

## PAKRUOJIS ADULT AND YOUTH EDUCATION CENTRE

### GRUNDTVIG LEARNING PARTNERSHIP PROJECT COURSE “MY URBAN GARDEN. FROM AN IDEA TO IMPLEMENTATION“ PROGRAMME/CURRICULUM

#### 1. COURSE OVERVIEW

The course is one of the adult learning /training activities in the frame of Gruntvig Learning partnership project “New Flavour of Your Life: Promoting Active Citizenship and Health Awareness Through Gardening in Towns and Cities“.

The programme/curriculum of the course is supported by an idea that urban gardening activities can enhance active participation of citizens in community activities, encourage the citizens to create cosier urban spaces and enhance health awareness as well as their sense of value.

The course equips the participants with knowledge and skills to start and maintain/develop an urban garden in their local neighbourhood in Pakruojis town.

The first part of the course focuses on organizational aspects of urban gardening activities, designing urban gardens, sharing knowledge about different herbs.

The second – practical part of the course is realized through setting up a real herb garden in Pakruojis town. It focuses on planting, working and maintaining a herb garden as well as having a goal to have it as an interactive, open and approachable communication and event space for Pakruojis town community members.

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#### 2. COURSE AIM AND OBJECTIVES:

##### **Aim**

To help in a not traditional learning way to supply knowledge and skills to start and maintain spicery garden/kitchen garden in town in order to involve participants and citizens into social and civil activities.

##### **Objectives**

1. Introduce to organizing and planning aspects of starting an urban garden.
2. Sharing knowledge about spice plants.
3. Help to develop practical gardening and team work skills starting an urban garden, enriching town image in a public place.
4. To create opportunities for the participants` interaction, exchange of ideas support, empowerment and self-esteem building.
5. Trying out new events to encourage Pakruojis urban population of community, informal communication, citizenship, organizational capabilities to transform established vegetable garden interactive space.

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#### 3. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Participants will acquire theoretical and practical knowledge, and organizational skills related to urban gardening creation and maintenance
- Interactive urban garden will be created
- Participants will establish closer links with other urban community, using them as Project supporters and helpers and also developing socially active urban population Pakruojis network

- Will enrich their organizational, collaborative and supportive group communication skills
  - Participants will become disseminators of urban gardening, environmental and urban space enrichment ideas in the community
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#### **4. TARGET GROUP**

The course is aimed at a mixed group of 16 people who live in flats and can't afford their own allotment gardens, 2 of them are unemployed, 3 of them are lonely seniors. They are Pakruojis town residents who live near each other (especially the group of learners living in the block of flats in Vilniaus Street 36)

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#### **5. TIMETABLE**

##### **Timetable structure:**

The course took place mostly on Wednesdays (days spread out over 7 months and in 2 parts: theoretical and practical, each of them – 22 teaching hours, 44 teaching hours in total).

##### **Course Schedule:**

###### *PART 1:*

27.11 and 11.12, 2013, 08.01 and 29.01, 05.02 and 19.02, 12.03 and 26.03. 2014 ( 8 days, duration of sessions – from 2 to 3 teaching hours)

###### *PART 2:*

11.04 and 30.04, 16.05, 17.05 and 28.05, 12.06. 2014 (6 days, duration of sessions – from 3 to 5 teaching hours).

11.04 - Starting the garden in wooden containers, preparing the soil

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#### **6. COURSE CONTENT**

##### **PART ONE: November 2013 – March 2014**

Urban garden . Spice garden / balcony garden and public spaces of the town Pakruojis foundation options. Sharing ideas and expectations (theory - 2 hrs.)

Plants for interior decoration, health strengthening. Plant garden on the windowsill: how to start? A variety of herbs, their properties, growing features (theory with practical elements, tasks - 8 hours).

Choosing a location for gardens (assessment of needs, tool storage, access to water). Containers for growing plants: bags, boxes, hanging structures (theoretical – 1 hour.)

Designing the garden, getting permissions, making an agreement. Seed germinating. The drilling time. Requirements, soil preparation. Sprouts care (theory and practical tasks of -11 hours).

##### **PART 2: April – June 2014**

Starting the garden. Box garden establishment (practical – 4 hrs.)

Preparation of planting plans. Planting or sowing seeds. Companion planting (praktika – 6 val.)

Open Urban Garden Day/ urban Garden Circle Day – organizing an event. Seedling and Plant Exchange Day – organizing an event (practical - 4 hrs.)

Urban garden maintenance in the summer. Team formation and garden features (practice -2 hours).  
 Course summary, using,, Go Round "approach (Practice - 3 hrs.)

## 7. TEACHING APPROACH (Methods of delivery)

The more theory-based sessions in the first part of the course use discussion, visual exercises, group work.

The second part of the course is practical and hands on. Learners learned by doing and organizing events.

