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Success Factors for Local Agenda 21 in the Baltic Sea Region

**Björn Grönholm, Marko Joas
and Maria Nordström
(eds)**

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Björn Grönholm, Marko Joas and Maria Nordström

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*Union of the Baltic Cities
Commission on Environment
City of Turku, Linnankatu 61
FIN-20100 Turku, Finland
<http://www.ubc.net/commissions/environment>*

*Åbo Akademi University
Dept. of Public Administration
Hus Lindman, Biskopsgatan 15
FIN-20500 Åbo, Finland
<http://abo.fi/fak/esf/lindman>*

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Chapter 1: LA21 in the Baltic Sea Area

Marko Joas

1.1. An introduction to the SUFA research component

Traditionally, research is often divided into basic research frequently academic in nature as aiming at a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon examined and applied research, which includes projects targeted to assist the work of practitioners. In SUFA, the research component is definitely of the latter character. The research component is adjusted according to the needs of the project as a whole, especially in regard to the need for knowledge about different types of institutional solutions which cities have created in order to cope with the challenge of a Local Agenda 21 (LA21), or some other sustainability policy planning process.

As LA21 is a voluntary sustainability policy tool having the primary goal of activating existing structures in order to meet the challenges from the local environment, social and economic conditions as well as, to some extent, creating new structures among actors, the way it has been used in various countries and regions has varied a lot. Even within one nation there may be a multitude of different LA21 solutions.

Therefore, it is also obvious that various institutional choices in general local governance as well as within LA21 processes are important in regard to the level of goal-achievement in sustainability policies. Why just institutions, structures? Is it not individual agents that often play the crucial role, especially with respect to the starting phase of a LA21 process? These two questions are known to us, and we are not blind to individual effort either. However, as Agenda 21 is defined as a time-consuming process instead of a short-term project, it would be too easy to believe that an active individual alone is enough. Instead, we believe that individuals can create institutional structures round the local process. These structures, organisational solutions and institutions are often varied in character, partly due to the fact that the Agenda 21 document as such defines the borders of the process very broadly.

In the project application we had a two-fold purpose for the project:

1. Our first intention was to collect aggregated data in order to be able to provide basic knowledge about the LA21 situation in the research region, and especially as regards basic knowledge about the LA21 situation in UBC member cities.
2. Our second intention was to discuss and describe the basic institutional solutions that, in various contextual settings, a Nordic as well as a Baltic-Polish, can explain the level of success achieved in the LA21 process.

The first question is to some extent answered in this chapter, whereas the second question is analysed more deeply in the subsequent chapters.

1.2. The research process and data

Two parallel data collection processes were active in SUFA. First of all, a basic knowledge of the local Agenda 21 situation in a broad sense has been collected throughout the research period. Basic sources in use for this part have been earlier studies of national level LA21 activities that at least partly have involved the region. Even though the national level study by Lafferty and Eckerberg (ed.) 1998, for example, does not include the 'Baltic' countries, and also lacking information on some of the 'Nordic' countries in this study, we still find it highly relevant as a basic source of information. The study has also substantially benefited from our earlier studies on city level within the area: for example, the UBC LA21 survey 1998 conducted in all UBC member cities of that time and reported in Grönholm and Joas 1999. There are also several national studies within the region, especially from the Nordic countries, which discuss the LA21 situation, and these have naturally been of high importance for us. A further central basic source for these descriptions, mainly discussing the national contexts, has been the national follow-up reports to the Rio +5/10 process that governments should have submitted regularly to the UN database (see www.un.org/esa/agenda21/). These data are verified and updated with the help of a few key-person interviews (see SUFA project report *Human Resource Review*, Veivo 2001), as well as by a city level case-specific database (described below).

| | | Frequencies | | | |
|---------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Country | All cases | Missing Cases | Valid Cases | % |
| Nordic | Denmark | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1.6 |
| | Finland | 8 | 0 | 8 | 12.9 |
| | Norway | 6 | 0 | 6 | 9.7 |
| | Sweden | 15 | 3 | 12 | 19.4 |
| | Iceland | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1.6 |
| | Germany | 21 | 4 | 17 | 27.4 |
| Baltic | Estonia | 6 | 3 | 3 | 4.8 |
| | Latvia | 5 | 1 | 4 | 6.5 |
| | Lithuania | 6 | 2 | 4 | 6.5 |
| | Poland | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4.8 |
| | Russia | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4.8 |
| Total | | 78 | 16 | 62 | 100.0 |

Table 1: The Number of Cities from each Baltic Country included in the combined LASALA and SUFA Baltic Area Database

Secondly, there has been an on-going data collection within a parallel research project, LASALA, that included a large survey to cities all over Europe, many of which come from the Baltic/Nordic region (see Evans and Theobald (ed.) 2001, and also Grönholm, Joas and Matar (ed.) 2001). This,

together with a specific SUFA data-collection is, in addition to being a useful resource for this chapter, the basis for the analytical part of this study as well. We have received survey answers from 62 cities.

Based on these materials, an analytical model is created about the causal relationships between institutional factors which enable a LA21 process, as well as institutional structures within a LA21 which result in success or non-success. These are discussed in a Nordic and a Baltic setting. Finally, the feasibility of the model is analysed by case

analysis, exhibiting six Nordic LA21 processes in depth in addition to ten Baltic LA21 processes. This represents the second phase of the data collection.

The remaining part of this first chapter discusses the overall LA21 situation in the research area, as well as providing us with some initial knowledge about the basic conditions for the local Agenda 21 work in regard to the national and international backup.

1.3. Local Agenda 21 activities in the Baltic Sea Region

Local Agenda 21, as well as other environmental policy innovations, seems to have started as an activity intended for the rich, industrialised and developed world. Already 4 years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro 1992, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) found that local governments in at least 64 countries were involved in LA21 activities, and the number of active municipalities exceeded 1,800.

In 1996, the UN reference year for finalised LA21 Action Plans, about half of the 1,800 active municipalities were still in an early planning stage of the process. Most of these active LA21 processes, in fact 82%, were to be found in Western Europe. The situation has been changing in the past five years since Rio +5, as more local governments in developing countries are involved to a higher degree (Local Agenda 21 Survey 1997). Today, a few months before the forthcoming *Johannesburg 2002 Rio +10 World Summit on Sustainable Development*, it is estimated that at least 4,000 to 5,000 local governments are participating in a local sustainability process, following a basic rationale similar to LA21 (Evans and Theobald (ed.) 2001).



Figure 1: UBC Member Cities and the Baltic Sea Region – Year 2000 (Source: Union of the Baltic Cities).

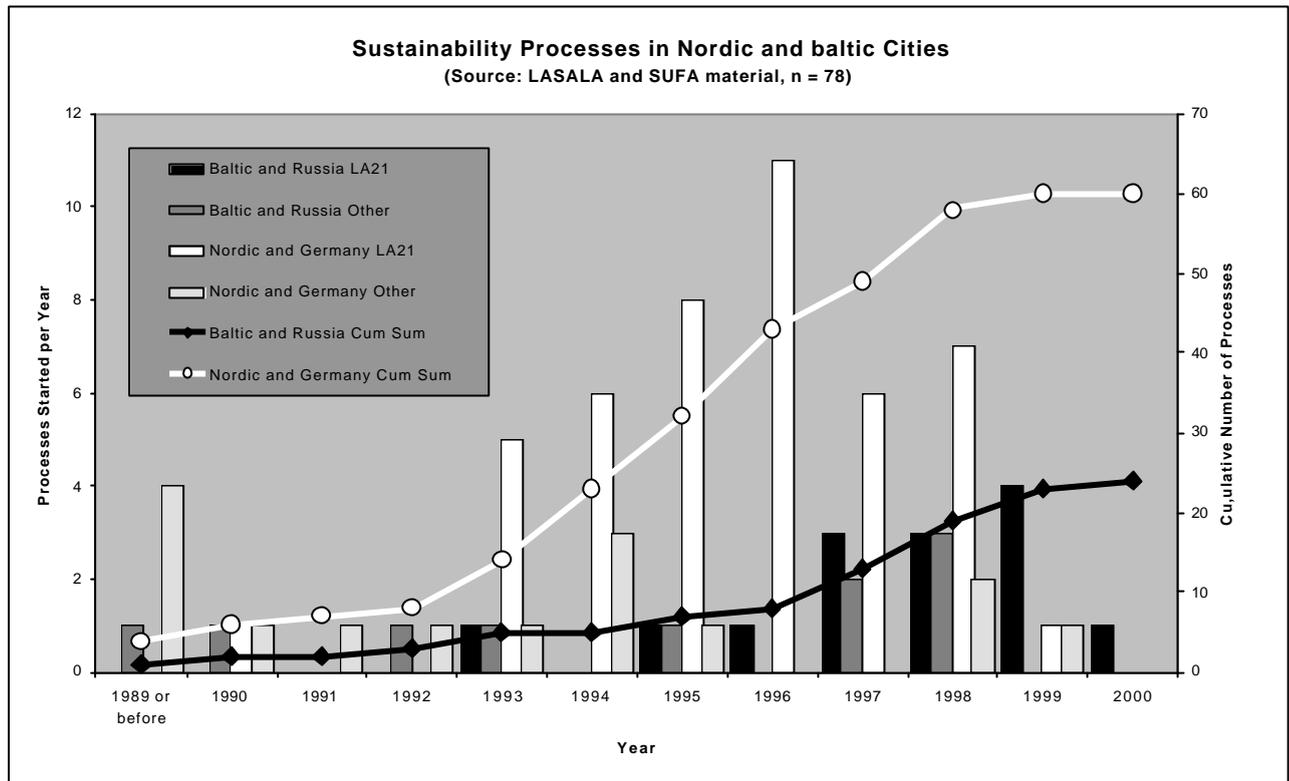


Figure 2: Start Year for LA 21 Processes in the Baltic Area 2001 (SUFA and LASALA database, N = 62)

Within Europe, the emphasis on activity at least in regard to expected results is still in the Nordic and Western European countries; but as the LASALA project has shown, the followers in CEE-countries and Southern European countries are not lagging very far behind. The growth rate of new local Agenda 21 processes seems to be especially active in these regions as well, and it seems that the municipalities which have started LA21 in these countries are also obtaining results rather quickly (Grönholm, Joas and Matar (ed.) 2001).

The Baltic Sea area is an interesting arena for sustainability studies, at least in two aspects. First of all, it is as a natural environment vulnerable both with relevance to the aquatic ecosystem and the high level of resource use in the region. Secondly, the political cleavage from the cold war has resulted in differences within economic capacities and national resources following the former division line between East and West. This social and economic cleavage line is also visible in administrative structures and sustainability policies, including all levels of society. In the following sub-chapters we describe the overall LA21 situation in a North and West Baltic i.e., 'Nordic' setting, as well as in a South and East Baltic i.e., 'Baltic' setting. We will describe the level of activity in general in the target countries, but also attempt to bring some basic features of the national and international support system for the LA21 processes to the fore.

1.4. The 'Nordic' LA21 situation

Traditionally, the Nordic countries have been seen as forerunners in environmental policies (cf. Andersen and Liefferink (ed.) 1997, for example). As sustainability policies have often been seen as a broadened version of environmental policies, an assumption of the Nordic countries being forerunners also in regard to LA21 is only natural. This assumption is, in a European context verified at least to some extent by earlier research: see for example, Lafferty and Eckerberg (ed.) 1998, Evans and Theobald (ed.) 2001, and Grönholm, Joas and Matar (ed.) 2001. In the group of Nordic countries, we count Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway. Not really geographically related to the Baltic region but definitely in its general political setting, we also add Iceland to this analysis. An additional country within the Baltic sphere which cannot really be called a Nordic nation either politically or even geographically is Germany, but as a Western European country with long, successful and leading traditions in environmental policy making, it is only natural that it is fitted into a 'Nordic' context.

Lafferty and Eckerberg (ed.) 1998 pointed Sweden out as the Scandinavian pioneer among LA21 countries, and they assumed that, amongst their case countries, at least Norway and Finland would follow Sweden's good example. Therefore, the Nordic countries can be called innovators in LA21 in a European and even Global context. In most countries, the work with LA21 has been delegated as a regional or a local responsibility, meaning that no clear or considerable support (funding, knowledge) have been allocated for these processes. Only a few countries have extensively supported LA21 processes, Sweden being perhaps the most visible one.

In **Sweden** all 288 local governments had initiated a LA21 process by 1997, and already 56 % of them had already politically accepted LA21 Action Plans in 1998. Central economic investments from the national government as well as supporting know-how have been seen as the main reason for this high level of activity. This is obvious also according to our data from 10 cities. However, most of the funding is, at least in the early 2000s, local, though there is also substantial input from national and regional governments both relevant to funding to some degree and expert knowledge in particular. Sweden has also had, from an early stage, a national coordinating organ for sustainability policies in addition to active local authority coordinating body for local Agenda 21 activities. Since 1997, however, there has been a visible decrease in LA21 activity in Sweden since, for example, the number of local government staff time relegated to LA21 activities has been cut to half during the years 1996 to 1999 (Eckerberg, Forsberg and Wickenberg 1997, Brundin and Eckerberg 1999, *Miljö- & hälsoskydd i kommunerna* 2000).

In the rest of the Nordic countries, made up of Finland, Norway, Iceland and Denmark, the level of LA21 activity has clearly been lower than that in Sweden. The delayed LA21 start in the other Nordic countries, as compared to Sweden, can

perhaps best be explained by the higher level of support from the Swedish government.

Even though **Finland** has had, already since 1987, a national Commission for Sustainable Development which also coordinates activities respective to the local level activities within the Association for Local and Regional Authorities, the low level of governmental funding appears to most succinctly explain Finland's late start. All LA21 processes in Finland are basically voluntary, and the strongest support has been in the form of know-how as delivered by the Association of Finnish Regional and Local Authorities. Nevertheless, specific programmes to activate municipalities have also been included in the input from the Ministry of the Environment. The first such programme was already introduced in 1992, and after a break of a few years several others have followed this pioneering programme. Approximately 60 percent of Finnish municipalities had started LA21 activities prior to the summer of 1999, but as all larger cities belong to this group, close to 83 % of the population are living in communities having LA21 activities (Hakanen and Mynttinen 1999, up-to-date information from <http://www.kuntaliitto.fi/>).

The basic support given to the Finnish LA21 processes seems to be very broad, according to our data from eight LA21 processes. The local input is naturally of central importance, both in terms of money and knowledge, but these processes have actually received support from almost all possible sources. National or regional government funding has been available in more than half of the processes in our sample, as has expertise. In a few cases, also international funding and know-how have been available.

In **Norway**, a comprehensive introduction of local level environmental administration into all Norwegian municipalities was carried out during the early 1990s (MIK-reform), and this was considered to constitute a sufficient LA21 contribution as well. The national coordinating activities were also limited until the late 1990s. Since then, however, Norwegian local governments have initiated actual LA21 processes as well. In 1997 it was assessed that there were approx. 60-70 such processes in Norway, but this figure has been increasing since then. During the year 2000, close to 300 Norwegian municipalities said they were involved in LA21 activities: this represents about 69 % of all Norwegian municipalities. From clearly lagging behind still in 1997, Norway has actually rapidly overtaken Finland over the last 2 – 3 years (Aall 1998, Bjørnæs and Lafferty 2000). As in Finland, the support for the local processes in Norway is based on several different sources, funding though mostly being a local responsibility, but there seems to be one major difference: the international contacts seems to be of less central importance in Norway.

The level of LA21 activity was also lower in **Denmark** than in Sweden during the mid-1990s. This despite the fact that environmental decision-making has been decentralised all the time, though the regional level has, perhaps, been more dominating. At any rate, in 1998 up to 187 out of 275 (68 %) Danish municipalities responded that they had LA21 activities in progress, and more than 84 % of the population live in these municipalities. This number of LA21 processes was in a clear and rapid increase during the late 1990s, as only about 50 % were involved in LA21 in 1996 (Moos 1999).

Iceland is not included in Figure 1, as the national Agenda 21 process only began in Iceland as late as 1998. However, the development has been very rapid since that time, as by the spring of 2001 about 40 out of a total of 124 local governments on Iceland were already involved in a nationally coordinated LA21 process. This is only about 33 % of all municipalities, but as Reykjavik is among the same more than 87 % of the whole population is covered with the LA21 process (<http://www.samband.is/dagskra21/>). As we only have one case from Denmark, respectively Iceland, we are not reporting city level figures in regard to the support situation.

In **Germany**, the LA21 activities were introduced at a rather late date. Since 1994, several governmental and sub-national efforts to support LA21 in Germany have been introduced, but there are still clear regional differences visible, as the 'Bundesländer' are responsible for most of these activities. This is also clearly visible in our data material. Funding for the German LA21 processes seems to be a matter for the local government itself, as well as for the regional government and – surprisingly – also for the private sector involvement in almost half of the 14 German cases. Expertise does, to the contrary, come from all possible sources. From 1997 to 1998 an increase from 100 to 300 active LA21 municipalities and regional authorities is visible, and in 2001 close to 350 municipalities were already involved, according to Econtur (www.econtur.de). This is rather little in percentage terms as respective to all approximately 18,000 local and regional government/authority units, but – following the German tradition of being forerunners in environmental policy – many of these processes are clearly ahead of the average LA21 process in Europe. Many of these LA21 processes are in the largest cities in Germany, and therefore more than 25 % of all Germans lived in the cities affected near the end of the late 1990s (Beuermann 1998, Zimmermann 1997, see also Lokale Agenda 21 im europäischen Vergleich 1999).

1.5. The 'Baltic' LA21 situation

The Baltic countries include, as a geographic region, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. As seen within a political and economical context, Poland and Russian Federation will also be discussed as countries belonging to this group. The overall level of LA21

activity is certainly lower in the rest of this group of 'Baltic' countries. The number of municipalities that are involved in LA21 activities is clearly lower both in the Baltic countries and in Russia and Poland. It is also obvious that the initiation of these projects is, on average, a few years later than in the 'Nordic' countries (see Figure 2). It must be emphasised that there are also clear forerunners among the Baltic cities which easily place themselves among the forerunners in our group of Nordic and German local governments.

A 1998 questionnaire shows (Grönholm and Joas 1999, see also Joas (ed.) 2000) that only four Russian and Baltic member cities in the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC is an organisation with 100 member cities (October 2001) from all 10 countries surrounding the Baltic Sea) network had commenced LA21 work in 1998, but almost half of the 'Baltic' cities in this study planned to do so within a few years. This is, however, much dependent on support from the 'West', as local funding and other support to these processes is almost non-existent, even if there is some limited national funding in Russia, for example (according to their country report). There is a large interest in activities supporting sustainability at the local level (Grönholm and Joas 1999).

Information in regard to the general LA21 situation in the **Russian Federation** is rather limited. An estimation from the Union of Russian Cities suggests that, from the rough total of 2,500 local authorities within the Russian Federation, more than 10 per cent are involved in local level sustainability processes of some kind. Between 100 and 200 of these processes correspond directly to LA21. The overall activity level is, in general, rather high in the areas closer to the Baltic Sea, as they are more aware of the need for this type of action due to the stressed state of the environment and the political pressure from the Nordic countries. Areas around the capital Moscow are also clearly ahead in this respect: for example, one of the better LA21 processes was identified from this region in the LASALA project, the city of Korolev. Most of the processes are activated, funded and conducted by local level efforts, and support from the federal government level has been non-existent. Some limited input has been available through international organisations.

Estonia initiated its work with sustainability policies soon after the re-gained independence in 1991. In 1995, Estonian parliament passed an Act on Sustainable Development, including several of the topics which were included in the original Agenda 21 document. The national implementation was strengthened by coordinated work by several of the administrative bodies within the national administration. This work is led by a politically high-level Commission on Sustainable Development, including 27 members representing the government, various ministries and representatives from the scientific community as well. Even though the Estonian government had plans to finance local and regional Agenda 21 activities according to

their reportage to the Rio process (www.un.org/esa/agenda21), in practice much of these activities are still, in practice, voluntary responsibilities for individual local governments. The existing LA21 processes are initiated as well as funded to a high extent by the local governments themselves. Knowledge and education are received from several sources: for instance, from international organisations and partners, local government central organisations and naturally from within the cities (according to ELL, the Association of Estonian Cities).

Of the total of 247 Estonian local governments, only two have so far finalised LA21 action plans, Tartu and Kuressaare, with internationally acknowledged sustainability processes, but an additional five cities (Pärnu, Viljandi, Jõgeva, Valga, Narva) and two rural municipalities of these at least (Jõgeva and Muhu) are very actively involved in a LA21 process. However, the Association for Estonian Cities (ELL) assumes that a further seven local governments - including the capital of Tallinn - are actually far ahead with similar matters that would be included in a LA21 process. As most large cities are included in these two groups, a majority of the population can be said to live in municipalities with an on-going or freshly initiated LA21 process. There is national backup for LA21, as Estonia has a coordinating national Agenda 21 committee; but according to ELL, the central resources for the local level activities are local. The answers from the participating cities in LASALA and SUFA confirm this to some extent. The input from the local level in regard to both funding and knowledge, seems to be of central importance, but there has also been substantial input from the international level NGOs and national government, as 2 out of the 3 cities involved say that they have actually received funding and expertise from these sources as well.

In **Latvia**, the overall LA21 activity level is rather similar than in Estonia, as about 20 cities or municipalities of the total of 578 local governments are involved in a LA21 process - but only two, Riga and Jūrmala, have managed to finalise a LA21 action plan. A further three cities are working with an individual LA21 process (Rēzekne, Rūjiena and Talsi), and there is also a regional LA21 process in Bârtava which includes 8 smaller municipalities, which has also been internationally recognised. Other sustainability processes, with similar goals but conceivably different means, are further active in 6 cities. Close to half of the Latvian population live in cities that are already included in some form of process aiming at sustainable development - even though the process is at the very beginning. The national backup to these processes is a bit difficult to assess, as the Latvian government has not updated their reportage to the Rio process. There are, however, regional environmental boards which also have duties within sustainable development policies. Nevertheless, in Latvia the local level importance seems to be of very high importance. This is valid both in regard to know-how and funding. The national government has supported, to some extent, only one of the four Latvian LA21 processes present in our data, whereas 3 out of 4 have

received EU and local funding. With respect to expert knowledge, national NGOs – in addition to the funding institutions - have provided some input for the local processes.

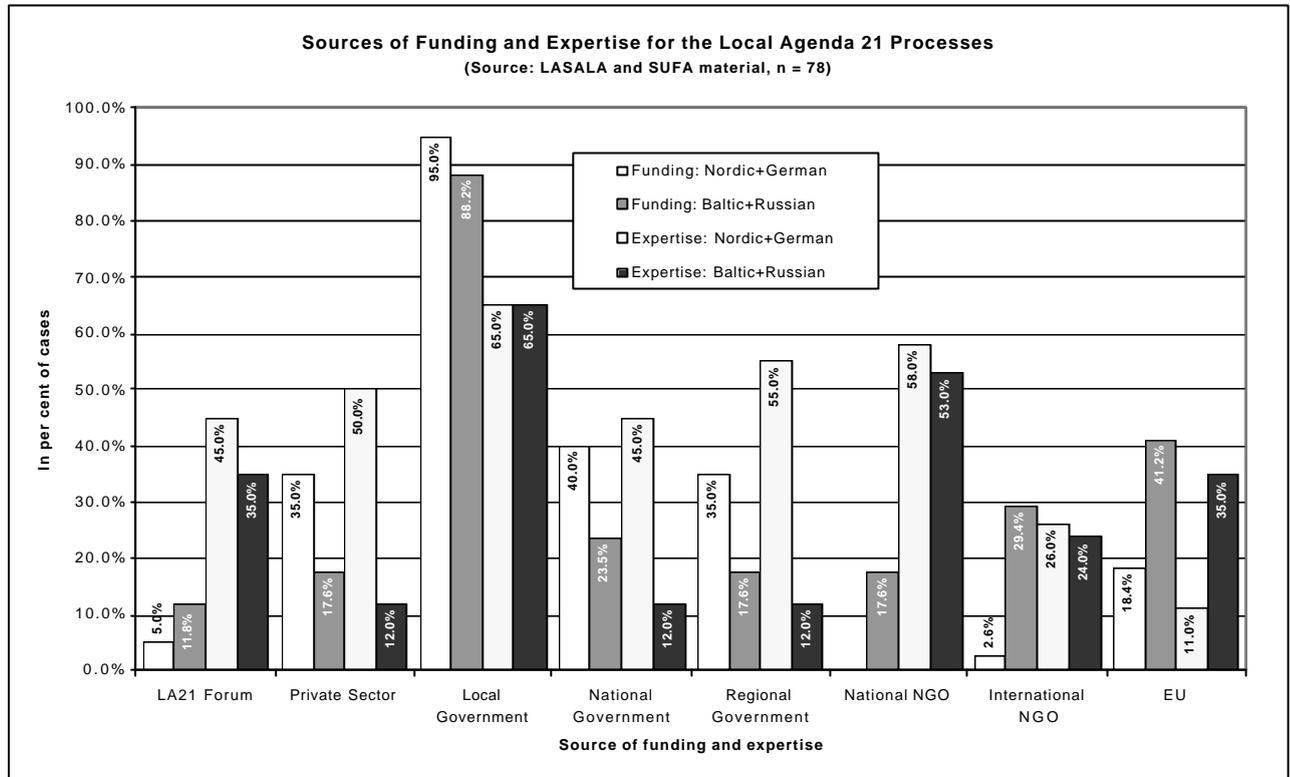


Figure 3: Sources of Funding and Expertise in the LA 21 Processes in the Baltic Area 2001 (SUFA and LASALA database, N = 62).

Of the **Lithuanian** 60 local governments, 16 are involved in an on-going LA21 process. As Lithuanian municipalities are rather large, this means that more than 40 % of the total population live in cities which are involved in a LA21 process. The municipalities in Lithuania have also been the active part, as it is estimated that three out of four LA21 processes are initiated by local initiatives: the importance of international NGOs is, however, visible. There are 4 individual processes: Kaunas and Klaipeda (Phare projects) as well as Panevezys and Visaginas. Furthermore, 12 small or medium sized municipalities are active in the ECAT-Lithuania lead process. Both according to ECAT-Lithuania and our survey data, national as well as regional government backup seems to be almost non-existent. For this reason, the role of the local government is further enhanced. International funding is also limited though clearly visible, and the importance of the NGOs in addition to international agents is further enhanced with respect to expertise. The limited role of the national level can perhaps be explained by the fact that, as late as 1998, Lithuania - while reporting to the Rio process follow-up - lacked a national coordinating body for sustainable development, even if one was under preparation. Nevertheless, steps forward had been taken in regard to individual pieces of legislation.

Poland is very diversified, similarly to the rest of the Baltic area, as regards the LA21 activity level. Even considered on a pan-European level, some of the Polish cities – Gdansk, for example - have already been regarded as forerunners in local sustainability policies for years, and there seems to be a rather active grassroots movement towards further local activities. Since 1994, there has been a national coordinating Committee for Sustainable Development, reformed somewhat in 1997 to also include regional matters. The national level regulation is also rather advanced, as the situation is in all EU member candidate countries by now. Poland stresses the fact in its response to the Rio process that local governments are self-governing also in respect to sustainability issues: they are, for example, preparing local physical development plans of their own. In 1997, the Polish government replied that at least 11 LA21 processes were undertaken in Poland. This is very few from the all in all 2483 municipalities even though many of the active processes are to be found in larger towns and cities. The initiating pushes for further activities lie in the hands of the local governments themselves as supported by international and national NGOs, many of which are environmentally oriented. This is also visible in the 3 case cities from Poland in our material, even though one of the participants had also managed to find some national governmental funding. (For details, see *Lokale Agenda 21 im europäischen Vergleich 1999*).

