



**FINAL**

**EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Priority Area on Maritime Safety and Security “PA Safe” Flagship Project to lay the groundwork for developing a plan to reduce the number of accidents in fisheries**

**Visits to Latvia and Lithuania 19<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> August 2013**

**Lithuania 20<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> August 2013**

An issue facing Lithuanian is similar to that in Latvia: to focus on improving health and safety and reporting of accidents, as well as highlighting how to enhance recruitment into the sector.

**Fleet and fishery**

Fishing takes place in the coastal zone up to 12 nm, as well as fishing in the open Baltic sea and along the coast (12-24 nm), and the open Baltic Sea (24 -40 nm), (plus some fishing long distance in the Atlantic and Pacific) Vessels are ageing vessels: 30 years+. There is also an inland fleet (approx. 150 vessels) fishing in the Coronian lagoon: for pike perch, bream).

The main EU quota species caught in the Baltic are sprat (12.510 t.), herring (2.633 t.) (Main Basin), cod (3.933 t.) (mainly SDs 25-32) and salmon (1.685 pieces) (SDs 22-31). This is for the fishery for 2013.

The Lithuanian authorities reported the following Baltic fleet information to the BSRAC:

Year	Length of vessels - 0-8	Length of vessels - 8-12	Length of vessels - 12-15	Length of vessels - 15 and up	Total Number of vessels
2012	86	20	2	42	150

No figures available on active fishermen/women.

**Visits to two fisheries organizations: Lithuanian Fisheries Producers’ Association (Alfonsas Bargaila) and Confederation of Fishermen and Fish Processors of West Lithuania (Algirdas Ausra)**

Both organizations have vessels operating in the Baltic.

**Meeting with the Lithuanian Fisheries Producers’ Association, Chairman Alfonsas Bargaila and Akvilé Kungiene**

Alfonsas Bargaila represents 15 larger (about 15 metres) sea going vessels operating in the Baltic, as well as about 100 small coastal vessels (3 to 15 metres). The larger vessels are demersal and pelagic (cod, sprat and herring), and the smaller vessels fish for cod, herring, sprat, smelt, zander, sea bream and bass). He informed that according to the Lithuanian

Maritime Safety Law, all fishermen have to be acquainted with the rules concerning safety. Every six months they must sign a declaration that they are familiar with the rules. It is the responsibility of the shipowner to ensure that the fishermen sign different journals to confirm this.

He commented that the authorities are ever-present and checking that the documentation concerning safety is in order.

Before the start of each fishing season, vessels are inspected to make sure that they are seaworthy.

Every five years there is a practical and theoretical refresher course for all the crew. It lasts two months and costs 500 - 600 Litas for each fisherman (145 -175 Euros). It is held by the Lithuanian Maritime Academy and an examination is organized and held by the Lithuanian Maritime Safety Authorities.

He informed that there is a compulsory state social insurance scheme for all employers (and shipowners) and employees. There is also an accident insurance to cover absence from work due to accidents.

He highlighted that the crew are very experienced and accidents are not a common occurrence. If serious accidents occur, reporting to the authorities is obligatory. As for less serious accidents or incidents, the shipowner or the captain has to examine every crew member and make sure that such accidents do not occur again. There is no requirement to provide information on work-related accidents.

There are also clear and fixed rules on the number of crew: six crew members on board larger vessels and two/three on smaller vessels. Lithuanian legislation does not allow one man alone on board a vessel. But they are ageing vessels and the average age of fishermen is increasing – average age is 50 years. It was hard to encourage young men to become fishermen.

The LFPA informed that they had put together a project for a course to train new fishermen and captains (course held at the Lithuanian Maritime Academy), and they may do this again.

