

Lead Partner visit to Lomza, Poland

Diet for a Green Planet Pilot Transfer Project

Nov 16 - 18, 2014

Participants from Södertälje:

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Local coordinators in Lomza:

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Objectives of the visit:

1. Follow up the transfer of Diet Policy in Lomza
2. Work with Roadmap for applications
3. Follow up handbook finalization

Summary: Process status and actions needed

- Diet Policy is a national issue in Poland – the city´s possibility is to invest in “soft questions” for its own school development and using research to influence the national policies.
- Sugar in food and health is an issue that will require special attention.
- An innovation center for SME organic farmers could be viable as project idea for Podlaskie Operational Program. It needs further elaboration.
- Pilotes for practice based education for Restaurant school, veterinary school and agriculture school are important for the continuous work and should be elaborated together with investigation of Erasmus+.
- Possible project ideas for URBACT III – Action Planning, Implementation and Transfer projects – were discussed. The ideas need to be checked with willing Lead Partner and viability for the proposed program, and some realistic ideas shall be elaborated further.
- Possibilities to participate in Interreg programs and Horizon 2020 roughly scanned.

Analysis and conclusions

Diet Policy transfer

A real Diet Policy will take time to develop into political recognition, and it is better to let it take its time and make it good, than to haste it through. Since diets is a national issue (In Poland and Lithuania we know by now it is – and



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probably in more countries) that is implemented through regional health authorities, the policy work needed must be based on science, and it will be important to engage a well selected consortium of high level research institutes. A Horizon 2020 project may be a way.

Excessive sugar and meat consumption and attitudes connected to this is a huge problem. A combination of creativity and courage is needed to break through the social codes that drive an excess that is not healthy and leads to overconsumption. There are also probably in every country national founded ideas about food security that are not really based in science, but more in tradition, that stand in the way.

The step Lomza is taking – already took in connection to this meeting – from focus only on the “hard” issues – buildings and roads, to the “soft” issues including competence and attitudes among teachers in school, is probably clever and completely in line with the Södertälje example – that also has taken more than 10 years in spite of 50 more years of civil society development in a village (Järna) within the same municipality. And even here there are strong national level issues still to handle.

Challenging these questions nationally on a too early stage will only provoke a counter reaction that the grass roots movement is not strong enough to handle.

Handbook progress

The polish handbook is in good progress. The last chapters will be written and translated to English for Lead Partner check during week 49.

Roadmap for applications – project ideas under development

Focus on news during this trip:

A new scientific report “SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WITHIN THE BALTIC SEA REGION: DO POLICY MEASURES RESPOND TO POLICY OBJECTIVES?” by Spijkers, Isacs and Hahn, Stockholm Resilience Center points directly at the Diet for a Green Planet example:

“The minimum annual cost for society of achieving the BSAP targets (cost-effective measures including effects on farm profitability and food prices) has been estimated to €4.7 billion (Wulff et al. 2014). However, a Swedish municipality, Södertälje, has already made large efforts to transform agriculture and the whole food chain and achieved, at least partly, all four policy objectives discussed here without additional costs. The secret is an integrated approach including public procurement, low-intensive animal stocking, and adaptation of meals e.g. in schools. Such synergy approaches, discussed at the stakeholder dialogue, can be contrasted to the dominant scientific approach of analysing cost-effectiveness of individual measures on individual policy objectives. Reductionist scientific approaches have a tendency to underestimate society’s adaptive capacity and exaggerate the costs for transformation and thereby contribute to society’s inability to save the Baltic Sea.”



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This is an important background for all application work – and it points at the need of intensifying the involvement of researchers in the mix of follow-up applications. (Preferably to have a separate research project with a strong direction towards communication and stake holder dialogues than having a bit of research in every project).

Operational Program Stockholm: Södertälje is in the middle of a powerful development. I even say – a breakthrough for Diet for a Green Planet. Since one of the two big industries in the town – Astra Zeneca – a year ago chocked the municipality by deciding to radically cut down activities and leave a large industrial area empty – there has been a process going on to fill the space, avoid losing competence and regain job opportunities lost. This has led to a project of building a “Science Park”, where Diet for a Green Planet had been lost among high tech ideas until it was rediscovered through work by Sara, Helena and myself two months ago. Now it is included as one out of four potential activity areas for the Science Park: Higher Education, Sustainable Production, Life Science and Sustainable Food. The hope is that the cross-breeding of these four areas will create innovation and growth of new SME’s.