1.6. Conclusions: Comparing the Baltic and the Nordic situations

It is obvious that the basic backup for local governments to start local Agenda 21 or other similar sustainability processes has been much more advanced in the Nordic group of countries in our selection than in the Baltic group. There are more active LA21 processes in the Nordic group, and these processes have started much earlier (see Figure 2). Since the late 1990s, the difference between Baltic and Nordic countries between the number of starting LA21 or similar processes - though still visible- has gradually become smaller. At the same time, the number of other than LA21 processes aiming at sustainability seems to be generally increasing. The basic difference between the two groups in regard to the backup is that the Baltic LA21 processes are more dependent on international funding and expertise, whereas it seems to be easier for Nordic cases to find governmental funding. Both groups are, however, highly dependent on the local level input pertaining both to expert input and basic funding for the local process (see Figure 3). This is the basic situation on a very superficial level for the local Agenda 21 processes in the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea. There are clear differences between the old EU member countries and the Nordic countries in comparison with the EU candidate countries and Russia. But if, for example, we go into individual LA21 processes and analyse their level of goal achievement, it is not that obvious anymore that the Nordic or western EU processes are that advanced as compared to some of the best Baltic cases. This is evident in the light of our findings in the remaining report.

Chapter 2. Theoretical discussion on success-factors of LA21

Björn Grönholm

We know that the intention with public measures is to take responsibility and complete specific tasks in our society. The tasks are of various kinds. There are both routine-based tasks and tasks that are of an innovative character. In the discussion of public measures, it is usually maintained that the tasks are huge and occasionally highly complicated. When or if the intention is to work with innovative measures, we often assume that the changes we try to accomplish are difficult and long-lasting. Therefore, it is often too easy to say that there are either no changes or only small ones in the routines and measures of the public sector, despite ongoing evaluation and development of the public sector and public administration. It is not an easy task to define public success. It is usually up to the expectations of the municipality, city or unit when they start to evaluate and measure success. The expectations vary, depending a lot on the circumstances and the situation in which the society and the authority work within. If we focus and try to define the local context of a local authority, we can say that the general characteristics of a local authority are; the *size of the local authority, type of population and industry, economical situation of the local authority and political majority* in the local authority (Kettunen, 1996).

2.1. What is success of public administration?

What makes the work and implementation of a political process a success or a failure? As a general goal, we can assume that all public administration units work and try to fulfil its objectives and do a good job. For most public administration units, continuing improvement is or should be the goal. When analysing and trying to define what “success” is, we also approach the question of reasons which influence or exert an impact on possible success. Is there one single reason for success as opposed to failure or are there several factors leading to the anticipated results of the process? Is it the design of the process itself that matters, or is it in the stage of execution, i.e., in the organization of the implementation process where we find the crucial factors or variables which have a decisive influence on the result? Is it the system or the structure, the actors or traditions that lead to good results? According to Bo Rothstein, every program - even if it has a good design - will fail if the implementation phase is controlled by an inappropriate organization (Rothstein, 1998). If there is instability and problems in the organisation, different situations and external circumstances may lead to different results in the end

When we discuss external reasons which might have influence on the work and success of public measures, we must also remember to mention similar internal reasons which influence the outcome of the work and results, especially if the local authority has to deal with the implementation of new ideas or routines, *to implement innovations*. Some local authorities are more sensitive or open to new innovations and

impulses than other local authorities. Some conditions for a local authority must also be fulfilled in order to meet challenges and be able to adopt innovations. Issues that affect the possibilities to adopt innovations are many. The most common or general factors that influence the adoption are either socio-economic in nature or different kinds of resource-oriented factors. We will not venture into these aspects in more detail here.

Instead, we will proceed and try to define what success as this applies to LA21 activities and processes really is. We must take the general as well as specific intentions and goals for Local Agenda 21 activities into consideration in addition to the above mentioned general expectations for public administration measures. As earlier mentioned, we know that the implementation of LA21 is a time-consuming process and that the innovation of LA21 initiatives has been received in various ways from country to country, not to mention the different local authorities.

Environmental problems have been brought into public focus and by this means on to the political agenda via locally bound environmental disasters. It took close to three decades before the importance of the local level in combating environmental problems - especially 'modern' problems with 'new' politics of pollution - was recognised (Albert Weale 1992). The institutionalisation phase of environmental policies in all Western societies remained at the national level for the first two or three decades (Jänicke 1997, Lundqvist 1999). Today, the local level is considered as important as the international level for the general improvement of the state of the environment. The leading idea is naturally *'Think global, act local'* since local decisions exert global impacts (O'Riordan 1996).

2.2. The design of the analysis

The main task for this analysis has been to see what factors have had a strong influence on the success of LA21 processes, i.e., to find success factors. We made assumptions that institutional factors most presumably have a strong impact on success of LA21 processes. In order to make this analysis possible we have to create two variables, a *dependent variable* (a variable that presents the phenomenon we are interested to study – in this case the success of LA21) and an *independent variable* (a variable or variables (in this case institutional factors) we assume have, or will have influence on the phenomenon we are studying). The independent variable(s) can in this study also be seen as the potential success factors.

The analysis will continue by creating an index, representing the success of LA21. The next step is to try the chosen independent variable(s) on the success index, in order to see whether or not we can find a dependence or correlation between this index and the independent (institutional variables) variables. If we find correlation between these two, we can say that we have found some explanation for the success of the LA21

processes involved. If not, we have to proceed and see whether we can find success factors that have been explicitly mentioned by the respondents of the survey. We will continue by presenting the two variables.

2.3. The dependent variable: The result achievement index

The dependent variable (further on; *the result achievement index*) represents the index for success of LA21 processes. We have chosen a number of good LA21 processes and decided to build an index representing information and data on results that these LA21 processes have succeeded to achieve within their process and work. The types of results for the LA21 processes can vary, but they should at least lead to better possibilities in solving sustainable development issues or challenges in the local authority. In order for the results in the result achievement index to be valid for all cases involved in the survey, they must be general and for all LA21 processes important. When building up the index we have been tied by the circumstances and questions in the quantitative database. We have selected topics that meet present information, whether the LA21 process has achieved clear goals with their LA21 process, or not. Our assumption is that the LA21 processes involved in this analysis have reached success to various extents and will therefore receive different points on the result achievement index. The result achievement index and the list of questions that are the basis for the index are presented in more detail in Annex 1.

2.4. The Independent variable: Factors that influence on public administration-related success

There are several factors which can have influence on success as well as on ordinary work routines. Those which have effect in a positive or a negative way are different in terms of their character also with respect to when and where they occur. Factors that may influence the outcome of public administration-related success are, as mentioned, several and of various types. A general division of possible factors tells us that we have system or actor-oriented factors which may influence on the success of public administration. Our assumption is that if we analyze these two different types of influential factors, we find that they are, in a sense, mutually dependent. More concretely, we assume that institutional factors are more important due to the fact that there is invariably a need for rules and regulations to guide the activities. It is therefore conceivable that actor-oriented factors initially have an impact after at least some institutional factors are present to guide the process. In other words actors, individuals or groups can first have an impact after there is some known rule-based guidance or institutional framework built into the society and the local authority. When focusing on institutions, we must mention that we are referring to levels of institutional building. We know that all countries and local authorities involved in this analysis have working institutions, and for this reason we are interested to find out if there are any variations in the level of institutions present.

The starting point in this analysis has therefore been to study or focus on institutional factors or variables either as decisive or as prime factors impacting the success for the LA21 process and the work in local authorities. The institutional factors are important for any kind of organisation and their potential to achieve success. The institutional factors are several, and of course of different types as well. We can divide them into two major types; physical or value-regulated variables. To understand the discussions of institutional factors better, an easy generalisation could be presented as prepared by new institutional researchers in following words: "...to understand the society as a game and institutions as the rules that guide the game" (North 1992, Ostrom 1994 in Hukkinen 1999). A general definition of institutions could therefore explain that institutions are rules, i.e., predefined patterns of conduct which the members of a social group have generally accepted (Berger and Luckmann 1967, Rutherford 1996 in Hukkinen 1999). The institutional rules can be informal rules - such as norms, habits and customs; or formal rules - such as written laws, regulations and standards. The rules apply in a system, in this case in the Nordic as well as Baltic and Polish societies. Environmental institutions are social institutions operating within the regime of environmental policy and administration (Young 1982). When dealing with LA21 processes and progress, we have to focus on formal rules and patterns rather than on informal rules. This is due to the fact that the LA21 activities and related work are regulated by normal national law and standards (Hukkinen 1999), despite the voluntary label the Agenda 21 have for local authorities or similar.

In this analysis, we have decided by reference to the data and the different national and local contexts we have to focus on the following possible independent (explaining or influencing) institutional variables:

- 1. Commitment to the process** (Political commitment to the process and Administrative commitment to the process)
- 2. Resources** (Funding, Personal and Expertise)
- 3. Public participation** (Existence of a LA21 Forum, Active real involvement and broad participation)
- 4. Partnership with other organisations** (Local partnership, National partnership and International partnership)

These institutional factors can be analysed individually or together in an index. The findings concerning the institutional factors are from the descriptive stories the LA21 processes have provided the research team with. These factors are of central importance in any organisation but for us they are interesting for several reasons. First, some of them are expected to be of more crucial importance for countries belonging to the Nordic context (strong support or availability of resources). Secondly, "partnership with other organisations" is expected to have a central role for LA21 processes and actors from the Baltic States and Poland, due to the fact that they have

started their LA21 process later and therefore have the possibility to study and obtain favourable experience. Thirdly, “commitment, political as well as administrative, to the LA21 process” is of major significance for any organisation independent on the local or national context or similar. Fourth, “public participation” is of central importance in the Agenda 21 document. Furthermore, public participation can be seen both as a general goal for the LA21 process and as an important means to enlarge and strengthen the local planning and decision-making process (i.e., a way to succeed with intended tasks and goals).

Different institutional choices are important for success both in public and in private administration processes. It is therefore also obvious that different institutional choices in general environmental management (especially in LA21 organizations) have an effect on how environmental goals are reached within local communities. This connection is especially obvious considering policies of sustainability. LA21 as a tool is important in this respect. However, even if we can find some general institutional success factors which contribute towards successful implementation of LA21 activities, it also can be assumed that these factors are not the same in different political, economical and environmental contexts. Therefore, we find it important to analyse the success factors that lead towards such cases that could be identified as best or at least good LA21 practices within two different contexts – a Nordic and a Baltic. Here we must mention that we are aware that we may also find results of actor-oriented success factors when analysing the data available. The general assumption is that institutional factors have an impact on LA21 success. Finally we can summarise the research questions or the hypothesis as following; “*We assume that institutional factors are more visible or present in Nordic countries than in Baltic – polish countries*”.

Chapter 3. The selection of good LA21 cases for the study **Björn Grönholm and Maria Nordström**

3.1. The goal for selecting LA21 cases

The overall goal for selecting LA21 cases for this study was to find 6 Nordic LA21 cases and a maximum of 18 Baltic LA21 cases. The reason why we chose only 6 Nordic countries is that we assumed from the beginning that the LA21 processes in these countries are more similar to their nature than the LA21 processes in the Baltic countries. These cases were the basis in providing the research group with data for the analysis of LA21 success factors. There are numerous ways of presenting or ranking different types of activities. When studying and analysing LA21 activities we have decided to focus on the process of the LA21 activities in order to find strong LA21 cases. We are interested to study what kind of process the LA21 activities, are in at the moment and how strong the process in itself really is. In this way we can make assumptions on how big the possibility is to succeed with anticipated goals and targets in LA21 work. We also wanted to include different types (size of the city, model of the LA21 process) of cities in the best practice work and look at factors that can influence the work with the LA21 process.

3.2. Description of the selection of good LA21 cases

When evaluating and analysing LA21 activities, as well as any other activity, it is important to clearly state what details the evaluation and the analyses will focus on. These questions are relevant and will also decide on how the whole analysis will look like and what kind of results can come up. In other words, we have to decide what we in detail are about to evaluate and analyse. When studying LA21 activities, there are several possibilities for evaluation. As mentioned earlier, there are challenges in evaluating and especially in comparing LA21 processes, e.g., due to variations in the time for starting the LA21 activities. Therefore, we have decided to focus on issues connected to the process of the LA21 activity (e.g. planning and implementation of the activities). When focusing on the LA21 process itself, the focus is on issues which influence the possibilities of succeeding with the intended actions and not so much on how well or efficiently the goals and targets (ecological and other) have been reached.

We will now proceed to present the model used for selecting good and strong LA21 cases. We decided to use a model that originally has been constructed for the LASALA (Local Authorities' Self Assessment of Local Agenda) –project, in which the intention was to find LA21 Good Practice cases around Europe (Evans, B. & K. Theobald (ed.) 2001 and Grönholm, B., M. Joas & T. Matar (eds.) 2001). The LASALA Good Practice Model had also to be further developed in order to fit better for the purposes and data material available in the SUFA project. We thought that this model best represented the intentions we had in this project.

3.3. Good LA21 cases according to the SUFA Good LA21 Practice Model.

The selection of good and strong LA21 cases had to start based on existing data-material. The material that best met the needs was the UBC member-city questionnaire from 1998. A number of questions were selected from the questionnaire in order to answer the specific question of each criterion. This questionnaire was sent to all members of the Union of the Baltic Cities in 1998 (in 1998 a number of 81, today 100) in order to analyse the situation for LA21 in the Baltic Sea Region. Out of these 81 cities, 59 answered the questionnaire, i.e., a return percentage of 73%. In October 2000, some relevant questions were picked out from the questionnaire and these questions were given new values based on a scale scheme that included 8 different criteria (see Annex 2). The cities got ranked after this scheme and some local sustainability processes were picked out as good practice cases. But as the situation has changed (with LA21 activities in the regions as well as within different LA21 processes) and a lot of work has been done since 1998, we decided it is also important to include other cases not involved in the UBC 1998 questionnaire.

Next, we selected cases according to the scoring they received from the UBC 1998 survey. According to this model, a total number of six Baltic – Polish (Tartu, Liepaja, Riga, Panevezys, Sopot, Elblag) and four Nordic cases (Kolding, Sundsvall, Helsinki, Turku) were selected. This survey was completed two years ago and was therefore incomplete, while changes had happened and some LA21 processes were not running anymore and some new had been initiated.

3.4. Selecting further LA21 cases

The following step was to find good and strong LA21 cases to complement the list of study cases. One intention was also to find different types of LA21 cases and cities and this aspect had to be taken into account. We contacted persons with relevant information about the national situation of LA21 from the countries involved. According to the discussions, the following cities and LA21 processes were contacted: a total of 20 cities in the Baltic Sea Region. Twelve cities and LA21 processes from the Baltic countries and Poland and eight from the Nordic countries.

3.5. Analysis of the material and data received

Our intent was to involve all of these cities in writing a story about their LA21 process. As a base for this, the cities received some important questions and issues to address in their stories, otherwise they had free hands on how to write it (see annex 3). As a helping tool for the analyses of the cases, we also asked them to answer a questionnaire with basic information. Because of the voluntary nature of this project, it has not been easy to get the cities involved in the project. The language issue has proved to be one obstacle that has made the implementation of the project more difficult. In a few cases, we have relied on outside translation help. Another obstacle has been the workload. To write the framework story took some time, while we

wanted the stories to be as extensive as possible. It is important to mention that we are limited to material and resources available to us. This means that even though the cases picked out as good practice cases are strong, other cases or cities could come in question as well. We would like to point out that the intention with the presentation of the good practice cases is more of an educative and informative matter, rather than ranking or appointing the “best LA21 cities in the region”. We therefore hope that other cities, as well as the cities involved, will get some new ideas on how to implement LA21 in their region and find new ways to do so through the framework stories and this report on success factors of LA21.

A total of 16 cities or LA21 processes responded to the SUFA questionnaire. From the list of selected LA21 processes, some were obliged to inform that they did not have the possibilities to carry through the tasks needed in the SUFA project and therefore could not participate in the success factor or analysis section. The final LA21 cases involved in the analysis are: *Tartu (Estonia), Liepaja, Riga and Jurmala (Latvia), Panevezys, Alitus and Varena (Lithuania), Sopot, Elblag and Gdansk (Poland), Sundsvall, Botkyrka and Malmö (Sweden), Lahti, Turku and the Åland Island (Finland).*

Chapter 4: Empirical findings, an analysis of Success-factors **Björn Grönholm and Maria Nordström**

4.1. Introduction

Six cities or LA21 processes from the Nordic countries as well as ten cities or LA21 processes from the Baltic countries and Poland have now written a descriptive story about their own LA21 process and work. It is important to consider that the representatives from each city had relatively free hands in writing their accounts: therefore, they are all very different in terms of content and style. In addition to these descriptive stories, they also had to complete a quantitative questionnaire involving basic data about the city and their LA21 process.

When studying the stories written by the participating cities, the first thing that springs to attention is how different these stories are. Even though the cities were given some specific questions to work with, the emphasis on issues important to the LA21 process varies quite a bit. Some cities emphasize the practical actions which have been carried out within the environmental field, others hold partnerships with various stakeholders as more important for their process. The fact that the accounts are so different makes the work and analysis of them same at the time both more interesting and more challenging and difficult. In one way, it is interesting because we can see the personal input the cities have applied within the frames of the LA21 process makes it difficult as it is harder to compare the stories on a common basis. It could be that some institutional factors we have studied have not been mentioned or emphasized in the stories, even though they exist. These are all issues that should be considered when reading this chapter. The stories are presented in Chapter 5. As mentioned previously, we decided to focus on institutional factors those we see as important for the work with new innovative, challenging and durable processes. The institutional factors we have decided to study more closely, as they have a relevant role for developing an LA21 process, are the following: *Resources*, *Commitment*, *Public participation* and *Partnerships*. The first step in the analysis phase has been to find out whether or not there is a relation between result achievement and the institutional factors we have chosen for this analysis.

4.2. Correlation between the “Result achievement index” and institutional factors

The first step will be to present the findings of the points for the “result achievement index” (see p.15). Of the sixteen LA21 processes, thirteen responded and provided the research team with the quantitative questionnaire. This means that even though not every city responded on the questionnaire, we have received replies from all countries involved. The following table shows the results achievement index and the single LA21 result achievement points.

| LA21 process | Country | Result achievement points |
|---|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Botkyrka | Sweden | 14 |
| Malmö | Sweden | 10 |
| Sundsvall | Sweden | 25 |
| Lahti | Finland | 25 |
| Åland Islands | Finland | 8 |
| Varsinais-Suomen LA21 (Region of Turku) | Finland | 19 |
| Tartu | Estonia | 18 |
| Jurmala | Latvia | Data missing |
| Liepaja | Latvia | 11 |
| Riga | Latvia | 8 |
| Alytus | Lithuania | 18 |
| Panevezys | Lithuania | Data missing |
| Varena | Lithuania | 7 |
| Elblag | Poland | Data missing |
| Gdansk | Poland | 20 |
| Sopot | Poland | 26 |

Table: 2. Results according to the “Result achievement index” (n = 13, missing = 3)

Table 2 shows that there is variation from one case to another in terms of result achievement. There is variation on the one hand between the Nordic and the Baltic-Polish context, and on the other between the different cases within the two regional contexts. The following step will be to see whether we can find any correlation between the result achievement index and the institutional factors.

The correlation analysis involving the “result achievement index” and the institutional factors did not give us the expected results. No correlation was found between either of the institutional factors present. Neither if we calculate all institutional factors together can find correlation. In our hypothesis, we expected for example, that there is a correlation between what a LA21 process achieves and the presence of institutional factors. Our expectation was that the higher score you get on the “result achievement index”, the more there should be institutional factors present. At any rate, these could not be found and therefore verified by the correlation analysis. According to this result we have to say that we could not find an explanation between success of LA21 processes (the result achievement index) and the existence of institutional factors. In a way this is surprising, while we expected to find this correlation and while we know that there is some variation both on the dependent and the independent variable.

The reasons for not finding an expected correlation can be many and, of course, may derive from various reasons. One reason is that the small number of cases did not give us material and variation enough for a correlation analysis. In particular, the independent variables (institutional factors) do exist, according to the answers, to a very similar extent. Another perhaps more likely reason, is that institution building among the Baltic and Polish cities involved is very close to the situation among the

Nordic cities involved, at least for the cities which are involved in this survey and have started a LA21 process.

In order to illustrate the situation in another way we will present a cross tabulation based on the data and show the following picture on how the cases are divided into four groups according to the level of institutional factors present and the scoring according to the *Result achievement index*.

| | | Institutional factors present | |
|--|------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| | | Low | High |
| Scoring according to the Result achievement index | Low | 2 | 4 |
| | High | 3 | 4 |

Table 3: Cross tabulation, *presence of institutional factors* and scoring according to the *Result achievement index* (cases n= 13)

As we notice there are no bigger differences between the different groups that could show us any additional trends or explanations on the correlation analysis above. When we studied the groups more closely, we did not find any variations between the Nordic and the Baltic-Polish cases and in which group they are located. Both the Nordic and the Baltic-Polish cases are divided equally between the four groups.

While the correlation analysis does not give us clear and satisfying answers, we have to go into more detail with the texts and descriptions made by the LA21 coordinators. There is variation between the LA21 cases and what have been mentioned as success factors, at least according to each of the involved LA21 processes and the coordinators in the survey. We must now continue by analysing the cases more individually and finding out what they have presented as important factors of success for their own LA21 process. We have proceeded to analyse the descriptive texts of the LA21 processes and see what they have mentioned as success factors for their own LA21 process. The data and information are based on a matrix we have made in which all these factors are presented. The matrix is divided into two categories, depending on which factors of success are mentioned in the texts. The scale or alternative points for the analyse of the texts are:

- 0 = the factor have had no impact on the process, according to the respondent (LA21 coordinator or similar).
- 1 = the factor is mentioned in their LA21 process by the respondent.

From the following table, we can see how many cities in these various contexts have defined the following factors to exert an impact on the process. The matrix below shows which above-mentioned factors have been mentioned or pointed out in the descriptive stories by the LA21 processes. In the table, mean values are presented and the scale range from 0 to 1 as depending on the above-mentioned scale (see also Annex 4.).

| | Nordic Mean value | Baltic-Polish Mean value | All Mean value |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Commitment | | | |
| Political commitment | 1.00 | 0.80 | 0.88 |
| Adm. commitment | 0.83 | 0.30 | 0.50 |
| Resources or support | | | |
| Funding | 0.67 | 0.30 | 0.44 |
| Personnel | 0.83 | 0.40 | 0.56 |
| Know-how | - | 0.06 | 0.06 |
| Public participation | | | |
| LA21 forum | 0.17 | 0.20 | 0.19 |
| Active real involvement | 0.17 | 0.20 | 0.19 |
| Broad participation | 0.50 | 0.80 | 0.69 |
| Partnership | | | |
| Local partnership | 1.00 | 0.50 | 0.69 |
| National partnership | 0.50 | 0.40 | 0.44 |
| International partnership | 0.50 | 0.80 | 0.69 |

Table 4. Mean values of institutional factors

When studying the matrix, we can notice no clear differences between the Baltic-Polish context and that respective to the Nordic. The highest mean value in the Nordic context is found in regard to political commitment and local partnership (mean 1.00 of 1.00 possible), while the highest mean value in the Baltic-Polish context is found in political commitment (mean 0.80), broad participation (mean 0.80) and international partnership (mean 0.80). We can, however, find the existence of some more institutional factors in the Nordic context in general. As we can see from the table above, one difference between the contexts lies in *partnership*. The Nordic countries participate more with local partners than the Baltic and Polish LA21 cases (mean 1.00 to 0.50) do, and the Baltic countries see international partnership as important (mean 0.80 to 0.50). There are also a few other interesting findings and some differences between the Nordic countries compared with the Baltic countries and Poland. According to the material, the Nordic countries have more funding, personnel and administrative commitment behind their process, whereas the Baltic countries and Poland alternatively appear to stress the importance of raising awareness and motivation for the process. These results were also expected.

4.3. Findings on individual institutional factors

Commitment

Both the Nordic and the Baltic-Polish contexts consider the political commitment to have a strong impact on the process (mean 1.00 and 0.80). The Baltic-Polish context put more emphasis on political than on administrative commitment (mean 0.80 to 0.30) e.g., they consider political commitment to have a stronger impact on their LA21 process. Three out of ten of the Baltic LA21 cases also have explicitly mentioned in their texts that the political commitment has been a success factor for them, while only one Nordic LA21 case has mentioned the same. One possible reason is that political influence (power) in development and success in the public sector has been much more important and crucial. For succeeding or even starting a LA21 process, political commitment has subsequently been demanded. In the Nordic context, both political commitment and the administrative commitment variables are considered equally important to the process. This also reflects our expectations: while the administration in the Nordic countries is relatively strong, both types of commitment are required in order to proceed with the initiatives.

Resources

The majority of the cities in the Nordic context consider resources, such as funding (mean 0.67) and personnel (mean 0.83), as important factors in a successful process. At any rate, in comparison to the commitment factor, the resource factor has not been seen as an equally important success factor than political or administrative commitment. In five of the six Nordic cities, we can find personnel as an existing variable in the matrix. In most of the Nordic cases, the local authority supports the LA21 process with full-time and in other cases part-time personnel. The personnel issue is important in the Baltic-Polish context as well (mean 0.40), but on the basis of the stories, we can see that only a few of the participating cities have resources in terms of personnel working with LA21. In the situation with funding as a success factor for LA21 processes, we find the situation more or less similar in both the Nordic and the Baltic-Polish context. Some cities have mentioned funding as playing an important role for the process, but the majority have not mentioned funding as a decisive role for the success of LA21 work. Perhaps we could say that funding is important, but success is not assured because of this alone: something more is needed to contribute to the success of the process. According to those involved in this survey, funding, for instance, is not regarded as an equally important success factor to the process as political commitment in particular.

Participation

When analysing LA21 activities, the focus is easily on participation issues, as perhaps one of the main focuses in the Agenda 21 document stresses participation as an important part of sustainable development. In this analysis, we are interested in seeing if matters of participation have played a role in the success of the LA21 work in cities.

The findings in this survey do not, however, provide us with indications that participation promoting initiatives or systems have taken place, not to mention having any significance as a success factor. We studied three issues more closely; existence of a LA21 forum, active real involvement by actors and the existence of broad participation in the LA21 process. LA21 Forums actually exist only in some of the cases involved, and have not maintained a crucial role (mean 0.17 and 0.20). Neither has active real involvement by actors played a role as a success factor (mean 0.17 and 0.20). The broad participation variable enjoys the highest mean value of these three factors when analysing participation (mean 0.50 and 0.80). Broad participation, in any case, is not considered to be an equally important factor as commitment to the LA21 process, existence of resources or partnership building for succeeding with LA21 processes.