### **Visit on a typical demersal/pelagic trawler Atlant (built 1971 and refitted up to 1997)**

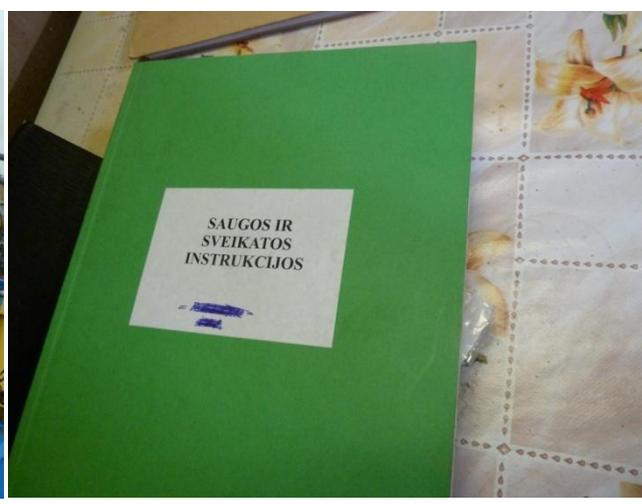
It has been recently refurbished in part, including more comfortable sleeping quarters. There was indication of good safety practices, with essential safety equipment such as:

- Fire-fighting equipment
- Life vests and lifebuoys
- Life raft (incl. date of inspection)
- Visible signs on fire and safety plans, care with use of chemicals and chemical substances
- Fixed CO<sub>2</sub> fire-fighting equipment in the engine room
- Life-saving signals and rescue methods

The relevant logbooks and journals as well as information booklets on safety practices were shown to us.



The vessel Atlant



Safety instruction manual onboard

### **Meeting with Algirdas Ausra and Erika Lapaite-Bruziene, Confederation of Fishermen and Fish Processors of West Lithuania**

Algirdas Ausra owns and manages four larger pelagic and demersal sea going vessels operating in the Baltic and other waters. His vessels are bigger and can offer better working and living conditions, and in that way it is easier to recruit crew members. But he did highlight the problem of an ageing generation of fishermen.

He confirmed the same information concerning health and safety and accident prevention. He highlighted the five year refresher course, which covers basic, professional mariner skills, as well as the six monthly check on safety - to sign and ensure the documentation is in place.

### **The Lithuanian Maritime Academy**

The Academy started out in 1984 preparing only fishermen. Now it is offering four year MSc courses in Lithuanian (two types of qualification), of which safety and work place practices comprise 6 and 4 ECTs. A tour of the school showed excellent facilities all round (for example in machine room and navigation simulation and radio communications, as well as for training in safety and accident/emergency). There was also a basin for training in basic rescue: with suits, vests and so on, as well as special rooms for practicing fire and smoke training. There are now no dedicated courses for fishermen, unless specially requested and organized. The courses provided meet the STCW-F requirements.

The representatives from the school think they are well enough covered with courses, training and observing the rules concerning safety and safety practices and highlighted that the sector does not record many accidents.

### **Visit to the authorities – from Lithuanian Maritime Safety Administration (LMSA), the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI), the Lithuanian Safety Fisheries Regulation Division and the Transport Accident and Incidents Investigation Division (TAID) under the Ministry of Transport and Communications**

The representative from the LMSA confirmed the information already sent to the project coordinators and presented back in February 2013: that since 2005 a low number of serious accidents/incidents has been recorded in the fishing sector. They informed us that rules and regulations are well established with respect to reporting and recording accidents. Referring to the information provided to the Project at its kick-off meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013: that according to the Transport Accidents and Incidents Investigation Division, in 2012 there was

only one accident: this was a fire in the engine room. The overall picture is that there are not many accidents.

Another representative from the Transport Accident and Incidents Investigation Division under the Ministry of Transport and Communications with experience in the fishing sector confirmed that safety high standards have applied in the approximately 30 years that he has worked in the sector. Directive 2009/18 is adopted and the function of reporting and recording accidents has moved from the Lithuanian Maritime Safety Administration to the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

With respect to safety of fishing vessels, the Torremolinos protocol is already in force, applying to vessels above 24 metres. National rules then apply to vessels below 15 metres. This includes a system for certifying vessels – which includes an annual inspection of vessels (previously every six months), but now amended to inspect them once a year. Since the authorities are not witnessing an increase in the number of accidents, an annual inspection is considered by the authorities to be adequate. During the annual inspection, the authorities can ask and make sure that the crew members are familiar with the use of safety equipment. Making sure that the crew are familiar with the use of safety equipment is the captain's responsibility.

