for a Green Planet since 2010. The process started already in 2001 with a political decision and in 2006 the development of a Diet Policy began.

The criteria for Diet for a Green Planet concept are:

- Good and healthy food
- Organically grown
- Less meat, more vegetables and wholegrain
- Seasonal food
- Locally produced
- Reduced waste

The purpose of the first transnational conference in Södertälje in May was to transfer the Diet for a Green Planet concept to the receiving cities by deepening concept understanding in order to prepare for local adaptation.

The main goal of the second transnational conference (Mollet del Vallès, September, 2014) was to facilitate the part of the concept transfer that relates to political processes and management of public services.

This final conference had two main objectives

1. To disseminate the results from the 15 month project that was approaching end date. The dissemination was “external” in the sense that there were people present that are not related to the project; e.g. reporters to cover the event, representatives from other URBACT projects, other municipalities in Catalonia etc. But the dissemination was equally “internal” in the sense that a number of participants from the respective partner cities were more or less new to the project – and this served as a competence building event for them, in order to carry on working with the Diet for a Green planet concept.
2. To do concrete work on forming new ideas, working groups and partner searches. The ambition for the four partner cities is that the work being commenced when implementing the Diet for a Green Planet concept will continue after project end. One way to ensure this is to engage in new projects and networks working in this direction. The vital project output regarding these ambitions is the “Roadmap for Applications”.

The participants

The conference hosted 38 participants from Łomża in Poland, Molėtai in Lithuania and Södertälje in Sweden. From Mollet del Vallès, the host city, the “main” delegation consisted of 7 people, but also a large number of people that partly participated. All in all, about 50 people from Mollet del Vallès took part in the conference, including two representatives from other URBACT food related projects and URBACT Thematic Pole Expert Eddy Adams.

Political representation

There was strong political representation in the conference. From Molėtai three civil servants and one politician (head of educational institutions) participated. From Łomża five civil servants and three politicians (two deputy mayors and one head of the department of education) participated.

Södertälje came with a big delegation. Eight civil servants and two high level politicians (one deputy mayor and the chairman of the city planning board) participated. Södertälje had had some difficulties in getting politicians to participate in earlier conferences in the project. For this reason, it was a great success to get two high level politicians in key positions for future development in Södertälje on board for this conference.

Molėtai in Lithuania had had even more difficulties in engaging politicians in the process, which had been further complicated by the fact that internal rules have made it difficult for relevant stakeholders to participate in project meetings and conferences abroad. However, in this event, there was a strong delegation present.

Stakeholder representation:

The main group, 38 people from all partner cities that attended the entire conference, consisted of civil servants (mix of sectors and responsibilities), politicians, NGOs, headmasters of schools, food and health experts, gardeners/farmers/agronomists, business representatives and researchers.

All in all, a diverse range of stakeholders participated in the conference.

Gender representation

Out of the 30 main participants, 22 were women and 16 men.

- Molėtai: 6 women, 1 man.
- Łomża: 6 women, 2 men.
- Södertälje: 9 women, 6 men.
- Mollet del Vallès: 5 women, 2 men.

Program and activities

Day 1, Monday: official reception with the Mayor of Mollet del Vallès, introduction to the concept and dissemination of results

All participants arrived to Mollet del Vallès during March 8th, some very late in the evening. In the morning of March 9th, all delegates met up at 08:45 in the hotel lobby and went for a joint short walk to the Centre Cívic Can Borrell.

After the mandatory registration process and handing out of translation devices, welcome announcements were made by Josep Monràs i Galindo, Mayor, Mollet del Vallès and Ewa Lofvar Konradsson, Deputy Mayor, Södertälje.

The next session was entitled "The Diet for a Green Planet concept, the URBACT program and guest presentations". It offered a background and concept presentation as well as presentations of two other URBACT projects. The aim was to reach a common level of understanding among all participants.

The session featured:

- Sara Jervfors, Head of the Diet Unit in Södertälje
- Helena Nordlund, Lead Expert
- Hans von Essen, Thematic Expert
- Uxio Novoneyra Rei, Local Coordinator, the Sustainable Food in Urban Communities project.
- Rocío Rojo Arauzo, International project manager, the Gastronomic Cities project.



Left to right: Sara Jervfors, Albert Garcia Macian, Hans von Essen and Helena Nordlund.

Lunch was then served at restaurant del centre de Serveis per a la Gent Gran El Lledoner, according to the Diet for a Green Planet concept.