### TEACHING APPROACHES

#### In sessions

- Minimal lectures
- Icebreakers (for example, describing mood in the weather forecast style, organizing a circle activity in the beginning of the session)
- Visual presentations - using photos, video
- Smaller group activities
- Practical implementation
- Guest - an architect from Pakruojis Municipality for one of the sessions

#### In between sessions

- Giving simple homework tasks at the end of each session. e.g. bringing a pot, tupip bulbs for planting, preparing a presentation about a chosen herb

## 8. ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION STRATEGIES

**Assessment:** Ongoing, to check how learning is going and adjust approach if necessary

- **HOPES** and **EXPECTATIONS/NEEDS**- Learners were asked to express this from the beginning.
- **FEEDBACK SESSION** - after the first practical activity - establishing an urban garden

**Evaluation:** Final, to look at the final result and judge the quality and success of the course

- **INTERVIEWS** - with the learners on video on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014  
**FORM/QUESTIONNAIRE** - a questionnaire that learners completed on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014 within the session (please, find the results below)

The questionnaire was used to measure the quality of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership project courses, lecturer expertise, impact of courses on learner competence and skills improvement as well as the benefits of the course for the project participants and the town community.

Criteria and statements	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	
<b>Proper organization and quality content of activities</b>						
Chosen the right place to organize a course				1	14	4,93

Chosen the right time				5	8	4,62
Classes helped to learn about the creation and planning of an urban garden.				6	7	4,54
Practical topics were discussed during the course			1	5	6	4,42
Classes met my expectations			1	7	4	4,25
There was a possibility created to exchange ideas			1	5	9	4,53
<b>Trainer's competence</b>						
Trainer knew her subject well			1	9	2	4,1
Material and assignments prepared by a trainer were clear and understandable			1	9	2	4,1
Trainer engaged learners to work actively			1	2	11	4,71
Trainer encouraged the participants' creativity				4	11	4,73
Trainer was able to create an informal, inclusive, supportive atmosphere				7	8	4,53
<b>Influence of courses on learner's skills/competence development</b>						
Enriched organizational and cooperation competence				7	8	4,53
Enriched supportive communication skills /competence				6	9	4,6
<b>Importance/benefit for a participant</b>						
Helped to build closer ties with other members of the town community			1	6	8	4,46
Improved practical gardening skills			1	9	5	4,26
Improved teamwork skills				6	9	4,6
Increasing family support and desire to be involved into the project activities			2	7	6	4,26
<b>Importance/benefit for the town community</b>						
Established gardens enrich the urban space				4	11	4,73
Organized events refreshed the life of the town			1	5	9	4,53
Increased co-operation between local institutions			3	7	5	4,13
Increased community interest / belief in the success of the project				7	8	4,53
There are signs of increased community motivation to take care of public spaces			3	5	7	4,26

### Summary of the learners' opinion

The average the statements on which participants of the course have measured the quality of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership project courses, lecturer expertise, impact of courses on learner competence and skills improvement as well as the benefits of the course for the project participants and the town community, is from 4,1 to 4,93.

Expressing their opinion about the quality of the course, the learners emphasized that there was the right place (4,93) and time (4,62) chosen to organize the course, and the classes helped to learn about the creation and planning of an urban garden (4,54).

Evaluating the trainer's competence, learners most of all agreed, that the trainer encouraged their creativity (4,73), involved them into classes actively (4,71), was able to create an informal, inclusive and supportive atmosphere (4,53).

The participants agree that the participation in the course enriched their skills of inclusive, supportive communication (4,6) as well as their competence to organize and communicate in general ((4,53). This opinion complies with their opinion that improved teamwork skills is also the benefit of the course for the participants personally (4,6) and that the classes helped to build closer ties with other members of the town community(4,46).

The group of participants also expresses a positive opinion about the importance and benefit of the course to the town community. The emphasis is given on the esthetical value of the established gardens (4,73), enrichment of the town's social and cultural life and increased community motivation to take care of public spaces (both 4,53).

## 9. TEACHER PROFILE

### The trainer/lecturer

Ms. Dolina Ražauskienė, as a learner/trainer in the Grundtvig learning partnership project group  
Work experience and competence: 7 years of informal adult training experience as arborist in Pakruojis municipality

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## 10. RESOURCES

### Teaching material

- Video “Bulb flowers planting“
- Handout – summary “Spice herbs“
- Presentation “Spice herbs“
- Information summary from the web page BACSAC <http://www.bacsac.fr/fr/produits/nos-produits/>
- Presentation “ Raised beds“
- “City gardening guide“ (material presented by Finnish institutions)
- Plan examples
- Presentation “Ideas for planning urban gardeni“ Parts I and II
- Handouts “How to sow lavender“
- Description of method “Going in circles“ (material about meeting methods; prepared by the Finnish institution)

### Additional material created by learners

- Learners presentations
- Urban garden plans
- Raised bed planting plans