

"We had a lot of fun  
baking and at the end we  
treated ourselves with  
delicious cookies."

Zdenka, Nejc and Erik,  
family



# MeTURA

Back to the Roots



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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IZOBRAŽEVALNI CENTER GEOS  
EDUCATION CENTRE GEOS



CENTRO SVILUPPO  
CREATIVO  
DANILO DOLCI

Thrive  
using gardening to change lives



**PROJECT  
PARTNERS**



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[www.ic-geoss.si](http://www.ic-geoss.si)



**Association of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac County**  
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**The Slovenian association for persons with intellectual disabilities**  
[www.zveza-sozitje.si](http://www.zveza-sozitje.si)



**Thrive**  
[www.thrive.org.uk](http://www.thrive.org.uk)

**FAMILY EDUCATION METURA**

**- BACK TO THE ROOTS,**

therapeutic family gardening  
and therapeutic family cooking  
for independent life of adult family members  
with intellectual disabilities

ANDRAGOGIC HANDBOOK  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE FAMILY EDUCATION  
METURA-BACK TO THE ROOTS

Project website:

**[www.erasmus-metura.eu](http://www.erasmus-metura.eu)**

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Published by

Izobraževalni center Geoss d.o.o., Litija,

August 2021

ic-geoss.si

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the Erasmus+ MeTURA Project:

Family education MeTURA - Back to the Roots,  
therapeutic family gardening and therapeutic  
family cooking for independent life of adult  
family members with intellectual disabilities  
Erasmus+ key action 2 “Strategic Partnerships”  
Project Number: 2018-1-SI01-KA204-O47051

For more information visit:

[www.erasmus-metura.eu](http://www.erasmus-metura.eu)



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

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*"I like  
project MeTURA  
very much, I like to garden at  
home as well. I have a big garden,  
raised garden bed and a herbal garden.  
What I like about the project is that different  
users can participate who will learn a lot of new  
things from how to plant seeds, how to grow plants,  
water them, collect crops, clean and use vegetables in  
the kitchen. What I like most is that they can do all by  
themselves, from seeding to preparing a dish. You can  
see this also on their expressions, when we come to  
a final result and everyone is happy. We like to  
participate in this kind of projects that teach  
us something, users and mentors."*

*Sonja Firm, mentor*

## Foreword

The other day I was walking in my local area when I heard some happy voices from around a corner. This immediately drew my attention and encouraged me to investigate what was going on. As I drew closer, I saw a group of people cheerfully taking care of a beautiful, raised garden bed. Nosy as I am, I asked them what was going on. One of the group spoke up and explained that they all had intellectual disabilities and were part of something called the MeTURA project. In our brief conversation, he explained that the project combined family based therapeutic gardening and family based therapeutic cooking. He said that gardening was great, and cooking was awesome. He then invited me to a lunch, which he and his friends were planning to cook later that day. What a great project, I thought to myself. They all seem very happy, attentive and proud of their flowers and veggies. And my neighbourhood is getting greener and more beautiful as well, thanks to their hard work. But why MeTURA? I asked myself. Where does this name come from? Well, this was one question I could ask at the lunch I was so kindly invited to. As for you, dear reader, if you have questions about the project yourself, I believe all the answers are within this beautiful handbook you are about to read.

# About the project

## PROGRAMME:

Erasmus+ (KA2 – ERASMUS + KA2 Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices - Strategic Partnerships)

## NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Family education MeTURA - Back to the Roots, therapeutic family gardening and therapeutic family cooking for independent life of adult family members with intellectual disabilities

## ACRONYM:

MeTURA

## DURATION:

1. 10. 2018 – 31. 8. 2021 (35 months)

## PROJECT NUMBER:

2018-1-SI01-KA204-047051



*"I liked the workshops a lot since I love being in the kitchen and I am very happy about it. I liked the best gardening, it makes me relaxed and happy."*

*Mateja, user of occupational activity center Zaravje, unit Litija*



The name Metura comes from a one-of-a-kind butterfly. It is black and yellow in colour, hairier than most and can be hard to spot in the wild. Butterflies symbolize transformation or long and healthy life and that is why it was chosen for the symbol of the MeTURA project - Back to the roots. The project is primarily aimed at adult family members with intellectual disabilities (AFMID) and their families and explores new innovative lifelong learning opportunities for them.

Partners in the project include the Education center Geoss (Slovenia), Centre for Creative Development "Danilo Dolci" (Italy), The Slovenian association for those with intellectual disabilities (Slovenia), Association of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac County (Croatia), and Thrive, The Society for Horticultural Therapy (United Kingdom). They have combined their expertise and knowledge in the field of lifelong learning and in the field of working with people with intellectual disabilities and have developed methodology and andragogic material for the implementation of the family guided processes of therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking.

The aim of the project is to improve the quality of life for AFMID by involving them in lifelong learning activities. As research shows, most adults with intellectual disabilities live at home with their families and it is these families that would benefit from being involved in lifelong learning activities tailored to their needs. Within the project, we focused on gardening and cooking, as these are activities that satisfy basic human needs (nutrition) and which many of us take part in on a daily basis. By carrying out these activities as a part of a guided process and with predetermined goals, we can achieve results that positively impact the increased independence of people with intellectual disabilities and the acquisition of key competencies, basic knowledge and skills. These activities are described as therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking.