The next session on the agenda was a study visit to the Gallecs Agricultural Park, which is a main component in the transformation work made in Mollet del Vallès. The study visit was hosted by Gemma Safont, Manager of the Gallecs Consortium.

The last session of this jam-packed first day took place in the City Hall and featured presentations of the results made in the three partner cities of Mollet del Vallès, Łomża and Molétai.

The presentations featured:

- Antonio Martínez, Manager of the Personal Services Area, Mollet del Vallès
- Núria Duñó, Manager of the Education Institute of Mollet del Vallès
- Albert Garcia Macian. European Projects Officer, Mollet del Vallès
- Daria Lutrzykowska, Lomzynskie Centre of Education's Development & Project Coordinator
- Loreta Stelbiene, Moletai Municipality administration & Project Coordinator



Pictures from the project result dissemination in Mollet del Vallès City Hall.

The presentations were supposed to be followed by a panel discussion led by Eddy Adams, URBACT Thematic Pole Manager (TPM) with responsibility for Social Innovation and Human Capital, but due to the tight schedule, that panel discussion was postponed to the next day. However, Eddy Adams did give some reflections on the presentations and on the general features of the URBACT programme to round off this session.



The final point this evening was a true highlight, from a project results point of view.

Both Södertälje and Łomża signed Letters of Intent with Mollet del Vallès expressing their mutual wishes to continue collaborating after project end.

Left to right: Albert Garcia Macian, Eddy Adams, Josep Monràs i Galindo, Ewa Lofvar Konradsson and Agnieszka Muzyk.

Media was invited to the session, which featured:

- Josep Monràs i Galindo, Mayor, Mollet del Vallès
- Ewa Lofvar Konradsson, Deputy Mayor, Södertälje
- Agnieszka Muzyk, Vice Mayor, Łomża

In the evening, dinner was served at Mercat Vell (the old indoor market of Mollet del Vallès), prepared by 9Natural Cuina.

Day 2, Tuesday: strategies, ideas & networks for the future

This day began with the panel discussion, led by Eddy Adams from URBACT, which was postponed from the day before. The 45-minute session offered a good rounding up of the experiences and learnings from the project. Eddy Adams also gave a brief overview of the URBACT III Programme.



After this, Hans von Essen, Thematic Expert, introduced the Roadmap for Applications, which is one of the project deliverables, and a strategically important document for the continuation of the work with Diet for a Green Planet related initiatives. The participants were divided into three different working groups separated by theme/program.

Left to right: Daria Lutrzykowska, Sara Jervfors and Loreta Stelbiene.

The working group session that followed was the first of two during the conference.

After lunch at the indoor market Mercat Vell, some participants went off for breakout sessions. A number of civil servants and one politician from Södertälje went to have a meeting with a delegation of city planning civil servants from Mollet del Vallès. The idea was to get acquainted and to get inspiration for future collaborations. Simultaneously, the deputy mayor from Södertälje and the two deputy mayors from Łomża went to meet with the mayor of Mollet del Vallès. This was a formal meeting between top politicians arranged to strengthen the bilateral relations.

After these breakout sessions it was time for another study visit; to the Eco-Farm Can Roger – where the highly committed farmer told the group about her offering of top quality organic products like peas, barley, oats, and wheat. She also has calves and beef cattle born on the farm. In addition to running the farm, she runs a farm store, an e-business and courses on food related topics.



Pictures from the Eco-Farm Can Roger.

During the evening, at Mercat Vell, a group of fine young musicians entertained the group with nice and swinging jazz, soul and funk tunes from the 70's.



The musicians had all studied in Mollet del Vallès, and it is part of the municipality's strategy to – to a high extent – promote talent from the own city.

A very nice atmosphere evolved with dancing and celebrating that these four cities really have made an impact during this short 15-month project.

Day 3, Wednesday: strategies, ideas & networks for the future

The morning was spent on the Roadmap for Applications working groups, session 2. The session was ended with plenary presentations and summaries.



Pictures from the group working sessions, being part of the Roadmap for Application work.

After lunch, which was once again enjoyed at the Mercat Vell, the group divided in two. One group went on a study visit to the Baix Llobregat Agricultural Park, an interesting example of how agriculture, food production and business is integrated in an urban area. Baix Llobregat is a very big agricultural park located in Barcelona, just next to the airport, highways and railways. The agricultural park concept is an interesting one when discussing food production, food security, resilience and issued regarding urban/rural development.



Pictures from the study visit to Baix Llobregat Agricultural Park.

The other group visited the Can Besora primary school, which is one of the schools who have implemented the Diet for a Green Planet concept.