Partnership

When studying the issue of partnership and comparing local and national partnership, we notice that all the Nordic cities emphasize local partnership, some supporting the idea that it would also have a strong impact on the LA21 process. Two out of six Nordic LA21 cases have mentioned Local partnership as a success factor for their LA21 process. Local partnership receives the highest mean value, together with political commitment, among the institutional factors involved in this analysis (mean 1.00) for the Nordic context. In the Baltic-Polish context, international partnership (mean 0.80) has been mentioned in more cases than local partnership (mean 0.50). Nevertheless, there are some cities in the Baltic that have mentioned local partnership, even emphasizing it quite strongly. For example, two out of ten Baltic LA21 cases have mentioned local partnership as a success factor for them. As we can see, the difference between local and international partnership and between the two contexts is not that evident. The main difference within the issue of partnership would be the national partnership. Not many cities in either of the contexts have mentioned national partnership as a source of influence in the process. To summarize the findings concerning partnership, we can say that LA21 processes in the Nordic context emphasize mostly local partnerships as important for their work and success, whereas the Baltic and Polish LA21 processes has emphasized more international partnerships. The perhaps most probable reason for this trend or pattern can be explained by the fact that the Nordic LA21 cases started earlier (between 1993 – 1997), while the Baltic and Polish LA21 cases have initiated their LA21 work later and therefore have both had the possibility as well as received the request to be in contact with other cities and LA21 processes: e.g., to gain experiences and ideas for the start-up, need and management of LA21 work.

4.4. Other factors influencing the success of the LA21 process

In the previous chapter, we presented findings concerning institutional factors. We explained that institutional factors are structural or system-oriented factors which exert and influence on practice as well as on the possibilities to carry on work and processes, e.g., LA21 processes. When we analysed the texts and searched for findings on institutional factors, other issues or factors also became evident. These findings are of a different nature and are specifically more actor-oriented or actor-specific factors. Though these are not of direct interest within our analysis, we also find them important to mention in this study on finding success factors applicable to LA21 work and related processes.

From the table below, we can observe which other factors we have found together with their mean values. Keeping in mind that the maximum value is 1, we notice that these factors are represented in the stories but are not highly emphasized.

| Other variables mentioned | Nordic Mean value | Baltic-Polish Mean value | All Mean value |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Personal impact | 0.33 | 0.40 | 0.38 |
| Integrated approach measures | 0.33 | 0.10 | 0.19 |
| Continuing funding secured | 0.17 | 0.10 | 0.13 |
| Good LA21 action plan | 0.33 | 0.30 | 0.31 |
| Practical results of LA21 work | 0.33 | 0.20 | 0.25 |

Table: 5. Mean values of other success factors (scale 0 – 1)

Personal impact and motivation

Personal impact and motivation as engendered by the LA21 process are seen as equally important in the Nordic and the Baltic- Polish contexts. In both cases, two cities (2/6 in the Nordic context, 2/10 in the Baltic-Polish context) have emphasized these factors as having a strong impact on the process. One example that the cities have given in their stories is the importance of motivated personnel, one or a few people who are especially interested in the process and who motivate others to join the ongoing work with the process - to get as many groups of people as possible involved in voluntary work within the process and for them to exchange ideas. The interest and knowledge about LA21 grows from there.

A good LA21 action plan

It is important to have a strong and favourable action plan within the process. The main matter of importance is to be able to work with the plan in practice. It is, for instance, important to be able to implement and reach people through various campaigns which are planned within the frames of the action plan. Another factor that makes an action plan strong is the existence of financial support to some extent, this securing the LA21 process in the future and making the action plan look more reliable.

Integrated approach

We can find an integrated approach in the Nordic context in particular. The integrated approach calls both for experience within LA21 work and in sustainable development, and is time-consuming. It is a factor that does not necessarily exist right from the beginning, but can enter the process at a later stage. The cities which have emphasized this factor mention, as an example, the success achieved in involving different departments and areas and even companies that have been actively involved in implementing different LA21 venues. The key is to get more and more people involved in the process, and with that, the awareness and motivation for sustainable development grows.

As we are able to notice, one of the key issues with these actor-oriented factors is the involvement of people and encouraging their motivation to grow, in addition to them becoming aware of the LA21 process and the work with sustainable development. However, we would still like to mention once again that in order to have these factors represented in a LA21 process, the existence of institutional factors also has to be a reality. There has to be a structural framework (commitment, resources, partnership etc.) before the more personally influenced factors can become relevant.

4.5. Conclusions

The situation in the Baltic Sea Region has developed rapidly during the last ten years in all countries and in all sectors of our societies. When analysing issues that involve one or several of the ten countries around the Baltic Sea, it is important to remember the reality these countries live in. All countries are different from each other but are also very similar at the same time. They are on different development levels but deal with the same or with similar questions. The outcome, as well as the way actors carry on with work topics, is different from each other, but we usually find very logical reasons for these variations in traditions and culture active within the region. When dealing with environmental matters it is also important to remember that these issues are rather new for all involved. This fact put some additional tension on the expectations of the results of the work. The ability as well as the competence of applying new innovations varies a lot from actor to actor, due heavily to the facts mentioned above.

The task for this analysis was to find out what the possible success factors of working with LA21 processes have been in the Baltic Sea region. We assumed at the beginning that there are variations in how the LA21 has worked and the matters which have exerted influence on their possible success as opposed to failure. We also assumed that there are various possibilities to succeed, depending on the level of existing institutional factors. During the duration of the project, we have learned a lot. Many of the observations have been positive - not because we could verify our assumptions or hypothesis, but because we can once again see that the differences between the

countries in the Baltic Sea region are no longer as substantial as they used to be. The integration of the region is developing in a positive manner.

As a general comment, it is worth mentioning that the LA21 processes and LA21 work in general are probably not yet familiar with evaluating and analysing their own work systematically. This does not apply to every LA21 process or just a specific country. Our feeling is that those who work with LA21 processes are fully occupied with meeting the main goals and targets and therefore have not yet been involved in evaluating the process and goal achievements.

What do we conclude in regard to the potential Success factors particular to LA21 activities? We assumed that institutional factors, such as structures and systems, would more or less automatically lead to progress and success if such were present. We also assumed that institutional factors would be more important than actor-specific factors. We therefore decided to focus on finding and evaluating the institutional factors. The findings in this analysis do, however, tell us that the variations amongst the LA21 cases in the countries involved are much smaller than we were able to expect - and the same goes for the level of institutional building amongst the LA21 cases involved.

Naturally, we also identified differences between the cases from the same context. Based on our findings, we could not find one or two clear success factors which worked for all. The strongest frequency was found with respect to the commitment factor. Administrative and, in particular, political commitment have, according to the respondents, been the factors which turned out to be important for most of the processes, but not for all. The fact that political commitment emerged as the most frequently mentioned success factor is not surprising. That the importance of political commitment has been mentioned in the answers by the respondents (usually LA21 coordinators or similar) communicates to us that the issue of LA21 has been taken seriously and that the matter has been decided on the top level in the local authorities. This is also one of the goals of the Agenda 21 document and the whole sustainable development process. Political commitment opens other important and vital doors for the process, e.g., funding and cooperation opportunities. Of the other institutional factors we had listed in the analysis, none emerged as having very high impact. Partnerships on the local level in the Nordic countries and international partnership in the Baltic and Polish LA21 cases seem to have been important for the respective LA21 processes involved. One clear reason why the international partnership has reached such a strong position among the Baltic and Polish LA21 cases (except for the rather late start of the LA21 process in general) might be the existence of the UBC network. For several years, the network has provided the member cities with information, models and experiences, also in regard to LA21 matters. A natural and easily reachable cooperation partner or channel does therefore exist to assist cities initiating or developing sustainable development processes.

The fact that we did not find any single clear institutional success factor does not mean that institutional factors have not been crucial or important. According to the material, we have not found evidence that point out actor-specific factors as more important success factors than institutional factors. Two factors came up frequently among the actor specific factors, namely the personal impact of the process and the importance of having a good LA21 action plan. These two findings were expected due to the fact that the process and work with LA21 matters is voluntary and not tied to a specific way of acting or model.

The material and the results of this survey are in many respects interesting and give us thoughts to proceed with. Our common feeling is that there is still a lot to be found and explained when it comes to the work with the LA21 process. In this survey we had to elaborate with a rather small number of LA21 cases. In further studies we know that we need to increase the number of LA21 cases in order to find a more clear difference between the LA21 cases and countries involved.

Finally, the LA21 processes which were involved in this analysis (as in conceivably all other LA21 processes as well) are highly varied. They are different in terms of the timeframe for starting the process, the reasons for starting it and with respect to who launched the process. The organisation and management differ as well as the resources available not to mention motivation. Because the process with LA21 is voluntary, we can easily figure out that the outcome will look slightly different from city to city. Some important issues or factors are, however, always present. These have been presented in the report and should not be forgotten when planning any kind of process - LA21 or other. Most important is however to start the process of reaching sustainable development; you organise or do it as you best see it for your city and according to your circumstances – let all flowers grow and flourish!

Chapter 5: Case Presentation

Next we present the participants of the SUFA project and their stories about their LA21 processes. The cities got a framework (see annex 3) with some questions to answer while writing the stories; otherwise they had free hands in writing them. The stories are edited and rewritten to some extent due to practical reasons, but we have tried to preserve some of the original texts as well.

5.1. Alytus City Municipality, Lithuania Preparation of Strategy of City Development and Territorial (Master) Plan According to the Principles of Sustainable Development.

1. Basic information:

Alytus is the largest city in the South of Lithuania and stretches out on picturesque green hills and valleys covering an area of 3920.8 ha about 113 meters above the sea level. Alytus is rightfully considered to be a cultural, economic and administrative centre and is often referred to as the capital of Dzūkija. It is supposed the name Alytus originated from its location – the confluence of the spring Alytus and the River Nemunas. Though the first documented reference to Alytus dates back to 1377, people already lived in that territory in the beginning of our era. The Nemunas River divided Alytus into two parts, the rural area on the left shore and the little town on the right shore, until after the 20th century.

At the beginning of 1999 Alytus was the sixth largest city in Lithuania with 77 520 inhabitants. Of the total, 46.7% are men, and 53.3% are women. Ethnic composition: of 94.7% - Lithuanian, 2.8% - Russian, 0.7% - Polish, 0.7% - Ukrainian, and 1.1% - other. The city of Alytus covers an area of 3943 ha, of which 33.3% are constructed areas, 6.1% industrial companies and roads, 9.1% agricultural lands, 33.3% green areas, 3% water bodies and 15.2% areas other designation. The major city industrial enterprises are involved in food industry (35%), textile (25%), mechanical engineering (23%) and equipment for wood processing. The major enterprises of the town of Alytus export most of their production to the countries of Western Europe. 84% of textile production is exported to Italy, Sweden and Germany, 15% of food products go to Poland, the Netherlands, and Latvia, and 76% of machinery equipment, to Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Bulgaria. 46.2% of the whole city's production is exported to the EU countries (compared to only 26% of Lithuania's total exports to the EU). 15.4% of the Alytus city's production is exported to Latvia.

Biggest challenges

The town lives a big recession after the Russian economical crisis and the unemployment rate is 13,7 % with a tendency to grow. The living standards of the citizens in general are rather low, the town has a lot of social problems: the population is decreasing because of higher death rates than birth rates. The town is not able to attract new investors, because it cannot suggest better conditions in comparison to other Lithuania cities. There is lack of information about the town in general.

The city is experiencing transport policy problems; the town has not got a good railway connection and it is necessary to build a new bridge over Nemunas river.

There is a lack of well-educated people (particularly managers, leaders), the town is not attractive for young people.

The environmental situation in the municipality

Soil and the upper ground layer are contaminated in the city, especially in industrial areas and around lake Dailide. Heavy metals concentrations in soil and oil products content in some industrial areas are beyond highest permissible levels. Heavy metals concentrations in soil exceeding background concentrations are found even outside the territories of these companies.

Year 2000 in Alytus 36 000 t of wastes and 670 t hazardous wastes were generated. Prohibited and old pesticides and chemicals represent a specific problem. 300 t of hospital waste after disinfections are taken to domestic waste dumping sites together with other domestic wastes. Among the most contaminated areas are those around old dumping sites and around oil storage where petroleum hydrocarbons are leaking from corroded oil tanks belonging to the Soviet army. Contaminants spread over the territory of more than 400 thousand m². It has been calculated that about 2075 tons of light hydrocarbons penetrated into subsurface.

2. Type of LA21 process:

What enablers do you see as important for a LA21 process?

Sufficient *motivation* for the LA 21 process; it helps in finding the solution for the difficult economical situation in the city.

Total *support, commitment* and *participation* from city politicians.

Political need and *request* for such activity.

Personal interest and *co-operation* among civil servants of the municipality.

Financial support from municipalities budget for city development Planning.

Participation of ECAT *consultants* in the process.

Sufficient amount of *information* and *technical conditions* for civil servants.

Interest from citizens' side and active social movement.

The beginning of the process

The process of Local Agenda 21 started in 1998, when it was agreed to start the preparation of documents of the City Strategy Plan. The LA21 process was initiated by the Municipality's civil servants and particularly environmentalists.

Activities

The process planning started in 1999. It was methodically supported by Jönköping Region (Sweden). The decision to elaborate the Sustainable Development Plan arrived from the necessity to integrate problems from different fields and to find appropriate solutions from all interest groups.

ECAT- Lithuania suggested participation in the "Local Agenda for small and medium size municipalities in Lithuania" project and in 2000 we were working in the ECAT-Lithuania project, looking for more information, participated in the education program for politicians and municipality workers, trying to be acquainted with experience of other countries. In 2000 Alytus signed the twinning agreement with Botkyrka Municipality (Sweden) and started active co-operation in the field of environmental protection and sustainable development. The city development visions and environmental policy structure was approved by the City Council in 2001. At the moment we are reviewing and evaluating the experiences of the LA 21 process as well as discussing on how to integrate the sustainable development principles to the City strategic development plan. We are also preparing projects, which could finance more active community involvement to the municipality activity.

Future plans

Our future plans are:

To get acquainted with Botkyrka Municipality (Sweden) and their experience with the incorporation of the sustainable development process into the city policy.

To evaluate the present situation and experience and to continue the started city planning process.

To suggest for Association of Local Authorities and state institutions to prepare methodology for municipalities.

To participate in ECAT- Lithuania LA21 project for better education of sustainable development.

Level of activity

In the preparation of Strategic Plan for City sustainable development were participating:

- The Core Workgroup consisting of 25 persons – representatives from municipality administration and NGO's.

- Each representative is participating in a Core Workgroup according to his or her interests and field of activities have created its thematic workgroup. These Thematic workgroups consist of about 150 people, which are representing various social groups, businesses and etc.

- The co-ordination group, consisting of 5 persons, which are formulating the suggestions for sustainable development plan.

It was ordered scientific - research works in different institutes and other scientific organisations for preparation of studies in small and medium size business area, heating supply, water and waste management, and social services implementation.

Level of participation

Participation of NGO's and communities is still on a very low level.

Organizational planning

It was agreed to have several forms of activities in the LA 21 process: Permanent working groups, employing consultancy organizations and institutes. Involving volunteers from NGO's. The problem is a co-ordination and combination of the work of all mentioned groups.

Cooperation patterns.

The active exchange of the experience and information with other municipalities occurred during the project "Local Agenda for small and medium municipalities". Municipalities had quarterly meetings to discuss and compare the project progress.

3. Special character of the LA21 process

Strengths:

There are a lot of economical, social and environmental problems in the city, which need solutions and actions. This is the strongest motivation to look for the best solutions.

A big need of new standpoints, ideas and inspirations. Propitious viewpoint of city politicians to the sustainable development process in municipality. Good co-operation between municipality administration departments. Efficient operation of working groups. High enough the qualification of administration specialists.

Weaknesses:

The state doesn't support the process of sustainable development in Lithuanian municipalities. Very pure LA21 methodical and information basis in Lithuania. There is no possibilities for municipality

workers to allocate the sufficient amount of the time for LA21 work, there are no people working with the LA21 project only. There is lack of financial support from local government for better LA 21 development and improvement. Informational and lingual barriers in communication with foreign municipalities. Weak intercommunication with community. Lack of traditions of civil society, low activity of the community.

Successes:

The environmental protection policy and the Plan for implementation of the environmental priorities were approved. The Alytus City Council was one of the first in Lithuania to sign the Charter of European Cities and Towns Towards Sustainability (the Aalborg Charter). The discussion about the Aalborg Charter in the Council Meeting was a momentum in awareness rising among the politicians. The City Council members and political parties understood what values should be in their daily work and what problems Alytus has now and what solutions are needed.

Failures:

It was rather difficult to establish proper communication with city community.
The municipality does not have a reliable citizens' opinion about ongoing processes in the city.
Lack of experience and information.
The wish to get quick and tangible results.

Political control

Intermediate reports are regularly presented for City Council comities. The comments from Council members and politicians were discussed in working groups.

Level of public awareness of the LA21 process

The LA 21 project was presented to the city community, several articles were published about LA21 activities, but more information is still needed.

Anecdotes:

What was extremely relevant – the study trips to the other countries. It changed some people in a short time from opponents to Agenda supporters and promoters.

The work with LA21 is challenging and needs very often to be completed after working hour. The 12 municipalities in Lithuania who have been participating in ECAT projects can be called “LA21 volunteers”.

4. Contact information:

Algirdas Reipas
Head of Environmental Department
Reipas.algirdas@ams.lt

5.2. Botkyrka, Sweden

Agenda 21, a sustainable development in the Municipality of Botkyrka.

1. Basic information:

Botkyrka is situated 25 km south of Stockholm, in the County of Stockholm. There are 73.000 inhabitants in Botkyrka. Botkyrka covers 197 square kilometres from Lake Mälaren in the north to the Baltic Sea in the south. Major industries are Alfa Laval and Tumba Bruk, a paper mill and printing shop and the place where the Swedish money and lotteries are produced and printed. Many inhabitants in Botkyrka come from other countries, at school there are 93 languages spoken. The average age of the population is 35 years, a young municipal by comparison.

Biggest challenges

Many inhabitants in Botkyrka have their origin in other countries. Issues of integration and democracy are high on the agenda. We have a relatively young population, the average age is 35 years, and also education is given priority.

Biggest environmental challenges

Pollution from traffic, The E20, E4 are passing through the municipal, near dense populated areas. Biological diversity in the old cultivated landscape and in the forests. Conflict between exploitation interests and nature reserve interests since the population in the municipal is increasing.

2. Type of LA21 process:

Enablers

Support from the Local council and executive board and to integrate the LA21 in the administration as a whole.

The beginning of the process

The start in 1995, decided on in 1997 by the local council. Sent for consideration in between to different stakeholders, also to private persons in form of advertising in papers asking for views and ideas. The process started with a governmental grant for involving a township in Botkyrka into the LA21 process. The initiative came from a politician, Chairman of the Environmental Board, also a member of the Executive Committee.

Activities

The executive Board issued 61 assignments, based on the LA21 document addressed to all municipal departments and companies. There has been a "midterm" audit of these assignments. One of the assignments is that the whole administration shall implement an environmental management system based on ISO 14001. This has shown to be a very good tool in increasing the environmental competence, and also the environmental awareness. Support is also given to private companies that wish to implement this system. Every year there is an exhibition in the town centres of what has been achieved for the environment. The administration also takes part in other exhibitions to inform our inhabitants of these issues.

There has been a survey on the inhabitant environmental behaviour and attitudes. It has been performed two times, in three townships and two schools. The survey is very comprehensive and has been performed 1995, 1998 and will be done in the autumn 2001.

Special effort and support is put to the education system, since we believe it is the children and young people that are able to make a difference for sustainable development. Co-operation with high school has started to create a higher education for pedagogues in order to improve the education in sustainable development, and give them didactic means for this. The education will start in September 2001.

Nature tracks have been established close to 34 schools and kindergartens. These tracks can be used in the teaching of many subjects like language and mathematics, as well as in science. The tracks consist of 20-25 "stations" where the pupils can learn, sing or play. There is a special material for songs, tales and instructions for the teacher, and also a map over the track.

The municipal also has an "Eco-bus" that is used mainly to educate children in the fifth grade. The bus has been rolling since 1989. A lot of our environmental work started before LA21.

The Education Board has put environmental and health as one out of four special developing areas where extra effort must be made. The Swedish Board of Education has issued a national regulation with criteria to get an environmental diploma. The schools of Botkyrka are working for achieving this diploma.

Future plans

There will be an audit of Agenda 21 in June/July 2001, by the environmental auditor. After that starts the process of taking forth a new LA21. This time we will try to implement social and economic issues to a higher extent.

All municipal departments and companies shall live up to the criteria for the internal management system before 2003. Those that succeed get a diploma that is time limited. Within this management system the working unit sets its own environmental goals and targets. A new survey will be made 2001 on behaviour and attitudes of the inhabitants. A high-school education for teachers starts September 2001. A nature database as a tool for education of sustainable development will be founded. Financed by the Boards of Environment and Education. Will be finished in year 2003. More exhibitions in the town centres!

Level of activity

The environmental department has two persons working full time with implementing LA21 within the organisation and out in the community. Each department and municipal company has one person in each management group, who is responsible for the EMS and LA21 in their department/administration. These people form a network that meets two times a year.

In order to implement the EMS a number of students have written environmental reviews in the different units within the municipal administration. This has been done in 43 kindergartens, 6 schools, 2 central administrative departments, the social department and the department for care of old and handicapped persons. This is the first step in implementing the EMS, and it takes some time. We have found that the municipal organisation itself has neither knowledge nor time to make these reviews. It is also a cheap way for the municipal to have this done, and it also benefits the students. This review is essential to have in order to make it possible for the unit/department to set relevant goals and targets for the future. It helps the organisation to start up the work.

The environmental and education departments have made joint applications to state organs for funding, for instance for the mentioned high school education for teachers, and for establishing the nature tracks. Since the municipal budget does not allow these projects, we are always in "hunt for"

alternative funding, and also students that are interested in making essays and such within this field. So in short, many projects are funded outside the regular municipal budget.

Some projects, as one resent, produce an environmental database in funded jointly between the Environmental and Educational departments. The secret is to find the right persons that are interested and willing to lobby and work for sustainable development. In the last half year the manager for our social department has taken part in discussing the European strategy for sustainable development, which will be presented in Gothenburg. This has lead to that other sides of sustainable development than the ecological has come “on the table” in the municipal.

Level of participation

The municipal organisation as a whole takes part in the process, both on the political level and in the administration. Some associations and organisations have their own programs. The organisations are for instance for pensioners and different immigrant organisations. The municipal real estate company has a program for EMS and are working very intensely with environmental issues. The company owns 11000 flats. Around 100 local landlords inform the tenants about environmental issues. The company also takes part in information campaigns in schools. It also gives grants for different environmental projects. Once a year the tenants are invited to a free visit to the municipal recycling plant, in order to understand the importance of sorting their waste in the right fractions.

Organizational planning

The planning is made within the municipal organisation, both in political and civil level. Other organisations have not taken any initiatives.

Cooperation patterns.

There is a regional co-operation between the 25 municipals within the county of Stockholm. It is lead by the Association for municipalities in the county of Stockholm. This network meets about two times a year. The network exchange ideas and sometimes invites a lecturer on a special topic. There have also been joint projects.

We also work together with municipalities in the project BETNET (Baltic Environmental Twinning Network). The municipalities that take part come from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, and Sweden. Two municipalities from each country take part except from Sweden, which has four. The project started in September 2000.

We have no co-operation with government organs, but we have had a few state grants for our projects, so one can say that they co-operate financially.

3. Special characters of the LA21 process:

Strengths and weaknesses

There has been strong support during the process from the politicians at power. Up to now the majority have been Social democrats in coalition with left party and/or environmental (green) party. The weak factor is the participation of the municipal inhabitants. It is difficult to raise enough support in terms of ideas and views from “ordinary” people in their “private” time. It is better to reach them at work.

It is also a question what dignity the LA21 shall have compared to other steering documents like the Strategic long term plan for Botkyrka 2001-2006 and General Plan for land and water use in Botkyrka. The LA21-document is also diffuse in its goals and targets.

Successes and failures

We have succeeded in implementing the environmental issues in the municipal administration, departments and companies. It has been harder to reach outside our own organisation.

Political control

The progress of LA21 is controlled by the executive Board in Botkyrka.

Level of public awareness of the LA21 process

There has been information about LA21 on our local TV-channel. For each chapter a short description has been made, and the film was broadcasted many times over a period of time. Since Botkyrka won the King Carl Gustaf of Sweden environmental price for the year of 2000 there was some articles about the price and sustainable development. Botkyrka has been known for our environmental work for a long time, and the inhabitants have answered in surveys that they think that the municipal makes a good job for the environment. If one would ask any person on the street of what the LA21 consists of I am not so sure he/she would know.

Anecdotes

We remind ourselves that it is a long-term job. It takes time to change the behaviour of people. Therefore, we put in a lot of effort with the work with children and young people. We work close together within the municipal departments and administration and involve our politician to a large extent. Especially are the schools, kindergartens involved.

We use the work that students can to for as often as possible. It gives mutual benefit. We try to find the "key-persons" that can implement and drive the issues in their organisations. We reach "inhabitants" mostly trough these people in organisations and private companies. There are annual environmental exhibits in the different town centres. The municipal government gives an annual environmental price both within the organisation and "outside". This is to encourage those that make a good job. We believe it is important to give feed back. We educate the staff of LA21. Of the 5000 employees in the whole administration, 3000 have been educated. On basis of the LA21 assignments there are green indicators. At the moment we have 22 indicators that monitor both outside and inside the municipal organisation. The indicators have been presented for 3 years. They are presented together with the annual report. A very efficient tool to use is the Environmental Management System, EMS. In Botkyrka it is very efficient since the Local Government has decided that each unit within the municipal administration shall have implemented EMS before 2003. That concerns more than 5000 employees. There is no way to get round this decision.

4. Contact information:

Ingrid Molander
molander@botkyrka.se

5.3. Elblag, Poland Agenda 21 in Elblag

1. Basic information:

Elblag has a population of about 130 000. It is situated in the northeastern part of Poland by the River Elblag near the Vistula Lagoon on the border of Zulawy Region and Elblag Heights on the area of so called 'green lungs of Poland'. Elblag is a dynamically developing town. Its directions of development are delimited in such documents as 'Development Strategy for Elblag Town', an action plan "Local Agenda 21' and 'Sustainable Development of Environmental Protection for Elblag Town in years 2000-2010'. The endeavours of the town's authorities are focused on satisfying the inhabitants' needs in harmony and with respect to the natural environment. This guaranties sustainability of Elblag in local views so that to coordinate any activities undertaken for environmental protection with social and economical aspects.

2. Type of LA21 process:

Activities

From 1994 to 2000 the following ventures and investments were completed. In the field of earth protection: a modern waste utilisation plant was built, a program of selective refuse collection was implemented, municipal parks were cleaned revitalisation of neglected areas such as Gronowo Górne and Modrzewina started. In the field of water and sewage management: Work to improve water and sewage management were carried out, a new water main Szopy-Elblag was built, Water Conditioning Stations at Krolewiecka and Malborska Streets were renovated, certain steps have been taken to improve quality of drinking water in Elblag, municipal waste treatment plant has been provided with a system removing biogenic compounds and the management of sediments was improved, there are separate rain water and sanitary sewage systems, a sanitary system has been built for Debowa District, 1st stage of the regulating of the River Kumiela was completed and a new technical and recreational strip was built, new rain water drainage system was built in the town. In the field of air and noise protection heat distribution network has been modernised there were numerous modernisation works of roads, pavements and cycling paths, as well as energy saving lighting and complementing greenery building a new bridge route on the River Elblag has started, tram tracks were renovated, a promotional campaign to use public transportation was carried out, communal buildings were insulated. In the field of ecological education program Agenda 21 was prepared a 'Green School' in Piaski was established, an ecological education program addressed to all inhabitants was implemented, an international ecological education camp for young people from the Baltic Sea countries was organised. Therefore Elblag today has: an ecological education school, mechanical and biological waste treatment plant, sanitary and rain water sewage system, a complete water supply system, a modern waste utilisation plant, a central heating system in the town and Elblag is a green place.