Whilst the investigation and reporting of accidents is under the TAIID (previously the LMSA), the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) carries out its own investigations in order to find out who is responsible in order to take action. This is thought to be a well-coordinated division of responsibility between the authorities. It was pointed out that it is the responsibility of the fishermen themselves to report minor accidents and incidents. On health and Safety, the SLI do not normally visit the vessels, but this could happen every two years. Introduced is a recently changed approach where the SLI have to give warning that they are coming to inspect and report on working conditions. The representative from the State Labour Inspectorate also informed that there had been no major occupational illnesses amongst fishermen in the 18 years she had been working in the sector.

Serious accidents are fire, grounding and collision. Representatives could not highlight any trends that were a cause of concern. It is mandatory to report accidents. If nothing is done to report them, the authorities are unable to do anything. That meant that minor accidents and accidents which are not reported prevent them from having a complete picture.

There was also the requirement to report according to safety at work requirements. All incidents such as cuts and lesions must be reported to the SLI.

It was informed that Automatic Identification System (AIS) is in the process of being introduced. This is being phased in according to vessel size. One complaint coming from the fishermen was the costs involved in introducing new equipment.

It was highlighted that the generally increasing age of the fishing fleet was of concern: there was a limit to how long the typically ageing vessels could keep being refitted. Improved facilities such as better sleeping quarters made it more comfortable for the crew and in turn led to better working conditions and give positive benefits for safety. But it was expensive to renew the fleet and even to introduce new vessels into the fleet. This was highlighted as a key issue for the fisheries sector. It was hard to contemplate a future for the sector if new vessels and younger crew members did not enter the sector. This made discussions on improved health and safety secondary.

At the same time there are steps underway for Lithuania to ratify the ILO Work in Fishing Convention ILO C188. This may have an impact on the living and working conditions for fishermen.

Although there is no specialised education to train fishermen, good education possibilities are still provided by the Lithuanian Maritime Academy in Klaipeda. Klaipeda University also offers education courses to qualify as officers. On offer are four year MSc courses for mariners, captains etc. But it was underlined that it is possible to design shorter (approximately 10 months) tailor-made courses for fishermen on vessels below 24 metres in the Baltic. There are also short training courses for fishermen going to fish in inland waters: short courses of a month, depending on engine size. For vessels over 5 hp a certificate is required. Lithuania also has requirements for operating pleasure craft.

As mentioned by the fisheries organisations, there is a five year obligatory refresher education and exam for the captain and all crew members in both theory and practice. This applies to competence with respect to naval requirements, as well as the application of safety on board and at sea. This refresher course takes place at the Lithuanian Maritime Academy or the Maritime Training Centre "Novikontas". If certified fishermen can document that they have used their qualifications for at least one year in the past five years, then the requirements are not so rigorous. Moreover, now that Lithuania has ratified the STCW-F Convention means that it may be possible to renew this certificate without a new examination. This would be looked into.

### **Final recommendations made at the meeting**

Renewal of the fleet was seen as the key recommendation. They cannot come with recommendations as to how to do this, but would like to make it possible for the construction of new vessels. Vessels are already well over the average age and this was clearly linked to an improvement of working conditions. The authorities are doing what they can to make sure that vessels are fit for purpose and comply with requirements.

To attract a younger crew – or to attract employment to the sector as a whole.

To promote a culture of safety amongst the fishermen. This includes willingness to report and talk about near-misses and close-shaves, as well as report on work related accidents.

On education, requirements on vessels over 24 metres are in accordance with the STCW-F convention. Every seagoing vessel was now applying the STCW (F) requirements. Perhaps this was at too high a level or too extensive for small fishing vessels? But it was underlined that there are possibilities to arrange shorter, specialised training for fishermen on vessels below 24 metres (in cooperation with the fisheries organisations and training academies), and in collaboration with the academies and training institutions across the Baltic (for example currently with Latvia).