Upon arrival back to Mollet del Vallès, some representatives from the Lead Partner took the opportunity to interview the project coordinators from Łomża and Molétai to gather material for the final narrative report of the project. The planned meeting on Thursday March 12th was cancelled. Instead, some issues regarding end-of-project administration and activities were dealt with in these sessions.

This marked the end of the official program, as the evening was free for all delegates to enjoy the evening in Mollet del Vallès or (which some chose) to go to Barcelona.

Analysis and conclusions

Methodology

The main structure and components of the conference were:

- Monday: **Introduction to the project and dissemination of project results.** One highlight was the watching of the video that the team from Mollet del Vallès had produced, which was very positively received. Another highlight was the signing of Letters of Intent between the high level politicians from Södertälje, Łomża and Mollet del Vallès.
- Tuesday: **Strategies, networks and ideas for the future.** The day was divided in two parts: a practical group working session and a study visit. The rationale behind working concretely on future project ideas and networks is that the work with the Diet for a Green Planet needs to continue directly after project end.
- Wednesday: **Strategies, networks and ideas for the future.** The day was divided in two parts: a practical group working session and breakout sessions/a study visit. The rationale behind working concretely on future project ideas and networks is that the work with the Diet for a Green Planet needs to continue directly after project end.

The basic methodology in this transnational conference was to work together in groups to further strengthen the relations between the partner cities and to build on the very solid (and friendly) platform that has been created during the project.

This somewhat changed during the preparation phase when the delegation from Södertälje grew to become bigger than originally anticipated. This, however, was positive because it shows that the good practice (Diet for a Green Planet) has been spread and amplified within Södertälje municipality during the course of the project.

A similar development occurred in Łomża, where there had been recent elections, and this conference presented an opportunity to bring newly elected politicians into the project.

In practice, this meant that there was a number of delegates that were not that familiar with the concept or with the work that had been done. Therefore an introductory session – an introduction to both the project and the URBACT programme in general – was put in the program.

The high level participation from politicians and civil servants also called for organising breakout sessions, hence the high level meetings on Tuesday afternoon.



Content

As far as content goes, the idea of disseminating the project was clear from the start. The working group sessions were also something that the four project partners agreed on early in the process. The emphasis on presenting the actual concept, and the URBACT programme emerged as we realised that many of the participants would be fairly new to the project.

The high level meetings with politicians and civil servants (two separate meetings) and the official signing of the Letter of Intent were all parts that were fit into the program towards the very end. We also made some late changes to make the programme fit well with the presence of the URBACT TPM, for which we are grateful.

It was a hectic preparation phase marked by many late changes. Preferably there would have been more time to prepare in detail, but thanks to a large portion of teamwork and flexibility everything turned out for the best.

Policy and Practice transfer

As this was the final conference and the project activities end on March 31, it was more a matter of summing up and looking forward than to follow up on the practice transfer and policy work being done. Our analysis, experiences and learnings – on network level as well as on partner level – are gathered in the narrative final report. Here is a brief summary of our findings, focusing on network level.

One overall conclusion is that networks on EU-level can be used to solve problems on local level. But it is important to analyse the political and system at each partner, before taking a concept from one country to transfer it to another. We have a lot to learn from each other in Europe, but we are very differently organized. Making the roles of everyone very clear is vital and also giving enough time to meet personally around project coordination.

Creating good local support groups or working teams have proven essential to be able to make a change at local level, but visiting other countries is also an excellent method to boost creativity, get inspiration and new practical ideas. Seeing the practical work and meeting the people behind it, is much better than just hearing or reading about a concept. Therefore the international exchange is so valuable.

It is clear that “receiving” partners give the “giving” partner new perspectives on its own activities. Thus this project has not been about a one-way transfer. It has been a win-win partnership.

Changing the policy landscape

Our experience during this (time limited) project is that local elections impact the work process and the abilities to make substantial changes. Local elections – depending on outcome and when in time they occur – may paralyze or slow down the process. But they may also offer opportunities to create interest for the project concepts and suggestions. This factor should be part of the initial baseline work.

Involvement of the political sphere is important and also other levels where decisions are taken. But the grassroots’ level is as important to involve as the decision level. When working with a practical concept, like Diet for a Green Planet, there will be no real change if the kitchen staff and chefs do not understand and are not motivated. Both the ground and the top must be on board.