Future plans

In 2001- 2015 in accordance with Elblag's strategy of development a number of activities are aimed at improving the state of the natural environment in the town so that to meet European standards. The activities encompass various task connected with protecting water, air, soil, natural resources and ecological education.

Among the priorities there are the following tasks:

- Town's active participation in AGENDA 21 program;
- Inhabitants' active participation in AGENDA 21 program, raising ecological awareness of all inhabitants of Elblag,
- Further modernisation of the sewage treatment plant,
- Extension works in the Refuse Utility Plant, improving management of medical refuse,
- Building a modern incinerating plant,
- Improving quality of drinking water,
- Regulating rivers Babica and Kumiela,
- Improving quality of air through implementing, among others, the 'Liquidation of Low Emissions program',
- Decreasing noise level, especially in the centre, by building a modern tram line, modernising roads, building the bridge route,
- Protecting monuments of nature and ecological usage of land, creating tourist routes

The authorities of Elblag are glad that the economical development of the town is not happening at the expense of environmental degradation and awareness of inhabitants who identify themselves with the town increases more and more.

Level of participation and awareness

The authorities of Elblag actively participate in the process of eco development and the "Environmental Education Program" which implements principles of Agenda 21, has been put into practice since 1994 and will be continued in the future. The main assumptions of the "Environmental Education Program" are based on activities, which condition the rise of ecological awareness of Elblag's inhabitants, among which there are for example to present the content of the Agenda 21 program to the inhabitants and ecological education in kindergartens, schools, ecological extra curricular classes and ecological camps. The main aim of the "Environmental Education Program" is raising ecological awareness and through this improving the state of natural environment. In 1996 an action plan "Local Agenda 21" was prepared. This plan emphasises that improving the state of natural environment in the town can be achieved through improving ecological awareness of the inhabitants.

The first recipients of the ecological education program were the youth. It must be said that their enthusiasm to learn and popularise the idea of sustainable development is exceptional. Young people very actively participated in different ecological actions. They are truly involved and feel responsible for matters connected with natural environment protection in our town. Also adults gradually learn to respond to the "Environmental Education Program". The town promotes and sponsors cultural activities of the inhabitants of our town (art and literary exhibitions connected with ecology). To sum up the "Environmental Education Program" gives inspiration, teaches and provokes pro-ecological reactions.

A trip to Sweden was an inspiration to establish a Local Agenda 21 Club in the Third Lyceum in Elblag. This is how students comment on their club LA 21 *"...numerous meetings, lectures, practical classes connected with thinking about natural environment definitely helped us to revalue the way of understanding everything what we call ecology. It turns out that it is also possible in our place although you need time and money. The basic thing is to teach people thinking, and this refers especially to the growing generation, of the environment as something personal, because we take care of our things and we respect them"*.

Cooperation

In 1995 Elblag as the only town in the voivodship (province) started co-operation with a Swedish municipality of Ronneby with regards to preparation and implementation "Agenda 21". Swedish experience in the field of ecological education, especially ideas of working with children and the youth, proved to be very helpful. The same ideas have been implemented in Elblag.

As far as "Agenda 21" issues are concerned, students of The Third Lyceum co-operate with the town's authorities as well as their colleagues from Ronneby. Mutual exchange of students, lectures, practical classes result in better and better understanding the issues and problems of environmental protection, and "Agenda 21". It must be stressed that more and more students know "Agenda 21". This subject as well as environmental issues is the subject matters of frequently organised seminars and meetings with town authorities.

3. Special characteristics

Strengths and weaknesses

In order to delimit external and internal conditions and factors which can have both beneficial and harmful influence on current and future state of natural environment a SWOT analysis has been carried out.

Opportunities:

National pro-ecological policy meeting requirements of educational, legal and financial system

City's localisation, which is within so called "Green Lungs of Poland".

International co-operation in the field of environmental protection which enables using scientific and technical outcomes as well as implementing environmental program such as LA21.

Participation in fulfilling international commitments in the field of protecting waters of the Baltic Sea.

Threats:

Unclear ownership status of flowing waters.

Lack of efficient legal regulations and executional instruments.

Considerable deficit of financial means for realising ecological aims.

On the basis of the above-mentioned methods strong and weak aspects of the city have been stated. One of the priority aims is refuge management, water and sewage management as well as ecological education. That is why "Environmental Education Program" has been implemented and is being realised since 1994 as project within LOCAL AGENDA 21.

Political commitment

In accordance with an act of law no. IX/176/95 dated 29.06.1995 accepted by the City Council, Elblag's participation in the international program LOCAL AGENDA 21, established in Rio de Janeiro, was declared. A document entitled "Development Strategy of Elblag in 1996-2010" was accepted in an act of law no XIX 340/96 dated 29.08.1996.

4. Contact information:

Jolanta Warzecha

Head of Environmental Protection Department

umelblag@elblag.com.pl

5.4. City of Gdansk, Poland

Local Agenda 21 in the city of Gdansk

1. Basic information:

Gdansk has been a part of Polish, European and World History for a thousand years now. The first turning point in the history of Gdansk recorded in the chronicles was the day of March 27 997 and this is officially recognized as the moment the City of Gdansk was born. It was here the internal World War II broke out in September 1939. It was also here that the Solidarity movement was born, which led to the victory of democracy in this part of Europe. Gdansk is also considered as the Poland's marine capital. Gdansk is the biggest city in the Pomeranian Region. Gdansk together with the cities of Sopot and Gdynia form the urban area known as the Tricity Area (Trojmiasto). The city area is 262 km² (26 203 ha), its population is about 460 000. The city is located at the mouth of the Vistula River on the Baltic Sea. Apart from the industry related to Gdansk's maritime location, Gdansk is the city of chemical and food industry.

General challenges

Too low incomes comparing to the city's needs. Public safety. Increasing unemployment. Scope and quality of health care. Lack of apartments for poor people. Increasing number of cars. Quality of the infrastructure. Improvement of the quality of life, to the level in EU countries. Noise pollution. Necessity to change public transportation means – new buses. Renovation of the old monuments.

Environmental challenges

Noise pollution. Transportation – air pollution, density. Increasing number of cars. More green spaces and recreation areas are needed. Sustainable land use

2. Type of LA21 process:

The beginning of the LA21 process

1990 was the beginning of the political changes in PL. It meant the end of policy based on planning. Central planning was over and local authorities became responsible for their region. That is the change of the general political and economical image of PL. Democracy, development of market economy influence; the change of the way of thinking and the way the environment is treated. Environment related issues became important in our country as well as in the communities. The LA 21 process in the city of Gdansk begun very early and it was the initiative of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Department (in 1999 the name of the department is Environmental Protection). In 1990 the City Council adopted the resolution on Sustainable Development. Since 1991 till 1993 there were discussions concerning the ecological priorities for the city. The work aiming at pointing out the priorities took almost 3 years. Active stakeholders at that time were: scientists, politicians, representatives of industry and business as well as NGOs. Resolution on Ecological Policy was adopted by the Gdansk's City Council in 1993.

Following the resolution dated 1993 all the departments in the municipality have become involved in the process of Gdansk's Local Agenda 21. The City Executive Board has appointed the co-ordinator of the process – Environmental Protection Department.

Activities

Our LA21 process covers almost all problems existing in the city. We developed our LA21 project in accordance with the strategy of the city development. The strategy includes LA21 priorities and proposes their solution. The first step towards implementation of the Local Agenda 21 was to spread

information about the idea of sustainable development and policy towards sustainability among the citizens and people working for the City Hall – those who will execute the resolutions, decisions and policy adopted by local politicians. There were meetings with NGOs, scientists, representatives of industry, trade unions, private companies, local politicians, heads of departments and seminars for the employees. The representatives of these groups formed the informal body, which was supposed to help in defining the policy for the city. Co-operation with all departments begun, as well as work on elaboration of the above mentioned documents (resolutions). It was time to agree the policy towards sustainability, to point out fields of activity, necessary changes and actions, which should be taken in order to meet the sustainable future. Summing up we can say that this first step included definition of the policy and priorities. It also pointed out the necessary activities followed by elaboration of the action plans.

The second step for us begun in 1996: verification of the policy with the needs of the citizens. The Environmental Protection and Department together with the representatives of the City Council and Executive Board (Mayor, Vice- Mayor) started meetings in different districts of the city. During each meeting we have selected from the volunteers people to co-operate with the City – people to represent interests of their district apart from the councillors. Such meeting are very important for us as they give us opportunity to present the policy of the City for the citizens and to know better their points of view and expectations. TV programme “That’s where we live” – which is in live presented in local TV – is another opportunity to get closer to the citizens. (During these meetings local authorities meets with the citizens in different city districts and discuss their problems). Following the implementation of the process at this stage in 1998 the mayor of the city established the Local Forum for ‘Round Table’ – the body to advice the City Council. The decision about the LA21 Forum was followed by the ordinance of the mayor in which he wanted all the departments to be involved in the work on LA21 and to appoint the representatives for regular (once a month) Forum meetings. The members of the Forum are: NGOs, scientists (representatives of University of Gdansk, Technical University of Gdansk, Medical Academy, representatives of industry, trade unions, private companies, local politicians – councillors and citizens (among them youth and unemployed). Disable people are represented by the president of Association of disable people. The Forum is supposed to discuss and to evaluate the priorities of sustainable development, which have been already implemented as well as to point out the necessary future actions. The meetings – organised by the co-ordinator take place once a month.

Every meeting has a different subject and is prepared by different departments. The topics discussed by LA 21 Forum so far:

- Ecological policy – evaluation of the resolution dated 1993
- Urban development of Gdansk, Tourism, Culture and education
- Industrial development and different investments planned in the city in the nearest future
- Environmental Protection, health and social care, Indicators of sustainable development
- Infrastructure in the city, spatial planning, housing and transport aspects
- Vision of the city development till 2010 – presentation of the study of the city development and spatial planning by the authors
- Sustainable development in the city of Gdansk – environmental aspects

The minutes of each meeting are taken and then delivered to the Forum members as well as to the authorities. Each meeting ends with conclusions, which are presented to the City Executive Board by the coordinator and approved and given to the City Council. They are helpful while formulating the resolutions and indicate the necessary direction for the policy. In this way our partners evaluate,

develop and cause the adoption of principles and action plans for sustainable development of the City.

Today all departments are involved in introducing the policy towards sustainability. Activities taken by different departments are co-ordinated in order to achieve one common goal: sustainable Gdansk consequently implementing its Local Agenda 21. The coordinator keeps the departments informed about the steps taken, organised meetings, conclusions adopted by the participants of Forum and progress in implementation of the process. All departments implement the "Strategy of the city development till 2010". The priorities towards sustainable development defined in 1993 have been almost completed. At the moment being we are working on defining new priorities towards sustainability till the year 2010- LA21 Forum has completed its work and proposal of the resolution has been presented for approval to the City Council. A necessary element of our LA21 is ecological education. We do our best to involve children and their teachers in ecological-friendly actions. We try to help them to create ecologically friendly attitudes and behaviours. To do this we provide financial support for all ecological events and necessary equipment to teach ecology in schools, we organise lectures, competitions and attend the events organised by schools. We also started composting in kindergartens in Gdansk and provide them with the waste segregation workshops. We want to do more in this field as we think it is the best way to create new mentality among our citizens and – sometimes thanks to the youngest citizens we can change the attitudes of the adults; children-parents relations.

Level of participation

The co-ordinator of the LA21 process is the Environmental Protection Department. People working for LA21 (sustainable development policy, Forum LA21, ecological education) are 4 (including the director who is also Polish LA 21 national co-ordinator in the Polish Cities Association), of course others are also doing the job if necessary (people in the department are 30). Forum LA21 – about 80 people actively working, the level of attendance of the meetings is about 80- 60% every month. City Council works on different resolutions formulating the policy for the city. The Council is presented the conclusions, postulates of every session of the Forum LA 21. Citizens: members of Forum LA21, attending the meetings organised by the municipality in different city districts. Schools, kindergartens, universities – are accustomed and also involved (depending on their possibilities and wishes) into the process. Actively participating in different kind of competitions, the every year Earth Day celebrations and clean up the World.

Cooperation patterns

The City of Gdansk is actively co-operating with its foreign partners. We are a member of ICLEI – using their training and instructions (participation in the LA21 Training and Guidance Programme), UBC – Baltic Agenda 21, Baltic co-operation in the field of sustainable environment, Sustainable Cities and towns campaign, REC, CEMR. We have friends in the city of Kalmar, Sweden and they all were very helpful while we were defining / formulating our strategy and process. Our foreign colleagues often serve us as an example to follow or provide us with useful information.

We also co-operate with different Polish municipalities, cities but due to the fact that Gdansk was the first to start the LA 21 it was difficult for us to take them as an example.

3. Special character of the LA21 process:

In order to make our LA21 work successful we need improved co-operation within the departments in the city hall, which are implementing the same strategy of the city development but it is sometimes difficult to communicate. We also need to spread more information about the implemented actions.

To do this we would need more people working in the field of ecological education and more money as it is good to issue different leaflets and brochures informing about the progress we make.

Strengths and weaknesses

| Strength | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| Work of LA21 Forum – big interest and involvement in the policy and actions taken in the city shown by its members – evaluation of the process, further instructions Monitoring of the process | Not sufficient knowledge about the process Lack of interest on behalf of media Not sufficient involvement of local politicians Difficulties in introducing the sustainable development rules in spatial planning |

Successes and failures

| Successes | Failures |
|---|---|
| The City of Gdansk was among the first Polish cities to initiate the LA21 process. We have formulated the ecological policy and consequently implemented it – this was the reason to award our city – European Sustainable City Award 1999. Organization of LA21 Forum – big interest and involvement in the policy and actions taken in the city shown by its members – evaluation of the process, further instructions | We would expect more interests and involvement into the process on behalf of politicians and media We did not get to all of our citizens, so many of them do not know anything about the LA21 and sustainable development in general |

Political control

Invitations to the meetings and minutes from all Forum LA21 meetings are presented to the members of the City Board and to all commissions working within the City Council. Politicians are invited to attend the meetings and to play an active role in the process. Sometimes they attend the meetings and if not they can present their comments to the minutes. The Council and city government has accepted the LA21 process. Without their political commitment we would not be able to act so actively in so many fields.

Level of public awareness of the LA21 process

As for the awareness there is always not sufficient work done in this field as the information could always be spread better. In our opinion the knowledge about sustainable development issues as well as our LA21 process is not sufficient. We have neither significant financial resources nor human resources to get to all our citizens. Universities and schools are aware of these topics due to their teachers, written information and lectures provided by our department. Also at the occasion of announcement of ecologically friendly competitions we provide some information about the topics we would need some involvement in. Citizens attend meetings organised almost every month with the local authorities in the different city districts and are also informed about the LA21 process and activities in the city. The last group that can follow the process on the current basis are the members of the LA21 Forum. As they represent different groups they are welcome to spread the information within their “small communities”. Some of them we know are doing so, but it is difficult to measure to what extent they are doing so.

4. Contact information:

Head of Environmental Department – Ms Jadwiga Kopec
Officer - Dagmara Nagorka - Kmiecik
E-mail: wosr@gdansk.gda.pl

5.5. Jurmala, Latvia

Local Agenda process in Jurmala

1. Basic information:

Jurmala, a spa city in the Baltic States, is located on the shores of the Gulf of Riga at 25 kilometers' distance from the capital Riga. The number of inhabitants constitutes approximately of 60 000, the territory covers 90 sq. kilometers of which 39 sq. km. are pine forests, swamps and parks, the length of the beach is 32 km. Jurmala is famous for its medical nature resources - mild climate, fresh coastal air, medical mud and mineral waters. Jurmala has been a popular resort place for people from Riga already since the beginning of the 19th Century. Until World War I it has created the image of a resort place. During the thirties Jurmala was an internationally recognized health resort with valuable culture traditions. After World War II Jurmala became a spa city of the Soviet Union and very many holidaymakers visited it from all the former soviet republics. The number of tourists decreased very rapidly after the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Latvia. Economical crises envelop the city and only in the season of 1996 the number of tourists increased a little.

Today we can see changes in the development of the city. Due to the denationalization and land reform, the building density increases and unspoiled nature territories as well as nature resources decrease (such as dunes, the banks of river Lielupe, pine forests). There is rapid building of rich private houses in some regions of the city. The west part of the city will be included in the newly developing National park Kemeru.

Biggest challenges

Keeping the natural resources and protecting the environmental quality. Unsatisfactory technical conditions of infrastructure, its a lack in the wide city's territories and high exploitation costs. Undeveloped transport infrastructure. Maintaining of cultural heritage and new building development in harmony with nature and environment. Creation of infrastructure for sustainable tourism. Lack of investments and other financial resources. Different social problems.

2. Type of LA21 process:

The beginning of the process

Creation of Jurmala Local Agenda 21 working group (LA21 action program was worked out)
Involvement in FEEE campaign for the bathing waters "Blue flag" (real process with public involvement started) Pilot project for 5 municipalities in Latvia "Local agenda 21 and environmental management in municipalities of Latvia", financed by SIDA. Pilot project for waste separation in 5 districts in Jurmala, financed by Jurmala city 1999-2000 Jurmala city acted as a partner in Phare Tacis financed SAIL project (informative material on LA21 topic in Latvian was prepared) 2000- First draft of Jurmala Environmental protection policy plan was adopted

Activities

Since 1997 our city has been involved in the Blue Flag campaign. In 1999 Majori beach in Jurmala was awarded the Blue Flag certificate. In 2000 Majori beach in Jurmala was awarded the Blue Flag. It has promoted our authorities to develop local strategies, policies and programs based on the principles determined by the Blue Flag requirements.

Success Factors for Local Agenda 21 in the Baltic Sea Region

Examples on activities in Jurmala year 2000:

1. *The name of the activity:* Natural falls (outfalls) into the Baltic Sea Bay in the territory of Jurmala

The goal of the activity: 1. To realize the impact of the human settlement on the natural falls
2. To realize the effect of the natural falls on the Baltic Sea

Targeting group: Environment researchers club members, teachers, and families, NGO

The contents/message of the activity :

On the basis of the study on sewage-related issues individuals assess the exposure and risk to human health and environment brought about by human wastes. It will help to identify the preventive measures and common action plan to forward the message to the inhabitants of the city.

2. *Name of the activity:* Protected plants in Jurmala

The goal of activity: To carry out a study on the protected plants found in the beach area

Targeting group: Young naturalists and photographers accompanied by consultants from the University, pupils, teachers, families

The contents of the activity:

Pupils and teachers get acquainted with protected plants found in Jurmala; gain knowledge on vegetation of the dunes and select a relative photo material.

3. *Name of the activity:* Contest for the young environment researchers

The goal of the activity To promote interest and knowledge on trees, plants, animals, rivers, nature history

Targeting group: Jurmala pupils, teachers, families, inhabitants of Jurmala

The contents of the activity:

Selected most interesting questions for the contest orientated on the Kemer National Park area.

4. *Name of the activity:* A story of the Lielupe

The goal of the activity: Through the symbol of the river to reveal the environment-related problems

Targeting group: Pupils from the schools, inhabitants and NGO situated on the riverbanks

The contents of the activity:

Consideration of the river from the users' point of view. Inhabitants' viewpoint studied. Problems realised. Agreement on the common action plan to protect the river.

5. *Name of the activity:* The great trees of Jurmala

The goal of the activity: To produce a booklet on the great trees in Jurmala, providing also
The scientifically based article on their role for the city

Targeting group: Pupils, young environment researchers, inhabitants of Jurmala, families, teachers, schools

The contents of the activity:

Examination of the surrounding areas where the pupils live, paying attention to great trees. Theoretical knowledge provided on the trees and their role. Selection of the information materials on the trees, production of the relative booklet.

3. Special characteristics of the LA21 process:

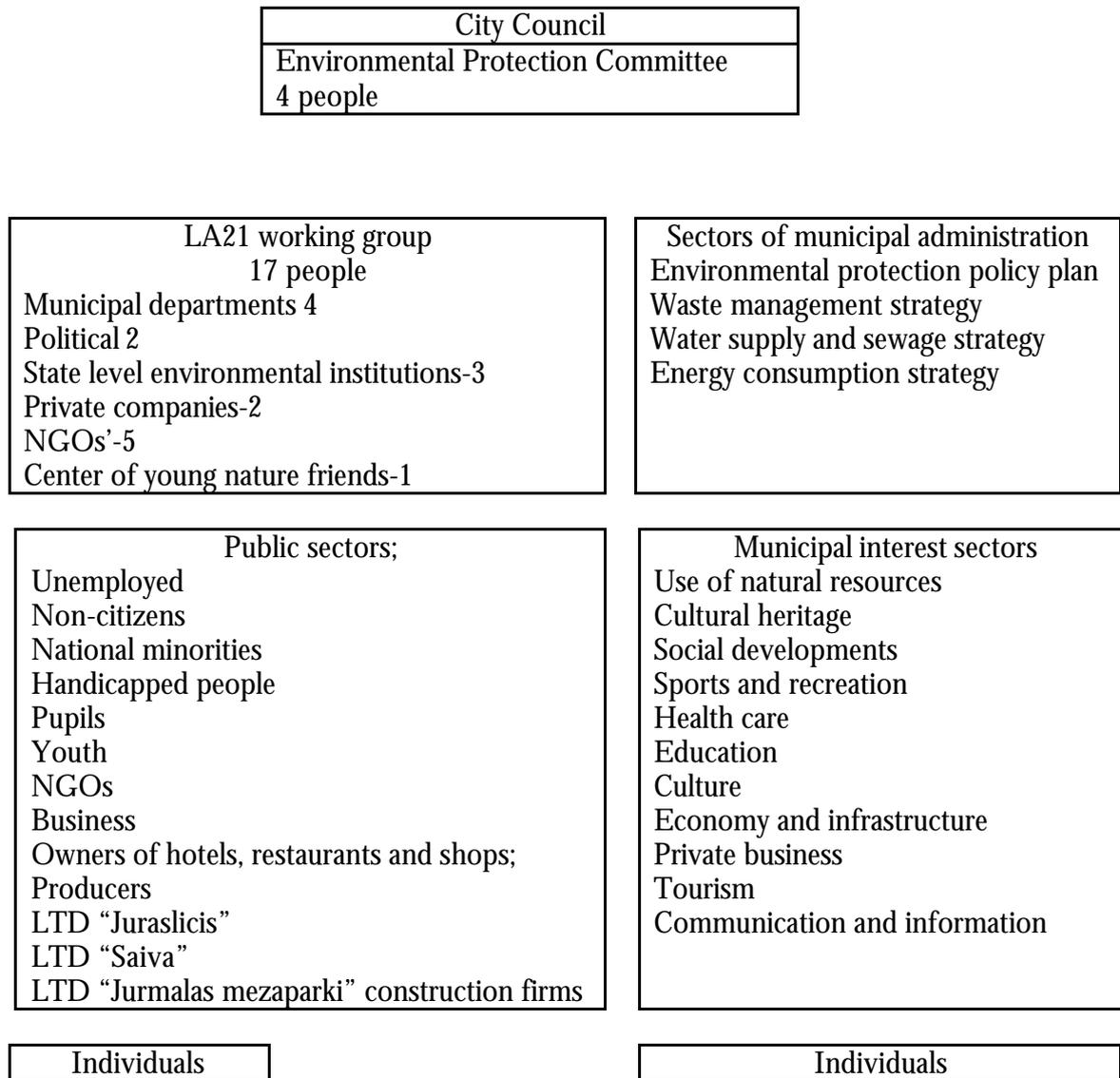
Political commitment

Jurmala's development plan adopted by Jurmala City Council in 1996 defines the city's development policy according to the sustainable development principles. It indicates that the basis for this

Success Factors for Local Agenda 21 in the Baltic Sea Region

development is balanced social, economical and environmental development, which ensures qualitative environment in the healthy city for its inhabitants.

ADMINISTRATIVE MODEL OF LA21 IN JURMALA



4. Contact information:

Rita Knutina
rita@jpd.gov.lv

5.6. City of Lahti, Finland

Lahti Environmental Forum

Basic information:

City of Lahti was founded in the year 1905. Then a village of few thousand people is nowadays a town of over 97 000 inhabitants. Lahti is situated in southern Finland about 100 km north from the capital Helsinki. The connection between Lahti and the capital area is good with both railway and motorway. Lahti is the center city of region Päijät-Häme which has over 220 000 inhabitants. There are about 43 000 jobs in Lahti. 63 % of those are in the service sector, 30 % in the industry and over 6 % in the construction sector. The unemployment rate in Lahti was at the highest in the early 90's, over 28 per cent and still it is about 15 %. The total number of jobs in Lahti has diminished in the last ten years with about 13 %. The Lahti municipal area is quite small, only about 150 square km. We have several lakes of different size and type nearly all with good recreational value nowadays. Different kinds of forests cover over half of the area and we still have few scenically well preserved agricultural landscapes. A comparatively large area of the city of Lahti (about 300 ha) is protected by law. Inside municipal borders there are 14 different nature reserves, which represent the biological and ecological conditions of the area quite well.

Biggest challenges in our city

Biggest social and economic problem of Lahti is still very high unemployment. Also the amount of those whose unemployment has prolonged is far too high causing many kinds of social and human troubles in the whole community. Partly connecting to high unemployment Lahti citizens have in average quite low educational level. These two nuisances give mostly the reason to the bad condition of municipal economy. For example the accrue of municipal taxes is far too small to guarantee adequate and high quality public services in the near future. The growing needs of the population especially in health care and social services but also for example in basic education and in public transport are more and more difficult to satisfy.

Biggest environmental challenges in our city

The environmental conditions and state of environment in Lahti is in general fairly good. Still we have many environmental threats and some environmental sectors would need much more resources than they have had this far. Air pollution and noise is mostly caused by traffic in Lahti. Air quality is worst in some places of the center of the city and in southern Lahti where we have a concentration of car markets. Recently built and planned new motor- and highways will deteriorate air quality and spread noise pollution to the areas, which were earlier clean and calm. It has not been done enough to prevent the noise from traffic areas here in Lahti and to improve the conditions would need a lot of investments too. The citizens of Lahti get all their drinking water from clean ground waters. In the areas of the largest groundwater formations there are plenty of dwelling areas and some main roads and streets. This means that the threat of contamination of the water sources is high and we have to put effective efforts to supervise the activities in those areas. There are many nowadays clean well-preserved lakes in Lahti. Anyhow the threat of eutrophication is all the time relevant. Effective construction of new dwelling areas in drainage areas of lakes and the change from summer cottages to all year settlement on many shore lines are causing growing stress to the water quality in many lakes. At the same time and for the same reasons is the need to preserve the recreational value of the lakes good. Comparing to the need and urgency of change in environmental attitudes we should put much more effort to environmental education and awareness rising. In general it seems to be very unusual that people would understand the connection between their choices and decisions and the

state of environment especially at global level. There we believe are the biggest challenges of environmental work in the near future.

