

Lead Partner visit to Moletai, Lithuania

Diet for a Green Planet Pilot Transfer Project

Jan 14-16, 2015

Participants from Södertälje;

Sara Jervfors, Project leader and Head of Diet Unit, Södertälje Municipality
Bengt-Åke Andersson, Kitchen Manager, Diet Unit, Södertälje Municipality
Adam Fridlund, Kitchen Manager, Diet Unit, Södertälje Municipality
Pelle Höög, Unit Manager, Diet Unit, Södertälje Municipality
Hans von Essen, thematic expert, BERAS International

Local coordinators in Moletai and experts from Lithuania;

Loreta Stelbienė, Dr., Head of strategic planning and investment department at municipality administration, Local Project Leader, Moletai
Miglė Bareikytė, medical doctor of municipality administration, Local project communication manager, Moletai
Dalia Burneikienė, public health specialist at Moletai Gymnasium
Henrikas Ivickas, Vice-Mayor, Moletai
Marius Jakubauskas, Senior specialist at Strategic planning and investment department at municipality administration, Moletai
Ona Kavalnienė, Head of kindergarden Vyturelis in Moletai
Nijolė Kimbartienė, Head of education, culture and sports department at municipality administration, Moletai
Arunas Svitojus, MD Baltic Foundation HPI, Lithuania
Paulius Svitojus, Baltic Foundation HPI, Lithuania

Objectives of the visit.

1. Follow up the transfer of Diet Policy in Moletai/Lithuania
2. Continued transfer of Södertälje good practice
3. Work with roadmap for applications



Summary Process status and actions needed



Analysis and conclusions

This meeting was a positive surprise! There were 40 registered Molétai participants from all walks of life at the seminar, and discussions were engaged and delivered several concrete ideas. The vice - mayor was present – not only a short time – but through the whole meeting, and concluded the meeting with some spontaneous good words.

The school lunch we had before the meeting was traditional – and had little influence yet from our work: Polished white rice is not local, not very healthy, and rice is a crop that has a significant negative impact on climate change and the piece of meat was bigger than necessary. However the reed beet salad and the bean soup fits into the concept – even though I may guess this is how it always has been done here. Possibilities of spicing and chef “tricks” to make the food tastier can also be developed. But – now, for the first time ever in Molétai, kitchen personnel were invited to participate in a competence development! The first year of the project is the time it takes for actions to even begin to reach the level where things in real life actually happens! And to reach this very first real starting point – it has taken quite a bit of effort from a group of dedicated local actors.

I think this really underlines the issue of the status problem for school kitchen personnel. Their empowerment must be the key!

It is sometimes said in Western Europe that Vilnius is the best hidden secret in Europe. I think this may go for all of Lithuania – and even more - smaller towns. The country has a very special and odd culture. It strikes me now, that the years of Soviet occupation may have built a habit to protect the culture by keeping it inside the group, and that it now is very necessary to open it up and show it in Europe. Protecting a culture by keeping it isolated is in the long run like trying to save life by conserving it.

In Lithuania we are working with the whole country rather than with only the small city. The process of DGP is in Lithuania bound to take time (my guess at least 10 years) and it must go hand in hand with opening up the treasures of Lithuanian culture to the world. The status problem with the kitchen personnel exists also in Sweden, but possibly it is even more pronounced here. It is

inevitable that it will take time to build up a pride for kitchen work, and it will require a serious competence investment.

I am beginning to suspect that the EU focus on new innovations, competitiveness and ever new ideas stand in the way for a necessary long sightedness in the work with human beings. The EU progress is after all made up of individual human processes – and humans need their time to mature.

Self-government elections in Lithuania will be 1 March. There are significant changes in local-government elections. For the first time Mayors will be elected directly. No one knows what this will bring. For the project development: Will it be possible or not participating in projects? It will very much depend on the ability of the politicians that win the elections to have a broad understanding. Cash flow is a serious obstacle. Without a clear will from decision makers this obstacle will not be overcome. This meeting shows something is beginning to happen. But it is two month from project end, and to continue and follow up we will have to make new projects. And is there a will strong enough for projects?

Diet Policy transfer

Realistically what can be achieved within this project is to write a recommendation to the Moletai Strategic Plan (a part of the Utena county OP) to work with food in school.

There are two key national government organizations that work with Diet Policy related issues:

- Lithuanian State Food and Veterinary Service
- Utena Public Health Center ,Molėtai Branch

The personnel and experts working in above mentioned institutions are educated at universities (they need to have university degree) and are also key to include in future project work.

But staff working at the kitchens' are under vocational schools. Molėtai has such a school – ALANTA SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS.

There are also other education institutions.

There are strict regulations concerning feeding at the educational institutions. The frequent inspections leads to that the staff are working without any creativity and innovations. And even more important – there is no training for fostering competencies and skills. As long as the communication between administration and the actual implementing personnel (cooks) is low, the risk of negative side effects of new regulations (in the form of stiffness in the implementation by low educated personnel) is great.



A first step is therefore to put attention to the connections between school food, environment, health, rural development, attractiveness and social development at large in the strategies.

Diet Policy is governed by the law LR SAM 2011.11.11 Nr V 964. According to Dalia, public health specialist at Moletai Gymnasium, who acquainted us with the state documents governing the nutrition (food) in educational institutions, the law gives recommendations to the menu including ways to preserve nutrients in cooking process. French fries, chocolate, energy drinks, carbonated drinks, GMO and certain chemical additions are forbidden and there are restrictions on sugar and salt content and it also prioritizes local and organic food, whole grains and vegetable juices. Menus shall be submitted to the "Public Health Agency" 15 days in advance to be approved according to requirements in the law that are specific to age and has to be varied.