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Thoughts on the practice transfer

The local conferences combined with practical kitchen exchange were a great success. When the conference participants had got the theoretical presentations they were offered a lunch prepared according to the Diet for a Green Planet concept. Students being involved in the conferences (as in Łomża and Molétai), kindergarten children presenting an artistic theatre performance about environment topics etc, brought new dynamics to the conferences.

Making local adaptations of Södertälje's "Diet for a Clean Baltic in Practice" handbook was also a good method to really see if the concept was understood and adapted to local conditions. Although, this project was too short to really give the partners time and ability to produce a high quality handbook that follows the concept. They all succeeded, but it indeed a challenge. One partner city claims that they would make it differently if they could start the process again.

Final reflection on transfer potential

This transfer project was too short to really teach the concept in its full depth. A recommendation for a similar transfer would be to plan for a real training program for a few participants from each partner, to ensure that at least a few persons from every place should have got complete concept knowledge. This training should include both theoretical and practical sessions.

Partner cooperation

The partner cooperation has functioned very well, both in the preparation and implementation phase. The team in Södertälje (LP) was responsible for designing the program, but the local project manager in Mollet del Vallès made a remarkable job in putting the whole program together. The other partner cities also had a chance to come with input during the monthly project steering committee meetings that take place within the project.

There was a challenge in preparing the conference due to a bilateral visit that took place in mid-February where a group of 9 people from Mollet del Vallès visited Södertälje as part of the project's stakeholder exchange program. This visit took plenty of time to coordinate – more than anticipated – for both teams in Södertälje and Mollet del Vallès.

Given the circumstances, we are very pleased with the partner cooperation.

Local Support Group (LSG) presence

The Local Support Groups in the different partner cities have been formed during the course of the project. Due to different preferences, the partners have chosen different ways of setting up their LSGs. The LSGs in Mollet del Vallès, Łomża and Molétai are fairly stable when it comes to number of members etc. The LSG in Södertälje grows during the course of the project. This is due to the fact that the Diet for a Green Planet is a dynamic concept, which develops all the time. And thanks to this URBACT pilot transfer network, more relevant stakeholder representing more sectors and competences join the work along the way in Södertälje. This was very clearly demonstrated by the fact that the Södertälje delegation grew as the final conference approached. Along the way, the Head of the Diet Unit and her colleagues identified key persons that will be valuable to have "on board" for further development of the concept. The LSGs have been represented in all transnational conferences – this one included. And the feedback from the project



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partners is that well-functioning LSGs have been a key to success in their respective processes.

Roadmap for Applications

The Roadmap for Application is an important deliverable in the Diet for a Green Planet project, with the purpose of presenting some concrete entry points for applications that are realistic and strategic on an EU level. Furthermore the purpose is to openly invite interested cities to join the work.

The ideas will be presented together with specific funds, which could finance a project. The Roadmap for Applications will discuss:

1. Promoting continued work in the 4 partner cities – Södertälje, Mollet del Vallès, Łomża and Molétai – in regional respective Operational Programs.
2. Further developments through the URBACT III Programme.
3. Continuation of cooperation between the four cities through cross border projects; Interreg A strand, Erasmus+, Interreg B strand, Interreg Europe, Horizon 2020 and others.

The purpose of the working group sessions during this conference was to consolidate certain ideas that had been identified earlier and to prepare groups that will work with them further. The sessions were thoroughly prepared (group division, themes prepared etc.) by the project's Thematic Expert.

The impression from the working group sessions is that they gave valuable input to the finalisation phase of the Roadmap for Applications, and that a solid groundwork has been laid for future projects and collaboration between the four project partners.

Translation

During the second day of the conference (Monday – introduction to the concept and dissemination of results) simultaneous translation was used, due to the fact that there was a fairly large group of people present (40-50). The facilities at Centre Cívic Can Borrell were not optimal for simultaneous translation as the signal was not clear. However, it worked better during the afternoon in the City Hall.

During the remainder of the conference, translation was handled by the coordinators from the partner cities (Albert Garcia Macian for Mollet del Vallès, Daria Lutrzykowska for Łomża, Loreta Stelbiene for Molétai). Mollet del Vallès' project coordinator Albert Garcia Macian made a big contribution by translating all study visits to English, allowing the other participants to follow.

Logistics

The logistic arrangements of the first transnational conference in Södertälje in May were challenging. The second transnational conference – and this final conference - were not as "spread out", most sessions took place within walking distance from the hotel. For the study visits, one bus could harbor the whole group. All in all, the logistics worked out very well during the conference.

Appendix 1: Conference participation list

Appendix 2: Full conference program

Report author: Daniel Dworetzky, support to LP.



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