2. Type of LA21 process:

Important enablers for our LA21 process

One of the most important enablers was the international contacts we had, for example ICLEI, Storströms amt, Denmark and some places in England. At local level the most important has been the committed and enthusiastic voluntary participation of many people from the beginning of the process. Also we think we have been lucky in recruiting people who have been working in the process. Many of them have eagerly improved their expertise in sustainable development work and have in that way made the process more effective. The monetary resources to the work have mainly been from the budget of the local environmental board. The subsidy of environmental ministry and later from EU Commission or other EU funds in different projects have given important extra resources. Also many partners in several projects, especially in recent years have given resources to wider and deeper implementation of the process.

Who initiated the LA21 process?

The planning of Lahti environmental Forum process started in spring 1993. First activities to implement the RIO process were two broad seminars later in year 1993. The implementation started at full effect in January 1994. The Lahti Environmental Forum was set up in 1993 when it became known how the Rio process could improve local responsibility for the environment and activate normal citizens to participate in environmental activities. Local Agenda was seen as a new tool for implementing sustainable development at the local level. The message in reports of Rio to us was: to implement sustainable development and to create participation in international programs.

In the course of 1994 about 100 people representing NGOs, the private and public sectors as well as different experts got involved in Lahti Environmental Forum activity. They worked in seven different working groups, each dealing with dimensions of sustainable development from their own point of view. The active working group stage lasted until the end of 1996. By this time many things has been achieved; the state of the environment in Lahti has been well defined with the aid of indicators for different sectors, future visions has been created for Lahti to be attained from 2005 to 2015, Lahti Agenda 21 has been drawn up. In autumn of 1996 the city board of Lahti decided that the city administration itself would get involved and become committed to Lahti Agenda 21, one way of doing this was by carrying out an environmental management plan for the city administration. The first resulting progress report was published in autumn of 1997, by which time the impact assessment of the environmental programme had been launched. A report on evaluation of actions in environmental program was published in autumn 1999. The second round of the environmental management system started in January 2001 when an environmental steering group of Lahti was founded. The new environmental policy of Lahti will be approved in city council next autumn.

Activities

During the first stage of Lahti Environmental Forum (1993-1996) there were 7 working groups. In these groups' active members of different sections of society dealt with the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. A steering group, with a secretary to assist, coordinated activities of Lahti Environmental Forum. An important part of the Environmental Forum in the early years comprised of regularly organised cooperation seminars, attended by representatives of all bodies involved. One example was a future seminar to deal with vision for sustainable development in the Lahti region. The basic idea of Lahti Environmental Forum was to get the different actors in society to sit down at the same table and reflect on the implementation of sustainable development,

as well as to look The *eco team* concept was found to be a useful method of encouraging local environmental responsibility for households. In Lahti and neighbouring regions about 30 eco teams have been set up. The corner stone of Lahti Environmental Forum from the very beginning in 1993 has been to promote the participation of citizens and stakeholders of all kinds. In order to activate the participation of residents in improving the environment of their own area a project was initiated in a suburb called Mukkula. It was also an experiment to see how different bodies could co-operate to get the local residents to use more initiative and take responsibility for their own area. In the winter of 1997-98 Lahti Environmental Forum was behind the drawing up of an "ideal imaginary" map of the area for children and at the same time schoolyard redesigning was carried as on the local primary school as practical work. In spring 1998 a services guide for Mukkula was made, where as well as companies and different shops and organisations, the nature around Mukkula and all it has to offer was presented. Taking advantage of the experiences gained in Mukkula, the environmental forum is now continuing and extending this kind of active resident project in other suburban areas.

Lahti Environmental Forum is mainly financed by the City of Lahti. During the first few years we got support from the Ministry for Environment development fund, which was a big help in disseminating the experiences of Lahti elsewhere. Later Lahti Environmental Forum continued as a EU project. The main event in 1998 was Lahti's second environment week in the autumn. Tens of organisations were involved in the planning and functioning of the event and thousands of Lahti citizens took part in the various happenings. As part of the awareness and publicity campaign three supplements were published in Uusi-Lahti and a CD-ROM guide to points of natural interest in Lahti was produced. The good experiences of Lahti Environmental Forum are continuing by concentrating the cooperation of various actors, we are taking concrete measures to promote sustainable development and are involved in international efforts to promote the Rio process in the neighbouring regions of Finland.

Cooperation and level of activity

Nowadays our sustainable development process is implemented in several projects and through many kind of co-operation locally, nationally and internationally. Networks of the different actors in the process are already very wide. Actual local sustainable development projects are "Environmental educational center of Lahti" which includes "Patina Environmental Education center" and environmental school "Ekoteko", "Vellamoinen 21 – sustainable development to the Lahti city region", "Environmental management system of Lahti City trust" and "Encouraging environmental awareness in Lahti". In projects we have many partners, which are paying their share of the costs and give part of their expertise to the process. For example every municipality and all companies within Lahti city trust are involved to the LA21 process. With the neighbouring municipalities we have planned a project to deepen the co-operation even further.

In our different LA21 projects are today working 10 employees or consults full day. Many more people are part time involved in working within our process. Most of the work is still spreading the participation, creating new ways and methods to promote sustainable development and rooting permanent and wider commitment to this work. In this all we have a lot to do in the next years. Besides this we have to develop methods to evaluate and measure more accurately the effectiveness of our actions and the results we have gained.

Level of participation

The participation to our LA21 activities is today very wide. We have made calculations of participants in different kinds of events and meetings etc. We can say that thousands of people in Lahti City region are yearly somehow involved in our activities. During the process we have made

two surveys where questions, for example about awareness about the process, were asked. According to these surveys we can say that local public awareness about the process and many of its activities is very good. When the discussion about sustainable development started, it became evident that in environmental work, if wanted it to be effective, need much more local actors than environmental administration. Arousing responsibility and participation among different stakeholders is one of the key issues when creating sustainable development. We think the core of the LA21 process is, or should be, a concrete and as wide as possible participation in the sustainable development work. LA21 should touch the whole community. It is not a LA21 process if it is only the work of some expert groups or for example an environmental project in municipal administration. LA21 is work done by citizens, citizens of course in their different roles in the community.

3. Special character of the LA21 process:

Strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures

At the whole we believe that we have succeeded very well so far. *One of the biggest strengths* has been the enthusiastic and flexible personnel we have succeeded to recruit. Their own personal qualities and networks have more or less created the level of participation we nowadays have. *One weakness or failure* we think has been the fact that political decision makers or the directors of the city are not well committed to the process. In that we have a lot to do. Anyhow we believe that more important is a wide participation and commitment of ordinary citizens. Considering the need of change that is also the field where we should put most of our resources available. The co-operation, and in several ways with citizens or with NGOs and other organizations, working with citizens have proved to be very effective. Giving environmental information and education with different methods and in several forums has been important. Also the development and implementation of new methods have given better results. The example of Lahti Environmental Forum has been used widely. The experience we have gained during our process has been adapted in many local agenda processes nationally where we have given lectures in tens of municipalities taking first steps in preparing LA 21 process or project. Internationally our LA21 model has been used as an example in Tartu, St. Petersburg and in Hannover and we have given introductions from Athens to Barents Sea and from France to China.

Awareness

Increasing environmental awareness and activating participation have proven to be really demanding tasks. In order to be more accessible to the citizens of the city Lahti Environmental Forum has rented (until the end of 1999) a little wooden cottage near the centre of the city and uses it as an information and awareness centre. After that we have had a permanent environmental information centre in the city centre. Also, by taking part in different fair and exhibition events in Lahti we have tried to be near to the people. We have published our own pages as a supplement of Uusi-Lahti weekly newspaper; this is distributed for free throughout the city, helping us to reach a broad public.

Political control

The planning of the whole process is lead by Lahti city environmental office. Political decisions necessary are made mainly in the environmental board. Plus these each project has its own working and leading group and most also minor activities are planned in different co-operative groups. Co-operation between projects is also continuous.

4. Contact information:

Kari Porra
kari.porra@lahti.fi

5.7. Liepaja, Latvia

The environmental action plan of Liepaja City

1. Basic information:

Liepaja has historically developed as a city of trade, industry and culture, located on a narrow strip between the Baltic Sea and Liepaja Lake in south-west of Latvia. The territory presently occupies 60,37 km². Today Liepaja is the third biggest city of Latvia with a population of about 94 500 inhabitants. The main advantage of Liepaja during the last two centuries has been its ice-free port which started to construct in 1967 and its growth and development refers to the 1890. After Russian Empire annexation of Kurzeme Dukedom in 1895 and in the beginning of the 20th century Liepaja became the most important naval port and fortress in the Baltic region but in 1949 Liepaja became the largest USSR military base in Latvia. Only in 1992 Liepaja port Authority was established and revival of Liepaja port as a commercial port has started. 1997 Liepaja Special Economic Zone was established. Nucleos of the SEZ is the port. SEZ icludes also the most important industrial areas and transport junctions.

Within the couple of recent years there are apparent signs in Liepaja that new life starts here, some of them are: increase of construction volumes (174% since 1994); size of foreign investments in the stock capital of companies has increased 19 times since 1994, more than 2000 active companies are working in Liepaja now with total industrial output 178,1 mio USD in 1999.

The mine city development direction is improving the quality of life wich includes business development, port and infrastructure development, social welfare, culture and education, environmental protection and tourism development. The mine branch is the manufacturing wich composes 47%, the trade 26%, transport and communications 8%

The important role in the city development is the Liepaja port. Cargo turnover has grown quite good since 1992 to 1999: loaded cargo turnover has grown from 417 700 tons in 1993 to 1 970 027 tons in 1999 but discharged from 8 400 tons 1993 to 354 032 tons in 1999. In 2000 cargo turnover has grown up to 23% than in 1999 this period.

Liepaja is the large industrial centre, it means that Liepaja is the good distribution center with well developed tranportation infrastructure: ice-free port, international airport, arterial roads and railway. We have stable economic and political environment and fast growing local business and Cultural community.

Liepaja is also the education centre of western Latvia. There are 3 higher educational establishments (Liepaja Pedagogical Academy, Liepaja branch of Riga technical University and Liepaja branch of Baltic Russian Institute), 4 colleges (Marine, Art, Music, Medicine), 2 vocational schools, 17 general education schools, 5 private schools and 21 kindergartens.

General problems of Liepaja city

- high level of unemployment;
- low level of peoples' health protection;
- low level of income;
- bad network of the streets and roads;
- low level of environmental education and communication.

Environmental problems

Education:

- Citizens' low level of information and competence on environmental and human health issues

City environment and landscape

- Decrease of biological diversity and landscape degradation
- Visual pollution of hovels and untidy places of the city
- Low valued environment and landscape of the block of flats living area
- Sand accumulation and dune zone erosion

Swimming water

- Risk of transboundary pollution from Butinge
- Unorganised seaside resorts

Waste management

- Lack of respective City Council waste management program
- Lack of mechanism for stimulating the conscientious citizens
- Limited recycling feasibility for reuse materials
- Illegal dumping sites in administrative territory of Liepaja

Domestic animals

- Lack of graveyard for animals
- Lack of animal homes

2. Type of LA21 process:

The beginning of the process

The decision by politicians of Liepaja City Council to work out Liepaja Environmental Action Programme (EAP) as part of the City Development Plan based on principles of the Local Agenda 21 was made the 23rd August 2000.

We started in September when the Working group was completed. There are 8 officials working in this group and they are from Liepaja Environmental Board, Nongovernment Organization, Liepaja Pedagogical Academy, Liepaja Health Centre and Liepaja City Council. Head of the Working group is Deputy Mayor of Liepaja City Council. The first task of our group was preparation of time schedule and working plan.

The goal of EAP: To work out a programmatic document which would allow to use the municipal budget and attracted finances purposefully, facilitating at the same time the co-ordination and approximation interests of different target groups towards sustainable development of the city.

Activities

What we have done:

draft overview of the existing situation;

Questionnaire for city public and Questionnaire for enterprises administration are elaborated;

public questioning process has started

1. The public involvement concept is elaborated within the framework of the EAP

The aims of the public involvement concept

Increase of public information on environmental issues;

Insurance of public collaboration in EAP elaboration;

To find out community's view on environmental issues, to summarize advice;

To establish support system for EAP realization

Means of public information and involvement

Newsletters;

Posters;

The press releases, mass media before and after activities

Informative letters to managers of organizations and enterprises;

Issued actions: "Water" realized 22.03. – 06.04. "The Earth" realized 06.04. – 21.04., "Air" realized 22.04. – 06.05;

Press conferences before and after actions and questionnaire;

Questionnaire realized in May, surveyed 695 respondents;

WEB site: <http://www.195.244.146.42/liepaja/index.htm>

2. Overview of the existing environmental situation and problems;

3. Analysis of the problem

4. Choice of criteria for problem prioritisation

5. Problem prioritisation according to the criteria;

6. Determination of activities for problem solution;

Future plans

We elaborate the draft EAP for public discussion at the moment. The public discussion will be in July – August.

The EAP has to be finished in September.

Level of activity

We can say that the level of activity is low. We sent information letters and short questionnaires to 30 enterprises, but we received only 9 answers. The schools are more active, 90% answered.

It was a better situation when an information seminar was organized.

Organizational planning

Mainly the working group works and coordinates all process. We used voluntary work when the phone questionnaire was organized. Students of the Liepaja Pedagogical Academy realized the public questionnaire.

3. Special characteristics of the LA21 process:

| | |
|---|---|
| STRENGTHS The project supported by administrators of the city Information relating the citizen's wishes summered up Experts' from different environmental organizations support for the project Local expertise available City Development Plan developed Development of the City Environmental Action Plan is going on. | WEAKNESSES The citizens' passivity Lack of local financial resources Poor solvency of the part of citizens Citizens' and experts' low level of reliability of the project Lack of staff members |
| OPPORTUNITIES It is the priority of the Latvian National Environmental Policy Plan Network of contacts established with professionals and institutions The public needs knowledge and information The NGO network facilities Adaptation to changing needs | THREATS Production enterprises uninterested in the project Lack of financial resources in the community No awareness of the environmental problems - lack of traditions Low culture level some of the people |

Political control

Our EAP process is not controlled through political channels exactly as control, but we have to inform them regularly.

4. Contact information:

Mara Zeltina
Mara@dome.liepaja.lv

5.8. Malmö, Sweden

Local Agenda 21, City of Malmö.

1. Basic information:

Malmö is the third largest town in Sweden with 250 000 inhabitants. After a decline in the 90's Malmö has started a process of development towards a city of knowledge. Between 1990-94 almost every fourth job disappeared. At the same time as the change in the industry a change in the population took place. The composition of the population changed radically. Large groups of low income like immigrants moved to Malmö at the same time as many families with children moved to communities around Malmö, as they kept their jobs in the city. Of the almost 27 000 work opportunities that were lost during the first part of the 1990's 86 % of the jobs were lost by people living in Malmö. They who lived outside Malmö in other communities did better. During the 70' the population had been decreasing but in the 90' the population increased in ten years by 24 000 to 255 000 inhabitants. The turning point came when the political situation changed at the end of the 80' and until the 90' the hard contrasts and fast decisions took place. The social democratic party had to leave the power after 67 years and the conservatives ruled instead. In 1988 the social democratic were back and in 1991 the conservative were back. First the local taxes were lowered and then the market forces were introduced. This was the largest privatising ever in Sweden. In 1991 the social democratic were back at the power and they raised the local taxes and started to make savings in the money spent on schools, elderly care and health care etc.

Biggest challenges

The first of July 2000 the bridge across Öresund was opened. The Öresund-bridge opened a new trend and a co-operation between Denmark and Sweden. What it actually will mean is not clear and it can have unforeseen consequences. One issue that will not help the integration of people in the Öresund-region is that there has not been an initiative to simplify the rules and regulations to work on one side of Öresund and to live on the other. As a help to larger integration is the fact that people travel between the three cities Copenhagen, Malmö and Lund to work, shop and take part in cultural events. As risks can be mentioned a bigger network, more specialization, higher rates of crime and barriers. As possibilities can be mentioned more competition, synergy effects and the closeness to Kastrup Airport. The new roll that Malmö has can be both a risk as well as a possibility.

Biggest environmental challenges

One of the biggest environmental challenges in our city is the traffic with carbon dioxide and other problems connected to it. Another problem is the lack of nature and the exploiting of land. Since it is Sweden's third largest town it has a lot of the problems of a big city and on the outskirts is the farmed land. These are the main kinds of areas in Malmö.

2. Type of LA21 process:

Enablers

Enablers that are important are to reach important target groups and to adapt the information and activities so that there is something for most people in general. To find key figures in the organization that can make the network functioning well is another way. Interested politicians are very important to stimulate and facilitate the process.

The beginning of the process

In Sweden the communities have got the responsibility for making action plans on how to accomplish the Rio-convention Agenda 21 before 1996. The City of Malmö gave the Environmental

department the task to lead the work with a Local Agenda 21 for Malmö. A working team used the material from different plans and programs in an attempt to co-ordinate different actions towards a sustainable society, including housing and construction. The process started in –95 with one person working with these questions. The municipal executive board initiated a working group to arrange meetings and discussions about the line of thinking and ideas for the future work on Agenda 21. The previous program on environmental care was replaced by the Agenda 21 program. The Environmental Committee and the municipal executive board decided to work according to the Rio-declaration and also to deposit money for this. This happened at the same time as Malmö had a deficit as mentioned above. But the money was available only one year after that. This was a change in environmental work that meant a wider perspective on the work. The Associations of Local Authorities also sent a message saying that this work had to be started.

Activities

Awareness on environmental and democratic issues needs to be raised with the citizens of Malmö. Making the citizens in Malmö participate in solving environmental problems can be done through co-operation with non-profit associations and to create networks. Other methods can be to profit from the knowledge from projects like Habitat. To be engaged in housing and housing environment is another important activity.

Activities we have had so far within the work with LA21:

- Dialogue with the citizens, lectures, information and exhibitions. Try to establish a line of thought where sustainable development is taken into account when making plans and programs.
- Published a newspaper (“Grön Stad”) “Green City”.
- A small book is published in two versions and sent to schools etc. It is called (“Miljön i Malmö och Världen”) “The environment in Malmö and in the World”.
- A house called the Green House was presenting environmental information by having a library and making exhibitions from fall 1996 to winter 1998. Several environmental organizations were working together keeping the activities going.
- A network with environmentally interested citizens in Malmö has met regularly since 1997.
- A book on environmental issues has been made and sent to schoolchildren at the age of 6-8 years during year 2000. It is called Lotta-Lotta
- We have worked with a certification system for owners of apartment houses. The environment management system in Malmö has grown and is a group of its own at the Environmental Department. All the departments in the City of Malmö work with environment management system and the implementation of this.
- We have worked with nature conservation and made an inventory of among others bats, lichen, fish, batrachians and birds.

We have been seeking money from the local investment program from the Swedish Government for ecological adjustment and have received approximately 400 million SEK to different projects concerning living and building houses. We have also worked with a project making schoolyards greener. We are now in a phase where we will try to concretise our visions. Our work needs to be adjusted to goals in our Environmental Program. One vision is that all our decisions are imbued by the Agenda 21 thoughts.

Future plans

Decided on for 2001 are the following activities:

- Co-operation with economy, planning, administration and public relations units.

- A foundation for environment initiatives from which those working in the local authority can seek money. The projects should benefit the environment in Malmö.
- An economy with environmental aspects added
- Biodiversity through building up a nature database with information on all species in Malmö.
- Housing, building and democracy
- Agenda 21 association in Skåne and Network and co-operation built with other cities, libraries and universities.

We are in a phase where we must try to concretise our visions and find a new way of working. We must work towards the Environment Program's goals. One vision is that all decisions are carried out with the Agenda 21 thoughts in mind. We work with activities that will make the citizen's responsibility larger and hopefully a larger activity and participation will follow. Giving and receiving information is an important part.

Level of activities and participation

In a central administration group there are three persons working 100% and one person working 50 % with Agenda 21 questions. Approximately ten people work in different projects connected to the central function. They are actively involved in the process. Then there are a number of organizations in different places in Malmö working with questions that has a connection to Agenda 21. The central administration is at a local government level. Non-profit organizations and associations work on a local basis in Malmö.

Organizational planning

The work in our Agenda 21 process is organized through the Environmental Department There is a central administration group and there are people working with the co-ordination at the other departments. There is a group working with environmental management system and one working with the Environmental Program. Another group is working with the housing exhibition BO 01. Environmental concentrations done at BO 01 are made possible to a large extent through money granted by the Ministry of the Environment through the Local Investment Program.

Cooperation patterns

There is cooperation going on with Lund, Eslöv, Vellinge and Helsingborg in Sweden. Also the library and the college in Malmö are into the cooperation. Abroad there is cooperation with Copenhagen, Kalliningrad, Spain and Portugal. The City of Malmö is also participating in different networks such as ICLEI, UBC.

3. Special character of the LA21 process:

Strengths and weaknesses

The strength in the system is that there are more people working with Agenda 21 both in the central administration and in different projects. The network in the city of Malmö is large. There is also the Local Investment Program working with sustainability that enables us to work with larger projects. *A weakness* is that many people don't know what the name Agenda 21 stands for. The name is not implemented yet. They know some of the activities and projects trying to make a sustainable society. The idea is implemented.

Successes and failures

The success is noticed through the spreading of different and extensive environmental work such as the Environmental Program, the Local Investment Program and the Environmental Management

System. A failure is the sluggishness in the system of a local authority. The system is built on the fact that there is a lot of time and the process is sluggish.

Political control

The political control is carried out through the municipal executive board through the Environmental Committee down to the department.

Level of public awareness of the LA 21 process

Many people don't know what the name Agenda 21 stands for. The name is not implemented yet. But they know what it stands for and knows some of the activities going on to make a sustainable society. The idea is implemented.

Anecdotes

Description Ecological adaptation of post war housing estate and industrial area to decrease local environmental problems, minimise environmental impact and involve local people in a long-term renewal process. The project covers a wide range of areas, many of which break new ground in Scandinavia and set high goals. Rainwater run off in the area is being decreased by Scandinavia's largest green roof programme and then led into an open rainwater system designed and built in part by a local resident and water enthusiast. Residents, pupils and staff in the industrial area are involved in design of changes to their outdoor environment in the gardens, schoolyard, park and industrial estate, to improve amenity, restore some of the 1950s character of the area and increase biodiversity. Local residents have started an electric car pool and two prototype electric street trains, manufactured by a local company, now link Augustenborg to the services such as bank, doctor, post office etc that are no longer available in the area. Residents have also raised the issue of traffic management and plans are underway to tackle local traffic problems. The industrial area now has Sweden's largest electric vehicle fleet. Half of the area has started separating waste for recycling and local composting of household waste with the compost going to organic agriculture in the region. By 2002 90% of the pre-project waste volume will be minimised or recycled. A number of houses with previous damp problems have had new facades with secondary insulation erected to decrease energy use and improve the appearance of the area. A number of awareness raising initiatives have taken place with local people who have amongst other things instigated a process which has led to a proposal for a Phase 2 of the project focussing on energy management and renewable energy. Local residents have been involved in many ways, both formally and informally in the process and a significant number of people, particularly non-Swedes who have been excluded from the labour market, have found their feet again through the project. Close links are maintained with local community organisations and the project has a small fund for local people to support individual projects run by the local Islamic Society, the local amateur theatre, a youth group etc. Several discussion and vision exercises have been arranged with local people and businesses to generate consensus around plans and future developments, which has led to concrete results such as the electric car pool, the Sun City proposal and other ideas. A number of local people have taken part in a programme of training with the aim to develop a local management co-operative to take on an ecologically adapted management of the green space and recycling system. First part of rainwater system complete, green roofs is complete, nearly all recycling houses built and half in operation. Electric trains operated for 1 year, car pool in operation, energy saving initiatives in place to large extent, school ground park and some of gardens altered, planned completion Phase 1 2001

4. Contact information:

Åsa Abrahamsson

asa.abrahamsson@malmo.se

5.9. Panevezys, Lithuania Agenda 21

1. Basic information:

Panevėžys is called the capital of Aukštaitija and is the fifth largest city in Lithuania. The city occupies a 50 sq. km area and the population is 133 700. Panevėžys is geographically conveniently situated, halfway between Vilnius and Riga, the capital cities in two Baltic States. Panevėžys was founded in 1503, the city Day is celebrated the 7th of September. The first mention of Panevėžys is in the letter from the Grand Duke of Lithuania and Alexander, the King of Poland, written on the 7th of September 1503, to Ramygala Church dean about granting land in the area between Nevezis and Lėvuo rivers and obligation to build a church and set up an inn. In mid 16th century the new town of Panevėžys was built on the left bank of the river. The place where the first church and its cemetery were situated in Venslaviskio Street is nowadays marked with a cross.

The city was famous for a long time as a center of agricultural processing industry with the largest mills in Lithuania. These traditions still remain in Panevėžys. There are such enterprises as sugar refinery, soap-works, meat, milk, grain processing, spirit and yeast, breweries and many smaller enterprises. Their products are in great demand also beyond the Lithuanian border; products of city enterprises are sold in foreign countries (e.g. linen textile, sewing, knitting, kinescopes, furniture, glassworks etc.).

Biggest environmental challenges

The municipality of Panevėžys attaches great importance to the quality of the environment. Contamination of soil in the territory of the town and of many enterprises and bottom sediments of the Nevezis river with heavy metals and other dangerous chemical elements, has been explored in detail during the last 4-5 years, the quality of groundwater in the water, bearing layer and wells of inhabitants has been determined. Lot of territories was cleaned up. One new section of Landfield, covered by geomembrans was made. The city has implemented management systems of solid waste and hazardous waste, ecological education by Young Naturalist Center and adoption programs for the environmental education in schools.

Each company with environmental impacts is responsible to monitor and to report its activities and emissions regularly to the environmental department. The amount of emissions is used as a base for environmental fees, which the company has to pay. Local and regional authorities are regularly monitoring the emissions of companies.

Challenges before the initiative began:

No data about distribution of toxic chemical elements in Panevėžys. The reasons for uneven distribution of morbidity and the strategy of city development general plan unknown. Population worried about municipal waste landfill and quality of drinking water. Huge amount of wastewater and sludge unsuitable for fertilizing.

2. Type of LA21 process:

Enablers

The main enablers important for the LA21 process:

- Union of the Baltic Cities

- Sister Cities in Kalmar (Sweden), Kolding (Denmark), Lünen (Germany), Lubek (Poland).
- BETnet (Baltic Environmental Network) Citizens of Panevėžys
- Politicians of Panevėžys.

Activity

Priorities for the Local Agenda 21 project:

- Establishment of ecological/pedagogical center of the City.
- Creation of a healthy environment.
- Public involvement.
- Ecological-health monitoring on waste management, water, air, green areas.

The aim:

To use complex geo-chemical environmental research data in decision-making for solving ecological and social problems in the city

Intermediate aims:

The research of danger caused by contamination of the factories (the most intensive pollution sources). The research of contamination of topsoil and Nevėžis river sediments in the whole city (after determination of pollution sources). In dangerously contaminated zones the evaluation of drinking groundwater quality from dug wells. The investigation of the relationship between contamination and morbidity and mortality rate (after subdividing of territory according to contamination danger), creation and implementation of rehabilitation programs and health status control. The evaluation of municipal waste landfill influence on environment and health (due to social anxiety). Solving of wastewater sludge utilization problem (due to threatening situation in wastewater treatment plant).

