



## Nature Therapy for the Improvement of Equal Living Standards in Latvia-Russia Border Areas

### Nature Therapy

**Priority 3** Promotion of people to people cooperation

**Measure 3.2** Cooperation in spheres of culture, sport, education, social and health



## Short summary of the project

As a result of socio-economic crisis during last 3 years in Daugavpils city and surrounding areas, Latvia, and in Pskov oblast, Russia, (regions located near the national borders and far from main state centres) the amount of families at social risk has crucially increased.

Having in view this problem, common for all project area, a public survey has been organized by Latvian and Russian scientists and professional therapists in both countries in order to evaluate the situation in the social sphere, define the most problematic family types and choose the most favourable therapy methods.

The survey was carried out in the form of a questionnaire for 15 social institutions (social departments, NGO's), 65 people took part in it.

As a result of the public survey **3 types of social risk families have been identified** as the most problematic and in need of support: large families, one-parent families and families with children with special needs; and the number of such families has been increasing during the last years. **The nature therapy has been declared as the most favourable** therapy method with innovative and experiential approach, available in local surroundings of the target region. Professional interest to nature therapy has been rising on the part of social workers on both sides of the border. **The social infrastructure has been evaluated as insufficient.**

To make an impact into the development of sustainable social environment and improvement of living standards thus contributing to the decision of mentioned problems, the project is planning to popularise nature therapy, to present and use its main types and to ensure equal living standards for children with special needs and social risk groups.

## Overall objective

To contribute to the development of sustainable social environment and improvement of equal living standards using nature therapy as an innovative experiential approach thus making more integrated Latvia-Russia wider border area

## Specific objectives

- ✚ To popularise nature therapy as an innovative approach for rehabilitation of children with special needs and children of large and one-parent families living in the most remote border regions of Latvia and Russia
- ✚ To present the main types of nature therapy, emphasizing animal - assisted therapy, to social workers in order to develop their skills and to local inhabitants in order to raise their awareness about the ability of nature to stimulate human senses in a way no man-made environment can, and to use these therapy types
- ✚ To increase the living standards and social environment accessibility for children with special needs and social risk groups by improvement of social infrastructure, strengthening and developing 7 sustainable local Latvian and Russian communities

## Beneficiary

Latvian Office of Euroregion "Country of Lakes" (Latvia)

## Partners

- ✚ **Daugavpils City Social Department** (Latvia)
- ✚ **Dagda Local Municipality** (Latvia)
- ✚ **Livani Local Municipality** (Latvia)
- ✚ **Ilukste Local Municipality** (Latvia)
- ✚ **State Administration of Social Welfare of the Pskov Region** (Russia)
- ✚ **Centre for Curative Pedagogy and Differential Learning** (Russia)

## Expected results

### + Trainings, workshops and camps:

- **18** social workers improved their daily work capacity and received new knowledge and necessary competences to use different methods of nature therapy (3 nature therapy training courses (each 3-days) provided by approx. 10 experts)
- **64** children of large and one-parent families received different nature therapy courses and new developing experience (2 international summer camps "Back to Nature", duration of each camp - 7 days)
- **80** parents and their children with special needs received new information and consultations on NT methods, as well as short nature therapy courses
- Professional and personal beneficial networks between Latvian and Russian social workers established

### + Improvement of social sites - equipment and reconstruction of the objects:

- Children House - Shelter "Priedīte" and Social Care Day Centre for persons with mental disabilities in Daugavpils
- Out-door playground for children, including area for children with special needs, in Dagda
- Premises of Day center of Livani Social Department (social rehabilitation equipment)
- Premises of Family Support Center in Ilūkste (special equipment and furniture for social rehabilitation)
- Beljsko-Ustjensky children house in Porhovskiy district and Bobrovskiy children house in Pechory district (nature training rooms, IT and photo equipment, aquariums, animal cages and other equipment for social rehabilitation and nature training)
- The Center of Curative Pedagogy and Differential Learning in Pskov (greenhouse for children with special needs, IT, photo and other equipment for social rehabilitation)

In total: infrastructure improved in 10 social sites of 7 Latvian and Russian communities; 5 video, photo and IT sets, 2 furniture sets, 11 equipment sets, 2 lifts for wheelchairs purchased.

## Final beneficiaries

- + Children from large and one-parent families and their parents
- + Children with special needs and their parents
- + Regular visitors of social organisations of the local communities in Latvia and Russia having special needs and thus in need of special equipment and infrastructure
- + Other inhabitants of the local communities

## Duration

14 months

## Budget

Total budget: **220 225,00** EUR

Programme co-financing: 198 202,50 EUR (90%)

Project co-financing: 22 022,50 EUR (10%)

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