

## **Lead Partner visit to Molėtai, Lithuania**

### ***Diet for a Green Planet practice transfer***

### **October 21 - 23, 2014**

#### **Participants from Södertälje:**

Helena Nordlund, lead expert.

Daniel Dworetzky, project coordinator support and communication manager

#### **Local coordinators from Molėtai:**

Loreta Štelbienė, project leader in the City of Molėtai

Miglė Bareikytė, communication manager

Marius Jacobauskas, project leader support

#### **Visitors from other partners:**

Albert Garcia, project leader Mollet

Agnieszka Buckowska, project leader Lomza

Daria Lutrzykowska, project coordinator Lomza

#### **Objectives of the visit:**

1. Follow up the transfer process in Molėtai
2. Follow up work plan for Handbook
3. Meeting also with the Polish and Spanish partners to follow up their work.

#### **Summary: Process status and actions needed**

- Coordination and cooperation functions OK, but the Lithuanian coordinator suffers from lack of time and she has had a hard personal situation during a period, why she couldn't participate in the Mollet conference in September. Instead the communication manager and a colleague of the coordinator went. These two and the coordinator now seem to form a good team, which is positive. It will be important to keep them all involved until the end of the project.
- The Local Support Group, LSG, was formed with 21 members, but no politicians and people from primary and basic school have been active since the first bilateral meeting in February. In the Handbook working group around 10 persons are active. For the coming planned bilateral meeting combined with the exchange for food professionals there is still a possibility to involve a more members of the LSG, see below.
- The practice transfer process seems to have been partly successful so far. The ideas of local, ecological and seasonal food are well understood. The health issues are very regulated by the dieticians and the state hygienic control institute which does not give much freedom for changes. Obviously it is not well understood why we should eat less meat and which kind of meat is then



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preferable. We worked as much as possible with this aspect, and the last bilateral meeting/professional exchange must put a lot of attention to this.

- Handbook production: Procurement process for graphic design and printing is done. Content plan is not developed in detail yet, but will be sent to lead expert before the end of October. A collection of recipes does exist, but they have not been sent to Södertälje. Content plan, texts and recipes have to be followed up by lead expert.
- The coming bilateral meeting combined with an exchange for food professionals will be held when the Handbook is printed, probably in January. This is an excellent possibility to finish the practice transfer and at the same time discuss policy questions and a roadmap for future applications. Important to try to get as many people involved as possible.

## **Analysis and conclusions**

### **Coordination and cooperation**

The Lithuanian coordinator Loreta Stelbienė is a very busy person, responsible for 40 projects in the Molėtai Municipality. She suffers from lack of time and little support from the politicians in the municipality. She has also had a hard time personally during the summer and autumn, because her husband went severely ill and passed away. Therefore she was not able to come to the Mollet conference, but her colleague Marius Jakobauskas went instead together with the communication manager, Miglė Bareikytė. These three persons now function more like a team than we saw from the beginning. This is positive, especially as Loreta is planning to withdraw from work during next year. If there will be any future cooperation with Molėtai it is good to have built up the relationship with other civil servants in the municipality as well, like Miglė and Marius, who both speak good English.

### **Local support group, LSG**

The local support group was formed before the first Lead Partner visit in February. It contained 21 persons including the project coordinator. No politicians have been participating in any project activity with the lead partner since the first bilateral meeting in February. Six of the LSG members came to the Södertälje conference, and two to the Mollet conference. The coordination team, (see above) is functioning well (3 persons) and the LSG members from the two kindergartens, the gymnasium and the Head of the Education department are active in the Handbook working group (around 10 persons). The LSG members from primary and basic schools have been invited but not responding when they were asked for Handbook content input. The local business representatives do not seem to have been interested in actively participating.