Activities so far:

- We have finished three projects for the waste management, one for air quality and air quality monitoring and three projects for the public involvement and ecological education.
- Geochemical mapping; the whole city and enterprises with their sanitary protective zones. The distribution of elements is shown on geochemical maps. The territories were subdivided according to the degree of contamination danger for the health.
- Geochemical investigations; evaluation of possibility of migration into groundwater through aeration zone (analysis of metal speciation in soil in the zones of extremely dangerous pollution for eight elements), monitoring of 29 dug wells, monitoring of Liudynė municipal waste landfill surroundings, experiments of wastewater sludge utilization for recultivation of peaty wood-cutting areas (experimental and industrial monitoring).

Implementation:

The plans of recultivation of the most contaminated areas of the city and the territories of the factories were worked out. About 10-60% of the surface ground (to the depth of 20-30 cm) was replaced on the territories of 6 factories. It makes about 2000m³. At 8 factories part of the territory, i.e. 20 000 m², was seeded with grass. The boundaries of sanitary protective zones in some of the factories were adjusted. Different coefficients were fixed for the purchase of land and flats. The plan of general development of the city was prepared. The cleaning of the Nevėžis old riverbed that is used for recreation and sports was carried out. For improvement of drinking groundwater quality the environs of 4 dug wells were put in order. The net of the centralized water supply was expanded (32 000m). It was prohibited to use the water from contaminated wells. The rehabilitation program for population affected by harmful factors was based on the relationship between geo-chemical and

physical (noise) contamination of the environment and total morbidity and mortality rate of inhabitants.

Solving social problems:

On the basis of environmental geo-chemical research and health monitoring the ecological rehabilitation program, including 348 inhabitants, was implemented. In order to reduce social tension among the people living near municipal waste landfill, but outside its sanitary zone, they were informed about monitoring results of their living surroundings. The data about the quality of the living environment was accessible to all social layers. This essentially increased the interest of the inhabitants in the activities and decisions connected with the environment and their contribution. A firm basis for preparing the general plan of the city was acquired. The set aims were mainly reached. Complex geo-chemical research and medical investigations were fulfilled and recommendations for decision-making given. Making environmental decisions it would be effective to increase the complexity of the research using the data about the size of techno-genetic geo-chemical load and its change in time.

The beginning of the LA21 process

The LA21 process was initiated by the Ecological Department of the City Municipality of Panevėžys. The process started in 1997 as the sister city of Panevėžys, Kalmar (Sweden) began a joint project called "Agenda 21-Kalmar-Panevėžys".

Referring to the declaration "Agenda 21", signed during UN conference "Environment and development" in Rio, the City Council of Panevėžys decided to take part in the international environmental strategy "Agenda 21" and to implement international and local environment protection projects of this strategy. The City Council also decided that the board of the City should ensure the organization of management of environmental strategy "Agenda 21". These decisions were made January 12th, 2000.

Cooperation

Cooperation with our sister city Kalmar in Sweden. We have had a special period to follow EU directives in very many aspects of environment, social, well care economic etc., and this means that we have began to be in very close collaboration with many departments of the municipality, citizens and politicians.

Future plans

Future priorities for LA21 for three years:

Ambient of the air quality monitoring

Extension of air and hydro monitoring systems

To improve the systems of informing of the population about ambient air quality and water quality in Panevėžys

To involve the citizens of Panevėžys in improvement of ambient of air quality, water quality and health prevention programs

Level of activity

Organization of work-staff of Ecological department of the municipality:

Institute of geology:

7 persons for sampling

1 person for sample preparation

2 professional analysts

5 environmental geochemistry specialists
7 medical specialists

For how long:

Geo-chemical mapping: 2 years (enterprises-1 year, city territory-1 year)

Geo-chemical monitoring: 2 or more years

Population health status monitoring: 5 years

Rehabilitation program; 1 year

Money:

100 000 US\$

Know-how:

Specialists of environmental geochemistry and medicine, professional analysts

3. Special character of the LA21 process:

Success factors; actuality, simplicity, understandability, inevitability

Failures; complexity, unknowing, inevitability

Anecdotes

Lessons learned:

The most successful implementations of environmental decisions are those in which the economical, financial and intellectual resources of several institutions are mobilized and all the layers of the society are active participants. The experience was gained how the cooperation among different organizations should be realized. The most effective measure to increase the interest of the population in environmental activities and decision-making is open and available information. Only complex research of the natural environment of the city can help to determine the relationship between the quality of the environment and the indices of the population health. This lesson was used while choosing the areas for the population health monitoring and establishing recreation sites. The practice of the city of Panevėžys, in using the results of the environmental geo-chemical research while making the decisions concerning the environment, made a radical change in the national attitude towards the importance of this kind of research in the environmental strategies of the cities.

The proof:

Analogous environmental geo-chemical research is at present done in major cities of Lithuania: Alytus, Mazeikiai, and Kaunas. The initiative of the municipality of Panevėžys was also an example to the municipalities of other countries, i.e. Latvia and Sweden.

4. Contact information:

Zita Zverkute

raminta@panevezys.sav.lt

5.10. City of Riga, Latvia

Development and Implementation of the City of Riga Environmental Strategy (2000-2010)

1. Basic information:

Riga, the capital of the Republic of Latvia, lays at the Baltic Sea in the south of the Riga Gulf. In 2001 Riga celebrates its 800th anniversary. The independent Republic of Latvia was established first in 1918, but in 1940 it fell to the Soviet power. In 1991 Latvia regained its independence. Riga is the biggest City in the Baltic States with 788,284 (2000) inhabitants. Since 1990, the population has decreased by 116,000 as a result of negative natural growth and out-migration. Compared to the total population of Latvia (2.5 million), Riga is disproportionately large and constitutes one-third of Latvia's population. Since gaining its independence in 1991, Latvia and Riga have achieved considerable success in implementing political and economic reforms. Like all economies in transition, Latvia suffered an economic recession immediately following separation from the Soviet Union, but managed to stabilize its economy soon after. At present Riga accounts for 54 % of the total industrial output of Latvia.

Biggest challenges

In the last several years, the City of Riga has undertaken many initiatives to incorporate the concept of sustainable development into the city's operations as well as the behaviour and attitudes of Riga inhabitants. This process is only just beginning, and Riga's biggest challenge has been fostering a participatory and transparent policy-making environment. There are a number of problems as the barriers to sustainable development, among them more important are mentioned below:

- Lack of co-operation between the public, municipality and interest groups as well as lack of experience and resources;
- Insufficient public education and level of environmental awareness;
- Insufficient involvement of public in solving environmental problems;
- Shortage of regular targeted information about environment.
- Integration of sustainability issues into sectoral planning and decision-making in Riga is limited and governance takes often the traditional command-and-control form.

Biggest environmental challenges

- The quality of the urban environment is low, in a range of sectors, compared to that of West European cities and the criteria of the required quality provision.
- Serious problems in the sectors of economic and social development, as well as environmental protection, leading to a lowered quality of life for the community, restricted access to environmental resources and risk for the future development prospects of the city.
- Environmental issues are not integrated in sector's development plans and visions, and the adopted measures often are contradictory to the principles of sustainable development.

2. Type of LA21 process:

Enablers

Perpetuum mobile of a strong political support. LA 21 is a long-term planning process. Politicians are planning their actions from one election to another. How get a strong political support in a long-term meaning?

Who initiated the LA21 process?

According to the terminology of the UBC Survey, 1998: *the initiating agents of the project were Riga City Council and environmental administration; active actors in the planning of project were representatives from environmental administration of Riga and twin city Norrköping; the organisation of the project was both technical administration and voluntary citizen participation activities; Swedish model was used for the creation of the Agenda 21 Centre.* Important steps: Establishment of the Environmental Protection Club (*Vides Aizsardzibas Klubs*): the 1st environmentally oriented large-scale NGO was in 1987 as a green movement against the soviet life style. *The first important decision:* the decision of the Riga City Council to sign the Aalborg Charter of European Cities and Towns Towards Sustainability (1994). *The first important document based on the sustainable development principles:* Riga City Official Plan (1995-2005).

Riga is one of the first cities in Latvia to adopt an official plan based on sustainable development and LA21 principles. The emphasis of the plan is on the preservation of nature and cultural heritage. This differs significantly from previous plans in which the economic development of the city took priority over environmental issues in both theory and practice. Previous official planning processes also lacked mechanisms for public consultation or input, and in its development of the most recent official plan, Riga had to overcome five decades of enforced non-participatory behaviour. Much has been done in Riga in the last years to develop democratic traditions with particular regard to involving the public in planning and decision-making processes. In the Official Plan, the development of a more detailed environmental strategy was specified as a priority for the city. The City of Riga Environmental Strategy (2000-2010) was developed and adopted by Riga City Council in 2000. This strategy is intended to create the preconditions for the sustainable development of Riga by finding solutions to the priority environmental problems and prevention of their causes. The Environmental Strategy is divided according to the following themes: Social Environment, Urban Environment, Nature and Nature Protection, Air Quality, Transportation and Energy, Water, and Waste Management. The Strategy evaluates existing conditions and presents a range of options to find solutions to problems in the sectors mentioned above. The Strategy is a blueprint for raising the profile of sustainability issues in city development and land use planning and decision-making, improving the environmental, social and economic environment and thus the quality of life for the residents of Riga. The City of Riga has also established the Local Agenda 21 Environment Centre to help identify partners for project implementation, and to facilitate participation in local, regional and international activities related to LA21. The mission of the Riga City Environment Centre Agenda 21 is also to act as a focal point for information and education on environmental and sustainability issues at the municipal level and to facilitate local stakeholder groups in environmental and sustainability awareness rising.

Activities so far

1. Development and adoption of the City of Riga Environmental Strategy (2000-2010) as a Local Agenda 21 Programme for the Riga City.
2. Foundation of the Riga City Environment Centre Agenda 21 (co-ordinator of the LA 21 process) and Riga City Agenda 21 Council (political committee of the process).

Relevant activities for the LA21 process: Adoption of the Riga City Official Plan (1995-2005). Adoption of the City of Riga Environmental Strategy (2000-2010). Development process of the Action Programme of the Strategy. Established co-ordinating executive unit (Riga City Environment Centre Agenda 21). Established Riga City Agenda 21 Council as a political committee to support LA 21 work in the city. The Council consists of representatives delegated from the members of the Riga City Council and is led by the Chairman of the Riga City Council. The Riga City Official Plan calls for the development of an Environmental Policy Plan and, thus, for the impetus for the

development of the Environmental Strategy. As a working document for the Environmental Department, the Strategy does not have a direct bearing on other City Departments and the planning process in general. However, over time, with the implementation of projects to be prioritised in the Action Programme of the Strategy (under preparation), environmental and sustainability issues will play a bigger role in the city land use and development planning as well as decision-making. The LA 21 process in Riga is in its developmental stages. Following development and adoption of the Environmental Action Programme, measures contained in the Environmental Strategy will be implemented.

Future plans

Implementation of the City of Riga Environmental strategy (2000-2010)

The Environmental Strategy is to be implemented through the projects that are listed in the accompanying Appendices. The projects predominantly, but not exclusively, pertain to the city administration. Public participation, awareness raising and education are not major priority issues.

- Development of the Action Programme of the Environmental Strategy.
- Begun in February 2001 it is to be completed by September 2001. In addition to the Environmental department, other departments of the city administration are participating in the development of the Action Programme that will prioritise projects to be undertaken
- Environmental co-operation agreements with twin cities and large cities in Baltic Sea Region
- Networking and project partner search. Project applications for EU funding programmes.

Level of activity and participation

Participants are employees of the Riga City Council different departments, experts from the University, state environmental agencies and representatives of NGOs (external experts also from the Nordic cities). 3 full-time employees in the Riga City Environment Centre Agenda 21:

| Activity of the LA 21 process | Number of the participants |
|--|--|
| 1998 – 1999: development of the 1 st draft version of the City of Riga Environment Strategy (2000-2010) under the framework of the Riga and Norrköping joint project “Riga City Environmental Centre Agenda 21” | Project team 15 people, among them 3 external experts from Norrköping. Involved in total – 250. |
| 2. The development process of the Action programme of the Strategy (since Feb., 2001) | 35 people from the different departments of Riga City; 10 external experts from Latvian University, representatives of the business sector and NGOs. |
| 3. Project application “ <i>Neighbourhood Sustainability Planning and Monitoring in Mezaparks, Riga</i> ” (submitted to Phare Access) | Project team 10 people; active involvement of 40-50 people in the project; target audience includes the 2500 residents of the Mezaparks neighbourhood, Riga City Council Departments and Deputies (100 planners and decision-makers), local media. |

Co-operation patterns.

The Centre co-operates with some of Riga’s twinning cities from the Nordic countries (Norrköping, Pori). Good co-operation was established with Helsinki Environment Centre in 2000. The Swedish model has been used to create the Agenda 21 Centre in Riga and we are planning to co-operate with Helsinki experts in developing sustainability indicators for part of Riga. Our LA21 process is in developmental stages. So far we have not organised a citizens forum or anything similar. But we have started to create a network of the contact persons from the different departments of Riga City Council and also environmentally oriented NGOs. It is planned to organise broad public

participation in the development process of the Action Programme of the Strategy. Riga City Environment Centre Agenda 21 acts as a co-ordinator of the LA 21 work in Riga City Council.

3. Special character of the LA21 process:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Strengths</p> <p>1. Riga has signed the Aalborg Charter, according to which cities undertake to plan development with a view to sustainability.</p> <p>2. Laws, plans, concepts, regulations, which have at their basis the idea of sustainable development, have been worked out since 1995 both on the national and municipal level: National Environmental Policy Plan; National Environmental Action Programme; Laws on environmental protection, waste management, transportation, spatial planning etc; Riga City Official Plan; Riga Region Development Strategy; Concepts papers, management plans, regulations (Waste Management Concept, Central Heating Concept, Environmental Protection Management Plans, etc.)</p> <p>3. Level of environmental awareness is slowly growing.</p> <p>4. Strength of the democratic structures (NGO, interest groups etc) is growing.</p> | <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Legislation acts and regulations are often in the development stage; some important areas have not covered yet. Development of instruments for enforcement of laws is paid insufficient attention. Discrepancy between adopted plans and tasks and their eventual implementation because of lack of economic, administrative and other resources. No national or municipal funding mechanism is in place to support the LA21 process. Funding is available for LA21 projects from the Riga City only in the form of co-financing guarantees for project proposals submitted to EU Programmes. Lack of coordination and collaboration between municipality and state, various municipal departments, interest groups. Shortage of information on environmental situation. Insufficient involvement of public or interest groups in solving environmental problems and in the legislative process. Limited experience in management, preparation of various projects and in obtaining and implementing local financial support (especially the environmental field). Understanding of sustainable development is poor in all sectors of society; hence no significant initiatives have been started to encourage more sustainable living and consumption patterns. Passivity and lack of interest of administrators in environmental protection and the efficient management of resources.</p> |
| <p>Successes</p> <p>Adoption of the Riga Environmental Strategy (2000-2010) as the LA21 Programme for Riga City. Establishment of the Riga City Environment Agenda 21 Centre as co-ordinator of the LA21 work. Creation of the Riga City Agenda 21 Council as a political committee to support the LA21 in the city. Networking and co-operation with the twin cities of Norrköping, Pori and Helsinki. Developing the Action Programme of the Strategy with involvement of all municipal departments /enterprises.</p> | <p>Failures</p> <p>An inadequate legal status of the Agenda 21 Centre in comparison with its tasks and functions. The level of independence should be higher.</p> <p>The LA 21 work too much depends on the ever changing political will.</p> <p>Low level of the publicity: the Agenda 21 Centre is known mostly to environmental experts and students.</p> |

Political control and level of public awareness of the LA21 process

Riga City Agenda 21 Council is expected to fulfil this role. Recently municipal elections were held and it is the responsibility of the new Riga City Council Chairman to organise further the work of the Agenda 21 Council. Information about the LA21 project has occasionally appeared in the local newspapers but mainly only environmental experts and “green thinking” individuals work closely with the Centre.

4. Contact information:

Laimonis Osis

Laimonis.agenda21@rcc.lv

5.11. Sopot, Poland

Local Agenda 21 Process in Sopot

Basic information:

Sopot is a city situated in the Northern Poland, on the Bay of Gdansk and is the central part of Northern Poland's biggest conurbation known as the Tri-City. The centre of Sopot is 11 kilometres from the centre of Gdansk and 10 kilometres from the centre of Gdynia. Today the city is a closed circle town with about 42.000 inhabitants. The rate of unemployment within the city is rather low – about 4 % of the population. The standard of living is also rather high. The majority of citizens have higher education. Unfortunately the city is also growing older as the rate of birth is decreasing while a lot of young people move to suburbs of Gdansk and Gdynia.

Human settlement here dates back some 2,500 years. A small fishing village owned by the Cistercians in Oliwa existed here from the 13th century. Today tourism is the main source of Sopot's revenue. Sopot is the city of tourism, recreation and entertainment. In the decree of the Ministry of health Service and Social Welfare from 27.01.1999 Sopot was stated the status of health resort. Each year, the city is visited by over 2 millions of tourists and holidaymakers who are captivated not only by plenty of tourist attractions and golden beaches but also by the wide range of illness treatment offered by the city and rich cultural and recreational offer.

General challenges

The main challenges of the city are connected with Sopot's touristy and recreational character. The strategy of development issues five main directions towards which the city is supposed to go. Those directions are:

Sopot as the city of tourism, recreation and entertainment throughout the whole year. Sopot as the ecological city, in which the environment and landscape qualities are preserved and used with a view to develop its health resort function. Sopot as the city of culture and science, a place for organising congresses and other meetings, in which institutions, objects, events and people constitute to a specific creative atmosphere. Sopot as the city safe and friendly to people, a city with a healthier lifestyle where the inhabitants and visitors' property are secured. Sopot as the city of spatial order and efficient technical infrastructure.

One important challenge is also the decrease in juvenile crimes, which is to be achieved by addiction prevention, conditions for the development of differentiated forms of the youth activities in their free time and a high educational level in schools. The city's aim is also to increase the degree of identity, integration and self-governing of the local society

Environmental challenges

As it comes to environmental challenges, what has to be mentioned first is a very characteristic fact for the city that there is almost no industry within the city's area. That's why the pollution is not such a big problem as it is in many other agglomerations. Nevertheless there are always a lot of issues that must be dealt with within the field of environmental protection. There are five main directions that are emphasised within the protection of Sopot's environment:

Monitoring of the air. The main problem is connected to the main road between Gdansk and Gdynia running through Sopot centre, which is the reason for the increase in the air pollution. Monitoring of surface water and coastal water of the Bay of Gdansk. Sewage and waste management; the city does

not have neither its own sewage treatment plant nor a dumping site – the ones situated in Gdansk are used in Sopot Green area protection. Over 60 % of Sopot area includes green places such as parks, garden plots and forests. There are a lot of semi-natural and natural greenery and some unique plants. Sopot's forests are the part of the Three City Landscape Park. Congestion caused by traffic and noise pollution.

2. Type of LA21 process:

The beginning of the process

Although the action towards the Local Agenda 21 in Sopot started as late as in 1995-96, the first steps towards development strategy and sustainable development of the city were made earlier. Sopot's Local Agenda 21 origins in 1990 when new conditions enabled the town to make its decisions about the direction in which it wanted to develop. It was then the development strategy of Sopot on its status as a health resort and tourist centre was based.

The Local Agenda 21 of Sopot as such was signed in 1996 after a few months long action consisting of the diagnosis concerning the state of the city and its inhabitants and several workshops of the Team of Strategy Elaboration. During the following years detailed schedules of the undertakings were created, and the strategy was implemented. In year 2000 a new initiative of creating of a co-ordinating body – LA21 office – occurred, the project, which is now being put into practice. The basis for the Local Agenda 21 action as such was created by the political changes in Poland and in whole Eastern Europe in 1989. The changes in the political system and new conditions made it possible for cities and towns to make their own decisions within the field of their development and objectives.

The Local Agenda 21 process was started as the result of the dialogue between the municipality and different groups of stakeholders. During the implementation of the strategy it became clear that one of the most important conditions for the success of the common objectives is the co-operation and integration of all the actors within the town and of all the social groups. It occurred also that although there was no formal Agenda 21 Document the town was heading just in that direction.

It was decided that there is a need of a new strategic plan, which will combine all the fields of sustainable development seen from different groups of actors' point of view. This initiative occurred in 1995. Finally the new strategic plan, which has become the local Agenda 21 Action Plan was elaborated in a real social manner. The base was the participation of 85 people representing different environments. There were representatives of the inhabitants, academic environment, health resort, tourist and recreation services, local businesses, non-governmental organisations, the province governor, the self-government council of the Gdansk province, the state police, political parties as well as self-government authorities and the town hall, altogether constituting The Team Of The Strategy Elaborators.

Level of participation and awareness

What can be regarded as essential when it comes to the Local Agenda21 in the city of Sopot is first of all the participation of almost all-possible stakeholders on the level of creating it. The development strategy was created both from the grassroot perspective and from the authority's point of view. The initiators of the process succeeded in integrating people from different environments, having different objectives – that is why the LA21 managed to cover all the fields of action. What is most important for the LA21 action in Sopot today is the co-operation and integration between all the actors realising the development strategy. Therefore one of the next steps of action is the

creation of LA21 Forum in Sopot. Apart from the Municipality workers and the members of the City Council there can be noticed a considerable engagement of non-governmental organisations in the process - especially of those dealing with environmental issues and of youth organisations but that are not the only examples. The level of public participation is something that must be improved - although there has been laid stress on the information campaigns; those actions are seldom long lasting. The dialogue between the municipality authorities and society leaves the space to improve, especially as it comes to the inhabitants that are not members of any organisations. The strong side, however, are the educational aspects and co-operation with schools and pupils. There are several youth projects ongoing and the level of consciousness among the young generation is increasing.

This situation is however very likely to be changed in the very near future due to the project of creating the Local Agenda 21 Office. What is important is the fact that the office will have as the main point in the strategy raising of the awareness concerning the notion of sustainable development and the undertaking within the city. This may probably lead to the stimulation of the wider public participation. Next stage of the planned development of LA21 Action Plan – namely the creation of the LA21 Forum, will also change this situation.

Cooperation

When it comes to the co-operation within the field of LA21 what has to be mentioned is the recently started co-operation of the LA21 Office with the city of Sundsvall (Sweden), which has huge experience with stimulating of public participation and activating of the private sector. This will also surely contribute to the successful development of the Local Agenda 21 in Sopot.

Future plans

The same people that was included in the plan and with who it was and will be realised, are still working on the future of Sopot. In the same way we have gained much experience in mobilising and integrating people from different environments on the common goals, and the active, free of claims attitude of people living and working in Sopot promises future successes. The detailed schedules of the undertakings, their costs and executors as well as the sources of financing /from the city budget, but also private, state, foreign aid funds, credits etc./ are being prepared.

The main objectives of the Local Agenda 21 Process are (beside the implementation of the LA 21 Action Plan):

- Awareness raising about the idea of Agenda 21, sustainable development and the environmental directives and spreading information about the undertakings and decisions within the city, with the focus on the three main field of the sustainable development.
- Initiating and supporting of environmentally friendly projects heading to goals connected with the sustainable development.
- Establishment of the dialogue and the plane of co-operation between the municipality and the society and the stimulation of the public participation with the focus on the NGO's.
- Collection of the opinions of the society and the grassroots' perspective comments and conveying it to the municipality actors.
- Thorough analysis of the situation of the city, verification of the strategic plan, calculation of needs and creation of the foundation for establishing of the Local Agenda 21 Forum.

Special characteristics of the LA21 process:

Strengths and weaknesses

The obvious strength of the LA21 in Sopot is its foundation. Sopot is one of the few cities in Poland, that have a strategic plan elaborated in a social manner with the participation of people representing different actors within the city. The people that created the vision for the city were groups of inhabitants, academic environment, health resort, tourist and recreation services, local businesses, non-governmental organisations, the state police, political parties as well as self-government authorities and the town hall. They managed to create the plan that is something possible to implement, as it comprises the needs of almost every citizen.

What is important is the fact that there were not only those 85 people who participated in the workshops of the elaboration group that had the possibility to influence the final version of the strategy of action. The work has been preceded by the diagnosis concerning the state of the city and its inhabitants, with a particular regard to the sociological research, including 70% of adult Sopot-dwellers - which gave a view on socially and spatially differentiated problems. This stable foundation has also resulted in the fact that the action plan is being implemented – there is hardly any field of action plan that is not being successfully realised.

The main drawback of the process that can be issued is the fact that the platform of dialogue between all the actors within the city has not been fully availed. Although the resolutions of the strategy have been successfully implemented, there has not been established any organ or office with the task to verify and update the Local Agenda 21, not only from the municipality workers point of view, but also the inhabitants. The society was not fully informed about the decisions taken within the municipality; the extent of the public participation has not been satisfactory. The weak point is the lack of the LA21 Forum within the city or other body responsible for the public participation and the dialogue between the different actions within the city. It became clear that the municipality must make a step towards public participation – one such a step is the establishment of the Local Agenda 21 Office.

Political commitment

In April 1996 the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan was signed by the City Council. It has become the main objective for the development of the city. What accompanied the LA21 Document was the report on the environmental state of the city. The city's management as well as the Municipality Departments was obliged to report on the implementation of the plan annually.

4. Contact information:

Magda Marchewicz

Magda_marchlewicz@wp.pl

5.12. City of Sundsvall, Sweden

Sundsvall's Agenda 21 work: Environment for Life

Sundsvall – on the way from one-sided industrial society to a sustainable society

1. Basic information:

Sundsvall has approximately 94,000 residents the bulk of whom live in or near Sundsvall proper. The labour market is however larger as within a one-hour commuting distance there is an additional population of 50,000 in Härnösand, Timrå, Ånge and Nordanstig. Sundsvall is an important domestic transportation hub with Sweden's seventh largest airport and a travel time to Stockholm, the capital, of three hours by high-speed train. Sundsvall also has the deepest harbour in northern Sweden, which handles a considerable goods tonnage. Through the years Sundsvall's image has been intimately associated with the major industries located near the core area and consequently Sundsvall had become known as a town burdened with environmental problems. However, over the past few decades' major improvements have been achieved by virtue of the energetic and dedicated efforts of the industries themselves and the municipality. The fruit of their combined endeavours is changing the image of Sundsvall.

Challenges

Areas like Sundsvall, with a long history of industrial activity, have to bear the weight of earlier environmental "transgressions". Leaching landfill sites, contaminated and, in places dead, seabed in the Bay of Sundsvall, polluted soil at old industrial sites, mercury contaminated lakes and other problems have been inherited. In keeping with Environment for Life, we do not intend to allow old mistakes to pass unaddressed.

2. Type of LA21 process

The beginning of the process

When, in March of 1994, Sundsvall began working on the production of a local Agenda 21 it was natural to base this undertaking on the same grounds as the 1991 world health conference held in Sundsvall by the WHO and UNEP. The conference theme was "Supportive Environments for Health" and the closing declaration, the Sundsvall Declaration, presented both opportunities and responsibility to the residents of Sundsvall to continue the work. Sundsvall's Agenda 21 was adopted by the city council in December 1997,

It is a target document, the goals of which are to be fulfilled by the year 2020. The achievement of these objectives requires that everyone; the city, business community, associations and individuals, understand the essence of the goals of Sundsvall's Agenda 21 and they create action plans to steer how they shall undertake to transform their operations to realise the creation of a sustainable society.