Ona told about improvements made in kindergarten "Vyturėlis" unit – excluding sweet juice, letting kids participate in food preparation, serving outdoors and making food interesting by creating café.

As this meeting was a very first time for open communication with kitchen personnel – it can be said to mark a beginning for the policy transfer. How to implement the intentions of the law – rather than its letter was discussed for the first time. This is a dialogue that should continue.

Practice transfer

The personnel in the school kitchens follow the rules in a way that is very literal and create greater obstacles than the authorities probably realize. The communication between different categories of personnel is hindered by fear, and maybe also as a result of habit from Soviet times.

The 15/1 seminar was the first time kitchen personnel was included in competence development. At the end of lectures there were group work. Nijolé (Head of education municipality administration) subdivided the participants into four groups and made them reflect over the lectures. I could see lively discussions in all the groups – and all four groups produced a number of conclusions. (translated to English in attachment 1)

Parallel the Moletai cooks had been working together with the Södertälje cooks to prepare a real Diet for a Green Planet dinner – three Moletai cooks plus a student interpreter and one Södertälje cook in each group. Molėtai had the excellent idea to include Gymnasium students to help with translations – at the same time language training, interpretation help and getting the word out through, parents, family and friends! The Södertälje chefs had introduced some colour and taste with simple methods to help lifting the basic local ingredients – like potatoes in the oven instead of just steam boiled.



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Roadmap for applications – Lithuanian contributions

The greatest interest for projects in Moletai is ERASMUS+ to continue the competence development of personnel in different directions within the “Reversed study plan” idea, and Nordic Council of Ministers programs.

ERASMUS+ is the programme where we very simply could spread the concept to many EU countries.

Two URBACT III ideas we discussed have some potential – Action Planning “Migration” and Transfer Network “Agricultural Park”. The cash flow requirement (receiving reimbursement a year after paying the cost) in URBACT is a problem for a city like Moletai.

The “Roadmap” developed to two project sections – one for the prioritized projects to work with concretely at the Final Conference – and one long list of related project ideas related to an EU level strategy of developing DGP.

Report author: Hans von Essen, Thematic Expert.



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Appendix

1

The Workshop "What would be necessary to change and what we can change in our eating/ feeding habits".

The goal of the workshop: in existing legal institutional environment what would be possible to change with the actual Diet Policy taken into consideration?

Group 1:

Participants:

1. D. Skebienė, Molėtų region Head of Alantos gimnasium;
2. N. Kazlienė, Alantos gimnasium public health specialist
3. V. Petkūnienė, Molėtų region. Head of Giedraičiai gimnasium
4. R. Lukšienė, Giedraičiai gimnasium public health specialist
5. D. Kaselienė, Vice-head Molėtai region Joniškis school- multifunctional center
6. D. Jurevičienė, Specialist Utena region public health center, Molėtai branch
7. M. Bareikytė, doctor molėtai munisipality adminiostration

Priority – ecological products (possible to add in to public procurement documentation)

- More vegetables from local producers
- More meals using leguminous
- More wholegrain products
- Drink pure water
- To offer more sour milk products
- Include spread (bruschetta)

Group 2

Participants:

1. R. Guobienė, Head of Molėtų gimnasium;
2. D. Burneikienė, Public health specialist at Molėtai gimnasium;
3. R. Veršelienė, Vice- head of Molėt progimnasiumi;
4. B. Grigonienė, Public health specialist of Molėtai progimnasium;
5. Skardinskienė, Molėtai egion. Kijėliai special education institution kitchen chef.
6. M. Tamulionienė, Molėtai state veterinary and food service chief specialist.

Priority – Ecological products from local producers (in Molėtai region more than 54 ecological small farmers)

- To stick to seasonal products
- Training for kitchen staff using local vocational school base
- To develop right eating habits starting from kindergarten but not forget talking with the family.
- Public procurement procedures- to add percentage of ecological products
- To give possibility to choose (at the beginning vegetables, salads) filling the plate. It gives possibility to reduce waste.



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- More fruits instead of juice, more seeds, nuts.
- Aesthetic presentation of food
- Activities: actions, markets, degustation concerning healthy, new coming meal.

Group 3

Participants:

1. D. Laurinavičienė, Vice-head of Molėtai kindergarten „Saulutės“
2. O. Kavalnienė, Head of Molėtai kindergarten „Vyturėlis“
3. R. Pumputienė Head of Molėtai primary school;
4. Ž. Remeikienė, Public health specialist of Molėtai primary school
5. D. Telksnienė, Head of Molėtai region Dubingiai village secondary school
6. R. Kerulienė, Dubingiai village secondary school kitchen chef.
7. N. Paulauskienė, Head of Molėtai state veterinary and food service

- Info-stand about the food waste of the day recalculated into money.
- Give possibility to choose the vegetables for the children themselves.
- Training sessions for kitchen staff “MUST”.

Group 4

Participants:

1. V. Budrionienė, Head of Molėtu r. Balninkai secondary school;
2. S. Lisauskas, Head of Molėtu r. Suginčiai secondary school ;
3. I. Padvariškienė, Molėtu r. Suginčiai secondary school kitchen chef;
4. N. Žemčiugovienė, Head of Molėtu r. Inturkė secondary school;
5. G. Gylienė, Molėtu r. Inturkė secondary school kitchen chef
6. J. Miknevičienė, Alantova vocational school teacher
7. E. Grajauskienė, Ecological association chairmen , owner of ecological farm „Gojėlis“ .

- Food- healthy , fresh , local and prepared in place
- Partly ecological- it is short budget to buy ecological products
- Seasonal – partly educational
- Mostly we are using local (Lithuanian) products
- Children could choose at least from 2 courses (the meal is in portions)
- Different food waste is from children who are paying and children who are getting for free (bigger)
- Necessary to put more efforts for developing eating culture.



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