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## **Diet for a Green Planet transfer process**

When starting the project there was a strong interest in the two criteria eco-farming and local products, from the Lithuanian partner. But it has also been expressed several times that it is too early for Molėtai to convert all food to organic because the economic situation is so difficult. In the different discussions we made clear that all the six criteria are important, and that focus and starting points can vary when you begin to work with the concept. A big interest to start reducing waste was shown in the bilateral meeting in April, and at the Södertälje conference we worked a lot with the concept of seasonal food.

This time we discussed the first criteria "Tasty and healthy food". In Lithuania all the public canteens have a dietician who is deciding all the menus and who does nutrient calculations on every meal. After that the State hygiene control institute has to approve the menus for the two coming weeks. Kitchen staff have no possibility to be creative or take any own decisions. This makes it difficult to get any creativity into the cooking process and to make big changes. Södertälje has gone from a few central kitchens to complete kitchens at every unit, i.e. a strong decentralisation process, during the last 10 years. Molėtai still has decentralized cooking, but the trend for the future in Lithuania is to centralize.

There is not much openness to discuss what is healthy, and there are not many possibilities for innovations either. Nevertheless sugar has been reduced in the kindergartens. Artificial spices are not used any longer, and they have some ecological products like meat from Alanta school, and eco-milk was also mentioned.

But the recommendations for protein and the amount of meat recommended seem to be much higher than what is used in Södertälje. In the Lithuanian kindergartens 80 grams of meat per child/ lunch is the standard, when Södertälje works towards 50 grams/lunch in average for school children.

It is obvious that the concept criteria "Less meat and more vegetables and whole grain" is the one we must work more with. It is the most crucial criteria of the whole concept, but also the one that creates most resistance. There is not enough will to reduce the meat consumption, and the authorities' recommendations also create problems here. And there does not exist enough understanding on why to avoid the industrialized chicken and pork meat. We should have worked a lot more with these issues earlier in the project, or we would need a longer project. During this meeting we analysed this as much as we could, more would not have been fruitful. It is needed to put a lot of attention to the "meat issue" in the last part of the project; especially on how to get enough protein without a lot of meat.

## **Handbook work plan**

The original plan was to have the Handbook printed in October, but that is now postponed till December or January. The Lithuanians stick to the original idea to make a Handbook for are all kind of interested people; kitchen staff, teachers, parents, civil servants, politicians and not only the specialists. Their version will



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be similar to the Handbook of Södertälje with texts in an easy language, understandable for anyone and the recipes will be organized according to season. The plan is now two salads, two soups, two main dishes and two desserts or drinks for every season. Loreta has a collection of recipes but did not send them to the lead partner before the meeting, so we have not had any possibility to evaluate them.

The introduction texts will be a translation from different parts of the Swedish handbook, and there will be poems for each season. If there will be any new written texts, was not really clear. I stressed that the chapter of meat and resource management is important to include in some way.

Loreta is responsible for the coordination and the procurement for graphic design and printing is already done. They will use a recycled paper and make the same type of book as the Swedish version, which is a cheap technical solution.

### **Eco-farming has potential in the Molėtai Municipality**

The *Alanta School of Technology and Business* is important in the Molėtai municipality with its certified ecological farm (2-300 hectares, milk cows, beef cows and sheep) and the first eco-farming training in the entire Lithuania. They also have a meat processing company and a shop in Molėtai town.

The other partners from Poland and Spain appreciated very much to visit the Alanta school and said they were positively surprised about the potential of Molėtai when it comes to ecological and local production.

### **Last bilateral meeting of the project**

The coming bilateral meeting combined with kitchen staff exchange will be held when the Handbook is printed, probably in January. An event to present the result is then planned. This is an excellent possibility to finish the practice transfer with practical cooking and tasting the Diet for a green Planet menu at the same time as discussing policy questions and a roadmap for future applications. Important that as many people are involved as possible, from the two kindergartens, from gymnasium, from the Alanta school (would it be possible to hold the event there?), but also politicians, civil servants and people from the Primary and the Basic school, even if they have not been so interested.

The Polish partner may give input on how to organize this, because they arranged something similar in June.

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