Activities

When we launched our Agenda 21 work in 1994 we agreed that we should start by creating good examples that can be spread and adopted by others. People in modern society no longer meet one another as they once did. Many feel alone and isolated. By ensuring that people are given the opportunity to meet we facilitate discussion and things start to happen. In Sundsvall we can summarise our work with the following words:

- Participation
- Knowledge

- Cyclical approach
- Long-term
- Sustainability

During the preceding years we worked to instil the Agenda ideas through educational activities and via projects to examine and evaluate different strategies. Sundsvall's Agenda 21 sets forth the overall aim of making Sundsvall a sustainable society by year 2020. Businesses, the municipality, organisations and individuals are responsible for determining their own plan of action in order to reach the goal.

Awareness

A lot of people are involved in our Agenda 21 work, but still the Agenda 21 work is relatively unknown to a lot of our inhabitants. Therefore we have bought a caravan to meet people in their living areas at Local Environmental Days etc.

Organisational planning

The work involved with Sundsvall's Agenda 21 is one of the city's central concerns and, as of January 1999, the City Executive Council's Development Committee has assumed responsibility for these issues. The Development Committee works together with a group of civil servants. The Committee also leads work concerning the labour market, general planning, traffic planning, public health as well as business and international collaboration. The focus is on undertakings that cross-traditional boundaries and the Development Committee's work are to lead towards a city that is attractive for children and young people.

3. Special characteristics of the LA21 process:

Strengths and weakness, success and failures

The most important strength factor is the implementation in the municipal organisation and that many persons are involved in the work. Another important factor is the holistic view in our work and that work for public health has been one of the fundamentals from the beginning.

The biggest weakness factor is the conservatism in our administration and that it is so difficult to demonstrate the economic consequences as the budget system gives us small possibilities to analyse this. Our annual environmental balance sheet has been very important for the local debate. Earlier we often got unbalance debate, as the knowledge was so unequal between experts and ordinary inhabitants. Nowadays all participants have good information and it is rather easy to discuss what is most important for good environment and health.

Most difficult has been to implement understanding in our society about the environmental impact from the traffic system and especially of the impact of your daily travelling habits. The private car is still a holy cow.

Political commitment

In 1990 the City Council adopted the following goal: *Sundsvall should be "a municipality with a good environment in ecological balance, where people can live in good health and enjoy unspoilt natural surroundings. The image of Sundsvall as an environmentally burdened industrial centre shall be changed. Not later than 1995 the city will be well-known for the results of its good environmental protection efforts."*

Despite an economic crisis along the way, the politicians have stuck to this goal and ensured that environmental work and public health has been allocated resources and has moved steadily up the political agenda.

Environmental issues in Sundsvall involve all of the city's departments and enterprises. Every department and civic company is required to include environmental considerations in their operations and allow environmental factors to influence their undertakings. Sundsvall's Agenda 21, as adopted by the City Council in December of 1997, requires the participation of all civic bodies. A large number of new dynamic projects have generated new approaches and ideas, which have then been incorporated in the day-to-day work of the municipality.

LA21 project examples

Environmental Balance Sheet

In 1991 when the City Council adopted the city's environmental plan it also required that an annual assessment be done in the form of an "environmental balance sheet". The residents of Sundsvall were to be involved in work to improve the environment and receive clear information concerning the return on funds invested in the environment. Knowledge is necessary if people are to be able to influence events and therefore the environmental balance sheet has come to play a role in the democratic process. The first environmental balance sheet was published in 1991 and was not only the first for Sundsvall, but also the first in Sweden. Today, roughly one-third of the local governments in Sweden, release environmental audits/balance sheets annually. Follow-up and evaluation are important elements in the work of generation change. The Environmental Balance Sheet is an important component of the eco-auditing process in Sundsvall. To date, it has been prepared for ten consecutive years.

Sundsvall's Environment plan

The environment plan contains a series of detailed proposals to improve the environment. This action plan also aims to reach the goals set down by the City Council in March 1990 with respect to our natural surroundings and environment. Among the goals is to alter the image of Sundsvall as an industrial centre burdened by environmental problems. Work associated with the Environment Plan was conducted in project form within the city executive until December 1997, when a local Agenda 21 was adopted. Agenda 21 undertakings are now the responsibility of City Planning Unit of the Office of the Executive Board, which continues to strive towards a healthy living environment.

Supportive Environments in the neighbourhood - Power to influence improves residents' health

Agenda 21 is not only an undertaking to protect the environment but also involves the creation of supportive environments for people's lives and living. To be able to carry out our assignment as defined by Agenda 21 requires the active involvement of many individuals in their environments. Supportive environments where people are permitted to participate and demonstrate a commitment is a sound method to help awaken awareness and spread the undertaking to more people than a few dedicated enthusiasts.

Residential Areas in Sundsvall became Agenda 21 projects

Households are the source of more than half of all emissions in Sweden that affect the environment. Environmental work results in more than just composts and allotment-gardens. You get a sense of community and co-operation with one's neighbours into the bargain. Local democracy and influence are important cornerstones in the growth of a sustainable society.

Local area description as starting point for strategic municipal public health work

Within the scope of the City of Sundsvall's general goals a desire is expressed to link undertakings within public health, environment and democracy. Residential areas are one of the most important areas for this work. The undertaking launched 1997 and as is yet not completed, ultimately is to create a strategy for public health work within the City of Sundsvall.

Clean Workplace!

The project Clean Workplace was launched in May of 1993. The aim was to get underway an effective and self powered work for the environment at a minimum of 50% of the municipality's workplaces. The work would be a part of the Agenda 21-work and the goal was to reduce the pressure on the environment, to show a good example, to increase the consciousness about the environment and to profile the municipality regarding the work for the environment. The project ended in June of 1998. The most important outcome of the project was an increased awareness of, and deeper knowledge about the environmental problems and about Agenda 21.

Green Purchasing

The purchase guide has then become the basis of a policy for ecological purchase that all the local authorities in the province have adopted. The Purchase Guide has existed since 1994 and is constantly evaluated by its users. The guide also works for purchasers in the private sector. It also used in school teaching and other educational situations. The guide is divided into a number of sections for different kinds of goods and services: transportation, packaging, plastics, vehicles, fuels, batteries, furniture, textiles, office machines, provisions etc. The material can easily and without too much revision be used in different kinds of purchasing.

Green plan

Biological diversity is a prerequisite for our own survival. The children of today must early in their lives be introduced to the wonders and mysteries of nature so that as adults they will understand and appreciate mankind's place in the eco-system. With this insight they will be prepared to care for both plants and animals, preserve their natural habitats and in doing so safeguard the well-being of the human race. The heart of town and the housing districts need an abundance of trees, bushes and flowers. The preservation and development of the prerequisites for biological diversity is essential also in urban areas. Our parks and gardens form a network where each component contributes significantly to the whole. A lawn with a few flowers is a much better living environment than a closely cropped lawn. The municipality is producing a green plan for the green areas in and nearby our urban areas.

4. Contact information:

Mrs. Marie-Louise Henriksson

Environment Planning Officer/Agenda 21

E-mail: marie.louise.henriksson@sundsvall.se

See also our website: www.sundsvall.se

5.13. Tartu, Estonia

Tartu Agenda 21

Tartu – a sustainably developing, socially responsible, and economically thinking town.

1. Basic information:

During the Soviet Union ages 1944-1991 Tartu was the second largest city after the capital Tallinn, in 1977 the population of Tartu reached 100 000. In 1951 Estonian Agricultural Academy was separated from Tartu University and so Tartu got two universities with tuition in the Estonian language. Many industrial enterprises were established, mainly to cover the needs of Eastern market. Whereas there was also a military airport for Soviet Union strategic bombers established, Tartu was until the beginning of 1990es a closed city to foreign visitors. This was a braking factor to the city development.

After 1991 Tartu is opened to foreigners again. More and more students from other European countries come to study to Tartu University and to Estonian Agricultural Academy, foremost from Finland. Despite of the problems that arose in the beginning of 1990es from the restructuring of the economy (the disappearance of big industrial enterprises, the bankruptcy of Tartu Kommertspank that was the first established bank after Soviet Union had fallen to pieces) the activities in these fields are going to expand slowly. Building activity is a very quickly developing field.

Nowadays Tartu is still the second largest city in Estonia. The number of permanent residents is 101 246 (men 44 920, women 56 326) that is about 7% from the whole population. Density per sq km is 2441 (01.01.200) and that is quite high compared with other Estonian big cities. Like in many other Estonian cities in Tartu the number of births is lower than the number of deaths and that is going to create big social problems in the near future. During the Soviet years the importance of Tartu as an education and science city was diminished but nowadays Tartu is known to offer education and health services and of course as a regional center. The area of Tartu is 38,8 km² and city is separated into two separate parts by the River Emajõgi (the length of the river in Tartu is 10 km).

General challenges

The most general problems are poverty and its consequences (growth of crime, alcoholism), under-employment of women and youth, developmental advantages of children and adults are not paid due attention, the continuing extinction of species and the impoverishment of the living environment, continuous growth of motor vehicle traffic and the resulting deterioration of air quality and traffic safety, non-competitiveness of public transport, increase in the volume of all kinds of wastes and no proper sorting of waste at its source, poor quality of water in some parts of the public water supply system, problems with getting adequate medical help in time (long queues), new buildings endanger city's green areas. The challenges are to cope with and to solve these problems.

Environmental challenges

The biggest environmental problems are:

Poor quality of water in some parts of the public water supply system;

- Continuous growth of motor vehicle traffic and the resulting deterioration of air quality and traffic safety.
- Large losses in power and district heat transmission, resulting in excessive production, an increased output of pollutants and higher energy costs.

- Increase in the volume in all kind of waste and insufficient regulation of waste treatment. Insufficient information on different ways of waste handling.

Challenges:

- Clean and high quality drinking water to all the citizens of Tartu.
- Smoother and safer traffic management for motor vehicles, fewer road accidents, less people distressed by traffic noise. Reduced air pollution by motor vehicles and cleaner air. Competitiveness of public transport and its increased use. No transit traffic through the city, a traffic scheme considering the preservation of nature objects.
- Smaller energy losses in production, in distribution networks and at the user end. Environmentally friendly production of electricity and heat with maximum reliance on local fuel resources. Minimal air pollution.
- Tidiness and order at waste disposal centres, the availability of special-purpose containers. Reduced amounts of waste at the refuse tip. Efficient waste management: everybody fulfils his or her duties. Toxic waste is kept away from the environment and the food chain; hazardous waste will not be delivered to the municipal refuse tip. Availability of sufficient and easily obtainable information on waste handling possibilities.

The beginning of the process

On 6 November 1997 (Order No 2601), Tartu City Government appointed a work group to prepare, by joining the efforts of people from different spheres of administration, Tartu Agenda 21 - a document reflecting the principles of sustainable development and the aspirations for purposeful development of Tartu. The cornerstone for Tartu Agenda 21 was laid in 1994 in Aalborg together with other European local authorities. Other important landmarks are the relevant resolution passed in the 40th session of Tartu City Council on 28 June 1995; the amendment of Statute of the City of Tartu (Regulation No 11 of the City Council, 22 May 1997) and the launch of the above-mentioned work group. The compilation and implementation of Tartu Agenda 21 is a motivating activity that has considerably helped to enhance environmental awareness. Different target groups and levels of administration have been involved in the compilation of Tartu Agenda 21. The resulting document (approved by Tartu City Council Regulation No 67, 17 December 1998) explains to the public in Tartu, as well as other regions in Estonia and abroad the reasons for selecting the road of sustainable development.

More than 40 meetings were held among the members of the work group and sub-groups, as well as two forums and a seminar- information day. A relevant project was launched in schools, a number of lectures and reports were presented in the departments of the City Government, in other local authorities and organizations carrying out similar projects. News items and feature articles were published in newspapers and periodicals; contract work was initiated, managed and implemented. Tartu participates in the preparation of Estonian Agenda 21 and in the international sustainable development network.

The primary reason for starting the LA21 coincides with the main goal of Tartu Agenda 21: Human- and environmental-friendly, sustainable development in Tartu. The general goals are a healthy urban environment with minimal human damage to the city and its surroundings, guaranteeing of diverse landscape and biota in both the city and its surroundings, the sustainable use of natural resources, promotion of the regenerative capacity of nature, the maintenance and enrichment of specific natural features characteristic of Tartu, the development of citizens' environmental awareness, humanity, a sense of beauty and love for their city and their home-country.

The roots of Tartu Agenda 21 lie within the Estonian nature protection movement. Initiated by the nature and environmental protection leaders of the city, the project continues to be co-coordinated by the Tartu City Government. The first step towards LA21 was the translation of Aalborg Charter into Estonian and the judgment of Tartu City Council on 28 June 1995 and the launch of the above-mentioned work group in 1997.

Activities

The relevant activity for our LA21 is a holistic/problem based approach where all economical, social and ecological circumstances are taken into account when planning the development.

To make the LA21 work successful it is very important to work with a broad range of partners who can give specific information and many good ideas (administrators, scientists, businessmen, non-profit organizations, public). It is also important that the environmental consciousness (not only the environmental awareness) among the public is high and information is a very important tool to raise it.

So far a systemic work covering all basic activities in a city administration has been done and now the process is in an implementation phase. In the future the fostering of development of awareness, skills and responsibilities in all the spheres of environmental protection and sustainable development is going to continue. For example the thematic years of Tartu Agenda 21 (1999 – year of clean water, 2000 – year of natural rarities, 2001 – year of clean air, 2002 – year of green areas etc.) will continue. In 2000 many guided tours were organized to know better different types of local landscape, plants and animals under nature protection etc. Networking between city government and other institutions was fostered. Tartu Youth` Nature House organized special drawing competition where there were participants from every school in Tartu. Diplomas issued on behalf of Tartu Agenda 21 jointly with Department of Education awarded the best teachers. Development unit of Planning and Land Surveying Department commissioned compiling of two thematic posters for disseminating in all schools (to be exposed in every classroom) and among other target groups. One of posters presented parks and other nature objects of Tartu (trees, caves, devonian outcrops etc.) under protection on the base of legal acts, and other poster presented species under protection which can be found in Tartu or in the surroundings of Tartu (plants, birds, amphibians etc.)

In 2000 the first competition of Tartu Agenda 21 “Enterprises towards complying environmental legislation – 2000” was initiated in the frames of implementation Tartu Agenda 21 by the Developmental Unit of Planning and Land Surveying Department, and implemented jointly and in good co-operation with unit of Environmental Services of Tartu City Government, Rescue Board of Tartu County, Tartu Public Health Board and regional office of the Ministry of Environment in Tartu County. Winner of the first award became Tartu Waterworks Ltd. Second award was appointed to Clinical Hospitals of Tartu University and the third award was appointed to AV-Tristar Ltd., whose main sphere of work is car maintenance. Award ceremony was held together with award ceremony of business competition Tartu Top 25.

A great step further in 2000 was also the establishment of the Tartu Agenda 21 Foundation by the City of Tartu on September 28. The aim of this foundation is to inspire and maintain pupils ongoing activities in spheres of social, built and natural environment. Assets of Tartu Agenda 21 Foundation (100 000 EEK) will be stored as a deposit of fixed date in a credit institution in order to get interest, from which scholarships will be disbursed annually. The main part of the money (80 837 EEK) for establishing that foundation has been donated by Per Aarsleff A/S to the City of Tartu in year 1999,

when Tartu Agenda 21 project won the first Best Environmental Practice in the Baltic Cities Award of the UBC. First scholarships were appointed in December 2000.

In order to foster LA21 activities in Estonia and to get an overview of nature conservation in Estonian municipalities a roundtable of high-ranking officials of Estonian municipalities gathered in Tartu 26 of January 2001. A session of brainstorming was held and it gave very valuable suggestions.

Level of participation and activity

The big success is the full compilation and full approval of the document and action plan. There are difficulties at different steps of the implementation. In this moment only one person is working with Agenda 21, the participation varies at different steps of implementation. Mostly they are involved financially and helping with know-how.

Cooperation and organization of the LA21 process

Tartu is actively co-operating with all relevant organizations and projects in Estonia and also in Europe. The work is organized mainly through networking with local and international networks. National core group exists. Key persons are contributing very actively. (Tartu did not use any external model in LA21 process directly.)

3. Special characteristics of the LA21 process

Strengths and weaknesses

The strengths for sustainable development in Tartu:

- The will to deal with environmental and social problems.
- The existence of clearly established environmental aims.
- The understanding that no human activity can exceed the tolerance limits of people and nature.
- The existence of educated and devoted staff.
- The potential of scientific institutions, university lectures, academics and other experts.
- The weaknesses for sustainable development in Tartu: there is no environmental commission in the City Council; it would be very useful to have a unit that deals only with sustainable development questions (like in Tallinn), a co-coordinating unit.

It is very typical for the LA21 work in Tartu that it was not very easy to convince carrier administrators in the beginning, but now everybody says: "I did the biggest part of the work."

Political control and public awareness

All units inside and outside (businesses, non-profit organizations, public) the City Government are involved into the Agenda 21 process. Unfortunately, political control over Agenda 21 process is missing. Therefore e.g. a commission on environment/sustainable development is needed. In Tartu the awareness of the LA21 project is quite well known but it could be better

4. Contact information:

Kristel Jonasson
krissux@ut.ee

5.14. Varena district municipality, Lithuania

Formulation of the vision and identification of development priorities according the principles of sustainable development.

1. Basic information:

Varena region is situated in the south of Lithuania. The district is rich with natural resources: forests, rivers and lakes. Varena is the district with 64 % of its territory covered by forests. According to statistical data of January 2001, there were 33 595 inhabitants in Varena district. Among them 35 % lived in Varena town (11 838) and 65 % – in rural areas (21 757), 47 % of population in the district were men and 53 % – women. Density of population is the lowest in Lithuania. Ethnic composition: 90 % - Lithuanians, 7,7 % – Polish, 1 % – Russians, 1,3 % – other nationalities.

There were 298 individual enterprises, 122 joint stock companies; 61 nonprofits, 75 public administration institutions, in total 662 institutions registered in 2001 01.01. Prevailing industry is food production.

Biggest challenges

At present Varena district, as well as all Lithuania, is experiencing economical decline. The most urgent problem is unemployment (in January 2001 it was 9.9%). In the labour exchange 1507 unemployed persons and 945 vacancies were registered in January 2001. The district might be attractive for foreign tourists because of its nature, but it obviously lacks common services. This happens mainly because of the lack of investments.

In order to know the opinion of inhabitants on the most important problems the public opinion poll was conducted. 990 inhabitants participated in the poll, among them 67% were rural inhabitants, 72% – women, 53% – from 31 to 40 years old, 49% – inhabitants with college degree.

The majority (95%) of the respondents identified unemployment as the most important problem. 31 % – pointed out the complicated development of production and business, 28% – insufficient medical care and 27% – educational reform. Unemployment, education and land reform problems were the most important for rural inhabitants while people living in the town pointed out unemployment, business development, quality and price of communal services. Older people were worried more about unemployment and delinquency, medical care problems, while young people – unemployment, housing and business development.

Environmental challenges

Environment is a priority field in Varena district municipality and the most important environmental problems are:

Drinking water (bad quality of the presently used watershed - new water head is under planning, ironed nature of the underground water);

Waste management (the landfill is overloaded and therefore since 1995 the recycling and the container collection system were introduced. The challenging problem is 34 illegal dumping sites in the district, which pollute the groundwater and spoil the landscape. By the year 2004 Alytus county regional waste management system should be implemented (ISPA projects) which will solve waste collection and management problems and 80 % of Varena population will be able to use the end results of this project.)

An opinion poll showed that the most urgent problem for the population (56%) of Varena district is waste management. Quality of the drinking water is a problem for 47% of respondents. Wastewater treatment and maintenance of forests areas and recreation zones is seen as urgent issue by 42% of the respondents. The most urgent environmental problems for the rural population are the quality of drinking water and waste management. Varena town people consider wastewater management and maintenance of forest areas and recreation zones as biggest environmental problems.

2. Type of LA21 process:

Enablers

In order to start LA21 in the municipality it is very important:

- To have support of politicians.
- That administration takes active part and has high qualification.
- To acquaint administration with principles of sustainable development and train them.

In order to implement project it is necessary:

- To involve politicians into implementation process.
- To attract public.
- To have active and qualified work of consultants.
- That politicians, administration and public would be willing to work together and understand principles of sustainable development.
- Sharing experience and information between municipalities implementing LA21 in Lithuania and abroad.

The beginning of the process

The Varena district municipality started the LA21 project in March 2000 after ECAT announced their project "Local Agenda 21 for small and medium sized Lithuanian municipalities" and invited municipalities to participate in it. The LA21 project in the Varena district was initiated by the advisor to the Mayor on Ecology and by the Senior Economist of the Finance Department and approved by the mayor and administrator.

Activity

The main task of the project is formulation of the vision of the Varena district and setting priorities. However, one of the main ideas is public involvement when solving problems of the district and development plans, as well as to train different departments to work together. It is very important to involve people in this process because local people know best their problems and can suggest better solutions and new ideas. Open discussions help to better understand problems and get public support, if public is passive conflicts can be expected when implementation starts and then to change anything is difficult and needs additional resources.

The activities so far:

A short review on Varena district was prepared;

Questionnaires for public opinion polls were prepared;

Public opinion poll and data analysis was performed;

Politicians and public were acquainted with the LA21 project and results of the opinion poll;

Together with ECAT consultants a seminar was organized for administration of municipality "How to make meetings more effective";

Work is going on in the subgroups in order to set priorities of the development of the district on the basis of which a strategic plan will be prepared.

At present the LA21 work group, together with politicians and citizen representatives, is preparing a project of priorities for the development of the district, which will be presented for public discussions.

Future plans

In the future it is planned to prepare the Varena district strategic development plan according to the priorities approved by the district council and based on the principles of sustainable development.

After analysing the information about problems of the district in different areas and data of the public opinion poll, a project work group will prepare a draft of the vision and priorities which will be discussed by the public and politicians. The work group will analyse results and prepare a draft of the council decision on the approval of the Varena vision and development priorities.

A leaflet, "Implementation of LA21 ideas in Varena district " will be prepared.

Level of participation

On the basis of the Mayor's order a project work coordination group consisting of 12 specialists from different departments was established. Later subgroups working on various fields were formed and about 50 people were involved: politicians, citizens, administration staff, specialists and representatives of NGOs: Business and crafts association, Agriculture consultation council, District environmental protection agency; Village tourism association, Ecological education centre, Dzukija national park, Education centre, Public health centre, Youth non-governmental organizations.

Organizational planning

When organizing LA21 activities a work plan was prepared where tasks and responsible people, terms and resources were foreseen. However, because administration staff was lacking time this plan was constantly corrected. There was no person in the municipality who would be working only with projects and who could coordinate work of this project.

Cooperation patterns

Communication and collaboration between municipalities was going on mainly during the seminars organized by ECAT, sharing experience, good examples, etc. A big success was a study trip to Poland organized by ECAT. Polish municipalities have experience in creating strategic plans based on sustainable development principles.

3. Special character of the LA21 process:

Strengths

Willingness of politicians and administration to prepare a real acceptable for public Varena district development plan, which could be interesting for investors and which could serve as basis to prepare investment projects from EU funds. Collaboration and exchange of experience between Lithuanian and foreign municipalities implementing LA21. More ideas appear when politicians, active citizens, consultants and specialists work together. Qualification of administration of the municipality is rather high. Active communication of the staff of municipality, collaboration with politicians and public creates positive image of municipality. Open public discussions helps to understand better simple problems, to find better solutions, assures public support. Decisions of the municipality become more clear and effective.

Weaknesses

Major part of society is disappointed about the work of public institutions and is passive in the LA21 process. Administration has not enough experience of public involvement. Administration cannot devote enough time to implement the project according to the plan. Too little time is allocated for implementation of the project and it has to be adapted to this situation. On the one side consultants have too little experience of similar project and on the other had administration of the municipality is not able to fully use help of consultants. Due to the difficult financial situation of the municipality there is no possibility to allocate enough resources for effective implementation of LA21 project and preparation of strategic plan. Insufficient language skills limit possibilities of administration to communicate and exchange experience with municipalities of other countries.

Successes

Good question nary for opinion poll was prepared and interesting and valuable information about public opinion on various issues was obtained. LA21 project was successfully introduced to Varena region council because not only ideas of sustainable development and experience of their implementation in other countries were introduced but also activities of administration in this field and results of public opinion poll. Politicians and administration understood importance of public participation. Collaboration between different departments of municipality was strengthened.

Failures

Because of lack of time detailed analysis of the current status of municipality was not prepared. Because of lack of time and resources not all planned activities were implemented. This project aimed to implement unrealistic plans – to prepare a strategic plan in a one-year period. The main aim of the municipality was to acquaint public and politicians with LA21 project, ideas as sustainable development and their importance, to promote more active cooperation between administration staff and to try to involve public and politicians into the process and together prepare vision of the district and development priorities.

Political control

Politicians were periodically informed about the progress of LA21 project.

Public awareness

A public opinion poll showed which part of society would be willing to participate in the decision-making: 58,5% of the respondents would like to participate in discussing problems and development of the Varena district, 13% - would not like. Some of them think that their participation will not change anything; others think that they lack knowledge in this field and it would be better if the municipality solves the problems. The activity depends on education of the respondents: the higher education the bigger willingness to participate. 71% of the respondents with higher education think it is important to participate in the process.

Contact information:

S. Griskeviciene

Advisor to the Administration on Ecological Issues

varena@lsa.lt

5.15. Varsinais-Suomi, Finland

VARSINAIS-SUOMEN AGENDA 21 -The communities' joint project for sustainable development

1. Basic information:

Varsinais-Suomen Agenda 21 (the agenda in southwest of Finland) is the communities' joint project for sustainable development in Varsinais-Suomi. In year 2001 twenty-five communities in Varsinais-Suomi are involved in this regional cooperation. The area of operation for Varsinais-Suomen Agenda 21 (will from now on be referred to as V-S Agenda 21) is by its' structure very complex. There are town districts, rural districts and archipelago districts. The main parts are sparsely populated. There are only seven municipalities that have a population that exceeds the limit of 10 000 inhabitants. There are altogether 331 890 inhabitants in this area of operation. The city of Turku has the most inhabitants in the area with a population of 170 931 and the island municipality of Velkua has the smallest with a population of 252.

Varsinais-Suomi has been a prosperous agricultural area for long, mainly due to the lucrative soil and the long growth season. The nature conditions and the cultural environment in Varsinais-Suomi are diverse and multiform; you can find both the Baltic Sea with its' beautiful archipelago and the more traditional rural landscape with its' fields of seed. The sea is of special importance in Varsinais-Suomi. It makes the counties' climate; vegetation, fauna, culture and partly also the language differ from the main land. The sea and the many rivers have influenced people's lives during many hundred years.

Challenges

The agriculture and the water environment are in a tight interaction with each other. The situation of the continuous erosion of the water system is one of the most alarming problems in Varsinais-Suomi. The scattered loading due to the agriculture, the communities and the scattered settlement is still growing. The recurrent of the blue-green algae in the Baltic Sea every summer is the main sign of the water erosion.

Changes the rural area: The rural change is a big threat to nature's diverseness. Clearing land for cultivation, drainage and forestry have affected the natural conditions over hundreds of years. Over the past ten years effective agriculture with its' fertilizers and pesticides has added to this change. The traditional landscapes disappear and the number of endangered species continues to grow.

2. Type of LA21 process:

The beginning of the process

V-S Agenda 21 strives to improve sustainable development in the whole Varsinais-Suomi area. The aim is that every municipality in this area would join the regional cooperation and start the work with sustainable development in their municipality.