Operational Program Podlaskie: The OP includes a point about getting new businesses started, which correspond to the need to build up an innovation center for farmers cooperation. The lack of logistic capacity among small farmers in Lomza region is a bottleneck for the further development. It is a goal to keep the small scale structure of agriculture in the area and improve by cooperative strategies and social innovation rather than by the standard merging of small farms to ever bigger. This will require a way to inspire youth to work with farming.

URBACT Transfer project Agricultural Park: Lomza has an interest in the idea of an agriculture park where Mollet with its Gallecs would be the Giving City. This is however not the city itself, which is the interested part, so we must check if it works and how. Södertälje has an interest that must be followed up. If Mollet confirms interest to be Lead Partner, an open partner search can be next step.

URBACT Action Planning Project Turn the tide of migration: This type of project is for cities with similar problem to solve. I will check whether URBACT would accept an idea to join cities that have the same problem but in opposite ways – so that the problem for one can be the solution for the other. The point is to join cities like Södertälje that are based on declining industries and already have a high degree of unemployment and face even more immigration and food is a new branch with potential to improve the situation – and rural area cities like Lomza that in the first hand needs to keep their population and are based on food industries.

URBACT Implementation network “European Food Challenge”. This is for cities that are already implementing sustainable strategies – like Södertälje – to enhance the implementation and produce recommendations on EU level.

Erasmus +: This is probably an important program for us. I envision a BERAS Academy application that brings together different education initiatives that



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come out of the needs for developing ERA, SFS Learning Center and DFG. Lomza asks for students exchange programs with practice one to three months to restaurant school, veterinary school and agrotechnical school in Lomza. There is also interest for this in Lithuania, and hopefully Erasmus is also a chance for the project idea "Reversed Study Plan" that may include as well Farmers University Practice course and BERAS Summer Academy.

The Reversed study plan: This project idea is about the transformations needed in the food chain, and is focused on farms and implementation of Farming Guidelines for Ecological Regenerative Agriculture by working in groups of farmers and youth practicing on the farms, where the focus is on achieving radical diminishing of leakage of N and P through balanced crop rotation and balance with animals. The learning produced by such projects on the farms will be acknowledged and confirmed by schools and universities participating in the project. The idea can be implemented stepwise as "running business". A project should use the idea to quicken a breakthrough in EU and give resources to research and secure the quality. Even though this idea is focused on agriculture and rural development it will include elements of Diet for a Green Planet.

A strand Interreg programs: There are cross border programs like Central Baltic Interreg V (five) A, South Baltic, Skagerack-Kattegat et.c. In these programs it is possible to capitalize on BERAS Implementation. BERAS International can be involved as a partner or as an external expert in such projects.

Baltic Sea Region (BSR) Interreg VB . BERAS Implementation was mentioned at the program launching meeting in Warszawa as one of the good examples with Ecological Recycling Agriculture as an example of how we can clean the Baltic Sea waters. BSR only accepts new ideas – no third BERAS – but new ideas that build further on results by BERAS Implementation should be a good entry point. Cities are good partners in Interreg since they can generate co-financing – if they only have enough synergy.

Interreg – whole Europe: This program has less money than the others and strong competition, but capitalizing ERA, SFS and DFG in all Europe should be checked as project idea.

EUSBSR – Baltic Sea Region Strategy: The BSR Interreg program is now based on the EUSBSR and following the EUSBSR will open up for even other funds. Hans has scanned the strategy in 2013 for entry points for BERAS and found quite many.

Horizon 2020 – Hans scanned the program for BERAS synergies in spring 2014 and marked the calls that could be interesting for BERAS. The competition in this program is quite high and it is much work behind an application. Since there are funds available for coordination and support without cofinancing and DFG has a strong network – it may be worth the effort, and it should be checked with key actors in the EU food sector.

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