### **Documentation referred to**

Eurofish article on Lithuania from 2011

<http://www.eurofishmagazine.com/magazine/272-em-4-2011>

Lithuanian Maritime Academy: [www.lmc.lt](http://www.lmc.lt)

The education and courses offered can be found on their website:

<http://www.lmc.lt/sub1/about-lajm/>

B.Sc. Programme in marine navigation years 2012 -2016:

[http://www.lajm.lt/uploads/Apie%20LAJM/angliskai/ERASMUS/Marine%20Navigation\\_2010-2014.pdf](http://www.lajm.lt/uploads/Apie%20LAJM/angliskai/ERASMUS/Marine%20Navigation_2010-2014.pdf)

## Lithuania deduction of tax at source

For salaried employees in Lithuania, the employer is obliged to deduct tax at source from the salaried employee and to make additional contributions to social security. The social security percentage paid by the employer is 30.98%-31.7% of the salary, and the salaried employee's contribution is 9%, including health tax. For example, if remuneration is 1.000 Litas, the employee pays compulsory state social insurance 90 Litas (9 % of 1.000 Litas) and income tax of 15 % (150 Litas). The employee receives 760 Litas as salary. The employer pays compulsory state social insurance of 31 % from the remuneration of 1.000 litas. The employee's costs are 310 Litas + 1.000 Litas for the employer.

Accident insurance: the State social insurance institution pays 80-100 % of the salary when employees are sick or after accidents at work.

[http://www.worldwide-tax.com/lithuania/lithuania\\_tax.asp](http://www.worldwide-tax.com/lithuania/lithuania_tax.asp)

## Novikontas Training Centre

Novikontas started its activity in Lithuania and later on expanded their services to Latvia. See <http://www.novikontas.lt/>

## Those we met during the visit

Alfonsas Bargaila, President Akvilė Kungienė	Lithuanian Fisheries Producers' Association Nemuno 42 B LT-93277 Klaipėda	lfpa@takas.lt
Vladimiras Borovichinas Deputy director of Practical Training Tatjana Lysenko International Relationships and Projects Department	Lithuanian Maritime Academy I. Kanto str. 7, LT-92123, Klaipėda	<a href="mailto:v.borovichinas@lajm.lt">v.borovichinas@lajm.lt</a> <a href="mailto:t.lysenko@lajm.lt">t.lysenko@lajm.lt</a>
Algirdas Ausra, Chairman Erika Lapaite-Bruziene	The Confederation of Fishermen and Fish Processors of West Lithuania Nemuno 40 B, LT93277 Klaipėda	<a href="mailto:baltzvej@takas.lt">baltzvej@takas.lt</a>
Robertinas Tarasevičius, Deputy Director, LMSA Linas Kasparavičius, Head of the Maritime Safety Division, LMSA Mindaugas Česnauskis, Head of the Shipping Standards Division, LMSA Vytautas Braslauskas', Deputy Head of the Training and Certification Division LMSA	Maritime Safety Division, Lithuanian Maritime Safety Administration J. Janonio str.24, LT-92251 Klaipėda	<a href="mailto:robertinas.tarasevicius@msa.lt">robertinas.tarasevicius@msa.lt</a> <a href="mailto:linas.kasparavicius@msa.lt">linas.kasparavicius@msa.lt</a> <a href="mailto:mindaugas.cesnauskis@msa.lt">mindaugas.cesnauskis@msa.lt</a> <a href="mailto:vytautas.braslauskas@msa.lt">vytautas.braslauskas@msa.lt</a>
Irina Jakovleva, Chief specialist, Fisheries Regulation Division Fisheries Service, under the Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Agriculture, Naujojo uosto str. 8a. LT-93279 Klaipėda	<a href="mailto:irina@zum.lt">irina@zum.lt</a>
Rita Dragasiene Chief labour inspector of the SLI Klaipėda regional district	State Labour Inspectorate 19 Algirdo str. LT-03607 Vilnius	<a href="mailto:rita.dragasiene@vdi.lt">rita.dragasiene@vdi.lt</a>
Leonardas Vilimas Senior Specialist	Transport Accident and Incident Investigation Division J. Janonio str. 24 92251 Klaipėda	<a href="mailto:leonardas.vilimas@sumin.lt">leonardas.vilimas@sumin.lt</a>