The V-S Agenda 21 started in the city of Lieto in February 1997, originally with 18 municipalities involved. The V-S Agenda is based on the Rio declaration from 1992 that was proposed to municipalities all over the world. The municipalities wanted to cooperate with the Agenda work and as a result to this a regional sustainable development office was founded.

There is a long tradition of cooperation between the municipalities in Varsinais-Suomi and therefore it felt natural to start the Local Agenda work together as well. Cooperation grows resources, and in this way even the small municipalities with weaker resources can improve their sustainable development through this cooperation. In addition to this, there are several things that can, and should, be done in a greater scale than just one municipality. The shared themes have been chosen on the basis of this.

The environmental authorities in the municipalities started the cooperation plans. An action program was prepared on a general level and was sent to all municipalities in Varsinais-Suomi. The local governments handled the matter and decided to participate in the regional sustainable development cooperation. The local governments also chose a representative to the management group, in most cases it is the municipal manager and mayor. It has also been possible to join the V-S Agenda 21 at a later point; today 25 municipalities are involved in this process.

Activities

The Agenda office has planned different training venues, seminars, discussing groups, campaign weeks, other venues and competitions and has visited the municipalities in order to increase the inhabitants' possibilities to participate in the LA21 work. These functions have helped the municipalities to improve sustainable development in their own activities. During the last working period around 70 seminars, training venues and functions have been organized. Over 50 visits to municipalities were made. During the period of 1999-2001 over 4000 people have participated in these functions.

Another goal for the V-S Agenda 21 office has been to increase the environmental awareness among the people and with that also learn them a more environmental friendly way of living. Along with different functions the V-S office has handed out fliers about LA21, e.g. about info desks about sustainable development in libraries, eco tips in the media, press releases, bulletins, web sites and schools and day care handouts.

The V-S Agenda office is planning and manufacturing different guides and other material about sustainable development as a tool for the municipalities. Last period 12 different publications were made, e.g. a guide on sustainable purchasing for the purchasers in the municipalities, Agenda guides for all schools and day care centres and a map on waste water treatment in scattered areas for the environmental- or health departments in the municipalities.

Level of participation and awareness

The V-S Agenda 21 office should create different tools and methods for the municipalities to work with sustainable development in practice. The agenda work is mostly on a grass-root level and is based on voluntary work. Every one is welcome to work with LA21. A reliable and productive agenda work demands tight cooperation with the local authorities, elected officials and with the management in the municipality. The agenda work strives to improve the discussion and the interaction between different authorities.

The agenda office's job is:

- Coordination of ongoing projects
- Starting new projects
- Gathering the workgroups and being in charge of their activity
- Arranging seminars and education
- Different events and campaigns

- Information spreading
- Supporting and giving expertise help to support the work with sustainable development

The V-S Agenda 21 is based on a broad municipal cooperation. The V-S Agenda 21 office has in its five years of existence become an important figure as a regional sustainable development office. This kind of broad participation within the work of sustainable development is rare in Finland. During the next period the number of V-S Agenda 21 municipals will increase even more.

One of the conditions for the Local Agenda work is to be able to see the overall picture; another criterion for a successful process is a broad participation. These are also the V-S Agenda 21 process's starting points. The environmental awareness and awareness rising are the foundation of Local Agenda work. With the increasing environmental awareness and with the love for nature people will learn their responsibilities within the sustainable development work. For example, in water protection it is necessary to decrease the nutrient level in all activities and everywhere. This again requires divers selection of means as well as a broad participation and a persistent cooperation.

It is vital for the Local Agenda work that different authorities in the municipalities participate in the work with sustainable development already in the planning phase. In the V-S Agenda 21 this has been carried out through different workgroups, in 2001 there were ten workgroups involved with the work (1 management group, 1 working committee, 3 water groups, 3 public awareness groups and 2 educational groups). In addition to this, there has been cooperation with several other authorities. All together over 200 people have been working in the workgroups

Organizational planning

The V-S Agenda 21 process is functioning as a roof organization for the work with sustainable development and gives the municipalities support and expertise help in many different ways.

In the first phase, when the Agenda 21 and along with it also the Agenda office were founded, the organization and the method of working took shape. The organization consists of a management group and 4 theme groups (later these were divided into smaller working groups). The management group consists of representatives from the municipalities and regional organizations. The management group has the highest power of decision in matters that concern the V-S Agenda 21. It leads and supports the agenda work and accepts the budget as well as the plan of action for every year.

The theme groups consist of experts and enthusiasts of the area. The municipalities' representation in these groups is very important. In the beginning the theme groups acted as so called planning groups and discussed goals, targets and forms of action for sustainable development within their area of expertise. The groups also started concrete actions in order to clarify the concept of sustainable development and to make the concept more apart of the everyday life. The main work was to prepare a sustainable development action plan, which would be used as a tool in the municipalities' work with sustainable development. The action plan was completed in the beginning of 1999. After this the theme groups were divided into smaller groups in order to implement the actions in the plan.

The working committee, which was founded in 1999, is the so-called expertise body. It plans future activities together with the agenda office, as well as it acts as a link between the agenda office and the municipalities. The working committee mainly consists of the municipalities' environmental officials. The condition for the cooperation and the network building between the municipalities is an active contribution from the workgroups. New workgroups will be founded as the need arises.

Future plans

The action plan for the third period of the V-S Agenda 21 is prepared for the next five years. The extended work period from three to five years will make it possible to focus even more on making sustainable development an every day concept and to make it a part of every day life.

The V-S Agenda's first action plan has functioned as a sustainable development tool for the municipalities. At this point the plan will be revised and updated. The next action plan will be prepared for years 2002-2006 and it is going to replace the first one. The new plan will be introduced during year 2002. The new period will mainly focus on the same things as the former period. The theme goals will be checked and they will if necessary be changed or improved. There will also be some following-up control of the implementation of the plan.

Cooperation

The V-S Agenda office is cooperating among others with people working with the environment in the municipalities and with many more of the municipalities' officials and elected officials, with many day-care centres for children and with many schools, businesses, universities, NGOs and private individuals in the municipalities as well as with the regional and national authorities.

3. Special characteristics of the process:

Strengths and weaknesses

The clear strength of the V-S Agenda 21 program is without a doubt the wide activity and the extensive activity field. The Agenda work has gotten more credibility through the wide cooperation between the many municipalities. Another strength is the continuity of the agenda work, which has enabled to hire long-term staff. The municipalities have adopted the office of sustainable development as a permanent organization and are not about to stop the financing. This makes long-term planning possible. It is also possible to get some real results, while the project is on a long-term basis.

As mentioned before, the V-S Agenda 21 started with a decision from the local government. The commitment of the management has given the work its needed credibility. On the other hand the work has more or less been about the municipalities' own inside matters and the inhabitants have not exactly been involved in it. The continuity of the work will however make it possible to expand the work in the future more towards the citizens. It is hard to distinguish weaknesses yourself, but one weakness is the low level of participation. The Local Agenda work is based on seeing the wholeness and on broad participation. Only with these things the work can successfully be carried out. The participation has however, regardless to some exceptions, been poor. This is why knowledge about the sustainable development office in Varsinais-Suomi spreads very slowly. On the other hand it is always hard and slow work to influence people's attitudes. It takes a long time to win over the resistance towards something new. When that threshold has been passed the work with sustainable development will progress easier and faster.

Characteristic for the V-S Agenda 21 is its practical functionality. There are only a few manifestos and they are made in such a fashion that everybody will understand them. The emphasis is on concrete action, on the practical deeds that will take the sustainable development forward.

4. Contact information:

Jaana Itälä

jaana.itala@vsagendatoimisto.fi

5.16. The Åland Islands, Finland

Ålands Agenda 21-office

1. Basic information:

The Åland islands is an autonomous region with a population of 26 000. We have our own government, The Landskapsstyrelse, which is appointed by the Lagting upon parliamentary principles after discussions between the political groups. The purpose of these negotiations is to ensure that the Landskapsstyrelse is supported by as broad a majority as possible – a minority government cannot be appointed.

The Åland Islands consist of 16 municipalities of which the (only) town Mariehamn is the largest with its population of 10 000 and Sottunga the smallest with 120 inhabitants. We are a demilitarised zone since the autonomy started in 1921. The main industries are tourism, shipping and trade.

Biggest challenges

Housing shortage. Drugs, because of the nearness to two big cities, Stockholm and Turku, it is easy to come in touch with drugs. It is also very easy to get alcohol, because of the ferries with cheap tax-free liquor and beer.

Biggest environmental challenges

The eutrophication of the Baltic Sea is a big problem. We can see the algae-blooming every summer and everybody is concerned. It even affects the tourism, you do not want to swim or fish in an “algae-soup”. In Åland we have a great number of cars, (about 16.000 private cars and 26.000 people) so the traffic is also one problem.

2. Type of LA21 process:

What enablers do you see as important for a LA21 process?

The fact that we are three persons working part time instead of just one makes us more creative. Åland Islands is a small society with two local newspapers and one radio station what makes it easy to reach out to people. Because our employer is an NGO, we can act very flexible and we are not seen as an authority.

The beginning of the process

The process started in 1994. The NGO, Ålands Natur och Miljö (the local environmental and nature association) held a seminar for employees and politicians in the municipalities and the regional government about the Agenda 21-document. The municipalities asked Ålands Natur och Miljö to lead the A21-process. In June 1995 the Agenda 21-office started. The regional government and the municipalities finance the office, but it is held by Ålands Natur och Miljö. In the beginning of 1996, each municipality had a local A21-group. The board of Ålands Natur och Miljö initiated the LA21 process. The first step was when the association Ålands Natur och Miljö held the seminar and when the municipalities asked them to lead the A21-work. The Åland lagting took an additional budget to finance the office. Since 1997 the municipalities also contribute. Every year an agreement is signed between 18 stakeholders; Ålands landskapsstyrelse, the 16 municipalities and Ålands Natur och Miljö.

Activities

The most important matter is to get as many as possible involved. To get people to understand that it IS important what we choose to do in our daily life. And if the politicians know that they have support among the people then they dare to take the decisions that is needed for a sustainable development.

The Åland Agenda 21-office has worked in many ways with different activities. In the beginning we supported the local A21-groups in their work with the Agenda 21- action plans and we continue to support them with “idea-changing meetings”, education and material. Our main task is to change attitudes and to show the connection between the global environmental problems and our daily life in the Åland Islands. We have had some campaigns during the years. Several campaigns have concerned the Baltic Sea. We have made two folders with information on the Baltic Sea situation, and what you can do to reduce the input of nutrition to the water. One of the folders is for the tourists that come to our islands. The Åland Islands are very much visited by tourists who travel here mostly by small boats and ferries. It is very important to preserve our nature and our culture. Both for the tourists as well as for those who have the land and the sea as a source of livelihood. The other folder contains advice about what you can do in your everyday life to help the Baltic Sea to recover. The same message we have had on the milk jars for two summers.

Another campaign went under the name of: “Is your breakfast suffering from travel sickness?” This campaign focused on consumption and how it can be related to transportation and the effect on the Baltic Sea eutrophication. We informed the public of the benefits of consuming local products instead of food that had travelled a long distance. We visualised this by putting three different breakfasts on three trays. One where the product had travelled far, one with local products, and the last one with products produced at home. Then we compared the trays and calculated how much fossil fuel each transport had consumed.

We have many projects going on all the time on different topics. For instance Fair Trade, Bio-diversity, Energy consumption, Traffic and transportation, Garbage and Wastewater, Nature and the use of resources. We have made a folder on the subject AIR and one folder concerning composting. We have seminars and lectures with invited lecturers. We co-operate with schools and distribute material to anybody who asks for it. We print a newsletter every month and we have a homepage on the Internet. An important task for us is to inform and inspire.

Future plans

We have established an office which is well known and which the contributors continue to support. The Agenda 21 process has been going on since 1995 and there is no sign of it to end. The stakeholders want us to continue and there is still work to be done even if a lot has been done already. But environmental issues are important and we are still trying to reach our goal, sustainable development. Our future plans are to continue with our grass-root work, but also to specialise on different groups in the society, for example companies and industries.

Our plans for this year is to work with:

- The Baltic sea and the oil-spill
- Arrange wanderings on different topics; nature, culture, spiritual...
- Arrange seminars in “responsible leadership” both for the church and the economic life
- Bio-diversity
- GMO
- Sustainable use of resources

Cooperation

At the Agenda 21-office we are three employees and in the municipalities there are 75 persons working voluntarily in so called Agenda 21-groups. We co-operate with loads of people depending on which project we are working with. For example: The Environmental bureau at Ålands landskapsstyrelse, The town of Mariehamn, Husö biological station and so on. The office is financed by Ålands landskapsstyrelse and all 16 municipalities. We also get sponsoring for specific projects.

We are part of the Agenda 21 network of svensk-Finland. We are also a part of the B7 network. We participate in Östersjöforum which is a Baltic Sea working group.

The office is held by an NGO, Åland Nature and Environmental Association (Ålands Natur och Miljö), but all municipalities and the Landskapsstyrelsen contribute to the Agenda 21-office. We have created our own model.

Level of activity

At the Agenda 21-office we are three employees and in the municipalities there are 75 persons working voluntarily in so called Agenda 21-groups. Know-how: we co-operate with loads of people depending on which project we are working with. For example: The Environmental bureau at Ålands landskapsstyrelse, The town of Mariehamn, Husö biological station and so on. The office is financed by Ålands landskapsstyrelse and all 16 municipalities. We also get sponsoring for specific projects.

Level of participation

The level of participation is good. For example we had a Future day in Lagtinget, and 900 pupils from 7 to 9 grade participated in some way. We participated in one commercial fare with an exhibition about garbage and about 500 visited our exhibition case. When we arrange seminars and lectures the level of participation is good. We have people participating both actively and passively, as listeners and also in our practical work.

Organizational planning

We have a referents group with representatives from our financiers and employers, where we discuss our plans. Our employer (Ålands Natur och Miljö) has also an Agenda 21-group who is responsible for the administrative issues. There are local Agenda 21-groups in the municipalities, which are working voluntarily with Agenda 21 issues in different ways.

3. Special character of the LA21 process:

Strengths and weaknesses

Our strength is that our employer is a NGO. That gives us many advantages; the Agenda 21-office can react quickly, and without having to go through lengthy decision making processes.

- We are not seen as an authority
- We can co-operate with other organisations in an uncomplicated way
- We can act very flexibly and with a minimum of bureaucracy

Our weakness is that we haven't really succeeded to inspire all municipalities with their Agenda 21 work. For some of them we function as a good excuse not to integrate the sustainability principle in their ordinary decision-making and management. The fact that we work with so many different issues at the same time makes it hard to go deep enough.

Successes and failures

We have succeeded in reaching out with our campaigns, especially with our Baltic Sea campaigns.

Failures, we haven't reach out to really all groups in the society for example we haven't focused on pensioners or disabled people.

Political control

We do not have a direct political control, but in our reference group there are politicians from Lagtinget and the municipalities.

Level of public awareness of the LA21 process

We have two local newspapers and a radio in a community, which is not that big. So, LA21 is often reported in the local media. We also try to meet people to discuss in commercial fairs and such occasions.

Anecdotes

We often work with a "three-step-model":

1. Describe the problem
2. Describe the causes of the problem
3. Show solutions, what can you, as a citizen, do about it

This we do in many ways, sometimes even spectacular ones. For instance, in our Baltic sea – campaigns, when we calculated how much algae could grow from the emissions of nitrogen from driving your car x km or pee in the sea and so on. People got use to see us with a pot full of algae in our arms! We even had the algae-pot with us when we were in Stockholm to receive the Nordic council nature- and environmental prize in 1999. All the Nordic Prime ministers heard our speech about the algae and noticed out pot.

And for two years we asked people to write a love-letter to the Baltic Sea. It said: "Dear Baltic Sea! It is very painful for me to hear about your bad condition. I promise You to reduce my personal loading on You by the following:" And then people could write down their concrete, personal promise, for example to leave the car for two days a week and use the cycle instead or to stop pee in the sea.

We are also known for having competitions and giving prizes for "everything". For instance, we had one competition between the guest harbours, which one had the most pump-outs of sewage water into land (to prevent the boats to pump-out the sewage water to the sea). The winner got one ceramic pot, where it said: "I do not shit in the Baltic".

We also had a competition between the politicians in the municipalities. For two months they should go to their meetings whiteout using fossil fuel. They could walk, cycle ride or what ever. The use of cars reduced evidently.

We have three main theses in our work:

1. Start with something that works (then you go on with the difficult matters)
2. Try to reach out to as many as possible
3. Let the LA21 work be fun

4. Contact Information:

Gunda Åbonde-Wikström
abonde@aland.net

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- Association for Local and Regional Authorities in Finland: <http://www.kuntaliitto.fi/>
- United Nations Agenda 21 pages: www.un.org/esa/agenda21/
- Icelandic LA21 site: <http://www.samband.is/dagskra21/>
- German LA21-Site - International Agency for Sustainable Projects Econtur: www.econtur.de.

Short interviews/surveys by e-mail:

- Audrone Alijosiute, ECAT-Lithuania
- Ille Allsaar, Association of Estonian Cities
- Marita Nikmane, Daugava’s Fund Ltd, Latvia
- Union of Russian Cities by the way of Mr Vladimir Volkov, Korolev Town Administration

Annex: 1.

Result achievement index (maximum 37 points)

- 1. Is there an existing LA21 Action plan?**
No plan – yes, LA21 action plan 0 or 1 points
 - 2. What kind of measures does the LA21 action plan have?**

| | | |
|---------------|--|------------------|
| Social | no – general goals – specific targets/indicators = | <u>0 - 1 - 2</u> |
| Health | no – general goals – specific targets/indicators = | <u>0 - 1 - 2</u> |
| Economic | no – general goals – specific targets/indicators = | <u>0 - 1 - 2</u> |
| Environmental | no – general goals – specific targets/indicators = | <u>0 - 1 - 2</u> |
| Educational | no – general goals – specific targets/indicators = | <u>0 - 1 - 2</u> |
 - 3. To what extent are results of evaluation fed back into LA21 Action plans?**
Not at all and very limited= 0, some=1, rather high and very high= 2 0-1-2
 - 4. To what extent are results of evaluation fed back into wider policies?**
Not at all and very limited= 0, some=1, rather high and very high= 2 0-1-2
 - 5. To what extent have LA21 issues been taken into account in the following plans and policies?**

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|--------------|
| Municipal statutory plans | Not at all /very limited= 0, some=1, rather high /very high=2 | <u>0-1-2</u> |
| Traffic / transport plans | Not at all /very limited= 0, some=1, rather high /very high=2 | <u>0-1-2</u> |
| Land use plans | Not at all /very limited= 0, some=1, rather high /very high=2 | <u>0-1-2</u> |
| Economic dev. plans | Not at all /very limited= 0, some=1, rather high /very high=2 | <u>0-1-2</u> |
| Municipal programs | Not at all /very limited= 0, some=1, rather high /very high=2 | <u>0-1-2</u> |
| All local policies | Not at all /very limited= 0, some=1, rather high /very high=2 | <u>0-1-2</u> |
| Municipal budgets | Not at all /very limited= 0, some=1, rather high /very high=2 | <u>0-1-2</u> |
 - 6. To what extent are economic issues integrated with social, environmental and health aspects of your Local Agenda 21 action plan?**
Not at all and very limited= 0, some= 1, rather high and very high= 2 0-1-2
 - 7. Are there partnerships created between different agencies working at the local level?**
No – yes 0-1
- Points total: 37 points**

Annex: 2.

The SUFA Good LA21 Practice Model

Part A. Enablers

Criterion 1: Identifying relevant topic areas for a LA21 process (max 10 points)

Criterion 2: Commitment to the process (max 20 points)

Criterion 3: Resources available (max 10 points)

Part B. Results

Criterion 4: Existing sustainable development plan (max 10 points)

Criterion 5: Level of integrated approach (max 10 points)

Criterion 6: Broad participation (max 20 points)

Criterion 7: Partnership between council and community (max 10 points)

Criterion 8: Level of awareness of the LA21 project (max 10 points)

Short description of the criteria involved in the model.

Criterion 1: Identifying relevant topic areas for a LA21 process. (10 points)

Criterion 1 focuses on the importance of awareness of local problems and circumstances in order to be able to prepare local action plans and to identify areas of responsibility. The awareness factor is also of great importance when identifying goals, targets and timetables for the activity. Another angle that criterion 1 fosters is the knowledge of what is relevant for the process and what is not, what a local authority should focus on. It is interesting for the project to see if the local authorities know what is relevant for LA21 and what is not, as well as finding out if they have measured and analyse the local problems in any way.

Criterion 2: Commitment to the process. (20 max points)

Criterion 2 stresses the importance of commitment to the process. The commitment should be stated by top politicians and other elected councillors as well as by the administrative personnel of the local authority. Therefore it is important to find commitment to the LA21 activity on both the executive and the administrative side. Criterion 2 is of great interest to the analysis of the SUFA project and it is seen as one of the most important criteria in the process, therefore it is weighted with 20 points.

Criterion 3: Resources available. (10 max points)

Another very important criterion for the SUFA project is criterion 3. This criterion focuses on the role of having resources available for the process. In some public administration processes some resources are more important than others, but for an evaluation of a LA21 process it is hard to judge which resources are the most important. Different types of resources are important in this case, for example funding, personnel and expertise. It is also important to be aware of the reliability of

the existing resources as well as identifying the possible resources that are available to the process.

Criterion 4: Existing sustainable development plan. (10 max points)

Criterion 4 focuses on the existing of a good plan for the future work. It is important to have a detailed plan that captures the essence of the work with the process in order to be able to do a good LA21 work. In this case we are interested in seeing if the local authorities have a specific LA21 action plan or similar plan.

Criterion 5: Level of integrated approach. (10 max points)

A central and relevant element for a strong organisation is working towards continuous improvement of the administration and management of the local authority. When evaluating LA21 processes and good practice cases in LA21 it is interesting to look at actions that aim to make lasting changes in the administration, the management and the political agenda. Criterion 5 focuses on whether actions that aim to involve sustainable development issues have been stressed within the LA21 process.

Criterion 6: Broad participation. (20 max points)

Participation is seen as very important for the work towards sustainable development according to the Agenda 21 document. That is why criterion 6 is one of the focus points in the SUFA analyse and is weighted with 20 points. It is interesting to find out what kind of participation mechanisms LA21 processes have (e.g. who is involved and how broad the participation is).

Criterion 7: Partnership between council and community. (10 max points)

We are interested to see in what way cooperation between different groups or partners in the local community work, and if specific arrangements have been made in order to improve partnership and cooperation.

Criterion 8: Level of awareness of the LA21 project. (10 max points)

Criterion 8 focuses on the importance of reaching the broad public with information. This is an important issue according to the Agenda 21 document. We are particularly interested to see how, and what kind of, informative and/or educative actions were planned within the LA21 processes.

Annex 3:

The SUFA-project:

“Success factors in local environmental policy for local Agenda 21 activities and European Union enlargement in the Baltic Sea Region”

The framework and guidelines for the city LA21 presentations or “stories” needed in the SUFA project. These guidelines are made for you as a framework for the LA21 city presentations. We hope that you, in English and by own words explain and present your LA21 process.

THE CONTENT:

A. A systematic review (3 – 5 pages)

Name of LA21 process and town.

Please indicate the name of the town and the name of the LA21 project or process.

Present basic information of your town, local circumstances and special features. Basic relevant information that can provide the reader of the case-stories, with a picture of local circumstances (big – small town, number of inhabitants, new or old town, close or not to other towns, specific history, type of economy/industry or similar).

What are the biggest challenges in your city?

A short presentations of biggest general problems and challenges in your town.

What are the biggest environmental challenges in your city?

A short presentations of biggest environmental problems and challenges in your town.

What is seen as relevant activity for your LA21 project?

Please indicate what you see as a relevant activity for YOUR LA21 project or process.

What enablers do you see as important for a LA21 process?

What enablers (resources or similar) do you see as important for YOUR type of LA21 project or process. What is important in order to make your LA21 work successful.

B. A historic chronology (3 – 5 pages)

When started?

When started and when implemented. Relevant steps in the process.

Why started (The reason and intention with your LA21 process)?

What was the preliminary reason for starting the LA21 process in your municipality.

Initiated by whom?

What actor(s) / stakeholder(s) did initiate the LA21 in your municipality.

How did your LA21 process started?

In what way did the LA21 take its first steps in your municipality? Did it start as an own process within the municipality or outside the municipality? What kind of decisions where the first decisions taken and by whom? Etc.

What activities have you had so far?

Describe the activities taken so far. What has been done, how and why?

Cooperation patterns.

Do you cooperate with someone / some other city or network in building up and developing your LA21 work? How are you organized and what kind of administration do you have?

Have you used external models for your LA21 process? If yes, what model/models.

What phase is the process in for the moment?

Try to explain or describe the phase in with your LA21 process is in for the moment.

What kind of future plans or steps do you have?

Please indicate the existing future steps, plans and intentions your LA21 process have decided to take.

What kind of future activities are planned?

What are you about to start or do within the LA21 process in the next phase?

C. Describe characteristics of your LA21 process (2 – 3 pages)

Define the type of LA21 process you have:

Strong sides and weak sides

What are your strong sides or elements within the LA21 process and what are your weak sides and elements.

Successes and failures

According to your own opinion, what have you succeeded and what failed with.

Level of activity

Describe the level of activity, how many are working, how many are actively involved and in what way - financially, know-how, other way

Level of participation.

Describe the level of participation. Who are participating, how/in what way and how much?

Level of public awareness of the LA21 process.

Is your LA21 project known in your city? How much and known by whom?

D. Possible; anecdotes or examples (1 – 2 pages)

Please try to explain the characteristics for your LA21 work. What kind of work is it about? What is typical for you and your LA21 work? Etc. Please also indicate or refer to any anecdotes you have had with your LA21 activity.

The presentation should be about 10 – 15 pages long.

Annex 4:

| LA21 case | Lahti | Turku | Åland | Botkyrka | Malmö | Sundsvall | Nordic mean value | Tartu | Jurmala | Liepaja | Riga | Alytus | Panevezys | Varena | Elblag | Gdansk | Sopot | Baltic mean value | Mean All | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-----------|-------------------|-------|---------|---------|------|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------------------|----------|--|
| | Institutional variables | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Commitment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Political commitment | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0,83 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0,8 | 0,88 | |
| Adm. commitment | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0,83 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,3 | 0,5 | |
| Resources or support | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Funding | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0,67 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0,3 | 0,44 | |
| Personnel | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0,83 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0,4 | 0,56 | |
| Knowhow | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,06 | 0,06 | |
| Public participation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LA21 forum | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,17 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0,2 | 0,19 | |
| Active real involvement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0,17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,2 | 0,19 | |
| Broad participation | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0,5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0,8 | 0,69 | |
| Partnership | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Local partnership | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0,5 | 0,69 | |
| National partnership | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0,4 | 0,44 | |
| International partnership | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0,5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0,8 | 0,69 | |
| Other variables | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Personal impact/motivation | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,33 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0,4 | 0,38 | |
| Integrated approach | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0,33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0,1 | 0,19 | |
| Continuing funding | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0,1 | 0,13 | |
| Good LA21 action plan | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,33 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0,3 | 0,31 | |
| Real practical results | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0,33 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0,2 | 0,25 | |

0= no impact
1= yes impact

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Paper copies can be obtained from:

Marina Hamberg

Åbo Akademi

Biskopsgatan 15

20500 Åbo, Finland

Tel: +358-2-2154 686

Fax: +358-2- 2154 585

E-mail: marina.hamberg@abo.fi