

## FOCUS ON FOOD

### Background

Food Hygiene and Food Safety in the Baltic region – Focus on Food is a joint EU project between German, Polish and Swedish control authorities in the food sector. The purpose of the project is to harmonize the interpretation of the common EU food legislation. The aim is also to raise competence among control staff and increase interest in food hygiene and food related issues among food businesses and consumers.

### Activity 4 – work exchange

One of the activities on this south Baltic boarder project is work exchange. The idea is that two inspectors from each country visit the other two countries, so at the end, everyone has visited everyone.

### A visit to Sweden

#### German colleagues in southern Sweden

In the beginning of 2013, in February, two German colleagues *Ilona* and *Ute* visited the city of Kristianstad and the city of Trelleborg in south of Sweden. We had some really nice days, carrying out inspections in various businesses like for example a pastry factory, a large scale catering, a hospital kitchen and a company that process freshly harvested carrots.

They harvest the carrots every day of the year, which is made possible through covering the fields with a thick layer of straw.

During the week we were fortunate to be accompanied by Susanne, our interpreter. She normally works as an inspector in Malmö and speaks excellent Swedish and German.



*Interestingly enough one of the peaks in production for the carrot industry is in January. That time of the year a lot of people choose a healthier lifestyle after the holidays.*

### Malmö welcomes Polish visitors

In May, the city Malmö had the opportunity to welcome two colleagues from Poland, *Tadeusz Ciesla* and *Emilia Modrzejewska*. Tadeusz used to work with control and inspections of large scale businesses and Emilia is the director of a group who makes inspections of restaurants and food stores.



*Polish colleagues visit Malmö, Sweden.*

We started the week with a visit to the Turning Torso to get a full view of the city of Malmö. We had a professional interpreter that followed us during the week. Very close to the Turning Torso there is an ecological food market. They have an idea of a sustainable food store which means, among other things, that they do not sell food with additives. They have a refill system for detergents and they have cargo bikes that they lend to customers so they can do their grocery shopping without using their cars.



*The famous Turning Torso by the Spanish Architect Santiago Calatrava.*

We also carried out an inspection of one of the many grocery stores that sell polish food. Since Malmö has many polish immigrants we also have access to their specialties. We visited the large scale bakery Pågen, where most of the bread in Sweden is produced. There we had the opportunity to test some of their products like a new pastry with blueberry and vanilla.

Tadeusz and Emilia spent the end of the week in Helsingborg, where they visited a small scale fish smokery, and a food store with a deli counter together with Swedish colleagues.

### **Experiencing Poland**

During a week in September two inspectors from Sweden, *Peter Svensson* from Helsingborg and *Maria Svensson* from Malmö met the golden autumn in Poland. We had an amazing week with different colleagues in the area around Szczecin. We experienced two very well maintained, small scaled fish plants, where different kinds of herring were processed.

### **Differences in control procedures**

One day we spent in Gryfino with our friends and colleagues Tadeusz and Emilia. We all went to a super market with bakery, deli counter and small smoke house for sausages. The inspection was carried out in almost the same way as in Sweden, with some differences. For example, the sanitary control in Poland does not include control of meat which is the case in Sweden. In Poland it is a task for the veterinary control. Another difference is the sanitary control of cosmetics, which in Sweden is carried out by environmental and health inspectors.

### **Fisheries – a new experience**

We also had the opportunity to visit a small fishery situated in one of the many rivers in Gryfino. This was a genuine experience for both Peter and me. We have seen nothing similar in Sweden. The fish were caught in a traditional way in special customized boats, and were sold to the local businesses.

On the last day of our week in Poland we visited a large food inventory and a restaurant. The similarities between the control carried out by our polish colleagues and ourselves were many, we even recognized specific products in the stock house, due to the large scale import of Polish products to Sweden. A difference between the three counties participating in the project is the possibility for German and Polish authorities to fine businesses immediately, an option we do not have in Sweden.

*Maria Svensson, Food Inspector, Malmö*