The project began by conducting research to determine the needs of our target groups. Based on the results Methodology Family Education MeTURA - Back to the roots for families with adult member with intellectual disabilities was developed along with andragogic material that offers practical tips, advice, activity sheets for implementation of therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking. The results were shared at national conferences that were organized in all partner countries and as well on national workshops.



# About the partners

## EDUCATION CENTER GEOSS (COORDINATOR)

Education Centre Geoss Ltd., Litija, Slovenia is an adult education institution that conducts both formal and non-formal programs for adults, different national and international projects. The goals of the organization are: to improve learning outcomes through quality teaching and learning process, to train and engage mentors and teachers towards innovative and holistic approach towards learning, to empower and increase the self-esteem of the participants involved in adult education, to increase equity and inclusion for all vulnerable social groups with fewer opportunities.

## ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES OF KARLOVAC COUNTY

Association of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac County, Karlovac, Croatia, is a non-governmental, non-profit, voluntary, charitable association, established with the aim to defend, develop the interests and well-being of persons with disabilities. Their goal is to raise awareness in society about the needs of disabled people, about the potentials they have and about the possibilities of their inclusion in lifelong learning.

## DANILO DOLCI

The Centre for Creative Development “Danilo Dolci”, Palermo, Italy, is a non-profit association involving young people and adults. Organization works in various fields of education in the national and EU area in cooperation with schools, universities, institutions, associations and social groups at local and international level in order to strengthen local development and satisfy community’s needs, with particular attention to the most disadvantaged target groups and to strengthen creativity, promote innovation in education and use new methodologies to strengthen the role of young people, adults and professionals.

## THE SLOVENIAN ASSOCIATION FOR PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

The Slovenian association for persons with intellectual disabilities, Ljubljana, Slovenia is a non-governmental organization with social and humanitarian objectives that strives for the improvement of both collective and individual care of people with intellectual disabilities and their families. They include more than 15,000 individual members from various local Societies for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities all over Slovenia. These are not only people with intellectual disabilities, but also their family members, experts in various fields and others.

## THRIVE

Thrive, Reading, United Kingdom, is an organization with over 40 years’ experience of an approach called social and therapeutic horticulture (STH). They use gardening to bring about positive changes in the lives of people living with disabilities or ill health, or who are isolated, disadvantaged or vulnerable. They work in a variety of ways: facilitate therapeutic programmes at their regional centres in Reading, London and Birmingham, run programmes in care homes, village halls, prisons and other community settings, train professionals to deliver STH in their own field and provide gardening advice for people with disabilities or ill health to help them carry on gardening.



## Partners thoughts about the project



"The MeTURA project has the ability to improve the lives of adults with intellectual disability (AD) and those who surround them. Through the creation of very accessible routes for both AD and those that support them to engage in occupations rich in developmental and lifelong learning potential. Through working together the partners have shared their own organisational expertise to ensure the resources will be of a high standard and fit for purpose. The dissemination of the resources will enable many families, educational and social care settings to provide higher quality care and learning to AD in a non-traditional learning setting. Additionally, through gardening and cooking those that support AD will have better relationships with them contributing to the quality of care and learning provided. Ultimately the people this project was set up to serve will have improved levels of independence, agency and quality of life."

Mark Emery, Thrive



"The project Family Education "MeTURA - Back to the Roots" has detected issues that may surround people with intellectual disabilities and their families in lifelong learning and contributors to a more independent lifestyle for them. In addition to upgrading existing resources and developing new knowledge, support tools and infrastructure that enable educators to permanently apply quality lifelong learning, that respect the individual needs of families and their members with intellectual disabilities. One of the great values of the project is connecting different EU partners and exchanging positive practices. Through the implementation of the project, daily cooking and gardening activities have gained a new meaning that is used to improve physical and mental well-being, promote learning and skills development, and improve social inclusion and engagement of people with intellectual disabilities in the community and at home. We are especially pleased with the desire shown by people with intellectual disabilities who want to be involved and learn. Developed andragogic tools and methods, as well as trained educators, will support them and their families in an innovative and inclusive approach to community development tailored to each person."

Gordana Jurčević, Association of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac County



"In our opinion there should more projects like MeTURA. It is great because it urges the people with disabilities to be more independent in everyday life. If they can grow their own vegetables/fruits/herbs and be able to prepare them for cooking, they will be more independent and confident about themselves. The project also invites families to spend time together in a different environment whilst taking part in different activities than they usually would. It is a great opportunity for all to learn something new and enjoy each other's company in a new way. An important aspect of the project is the therapeutic side of gardening and cooking, which is beneficial for those with disabilities, their mentors, family and others involved in the process. We are proud to be part of the project and we strongly believe it will change the lives of many people."

Jasmina Kebe, The Slovenian association for persons with intellectual disabilities



"We consider MeTURA an important support for families with adult members affected by intellectual disabilities. The proposed methodology and its application through workshops represent a good example of how to support families in helping their members with intellectual disability to have an independent life. It is particularly important in our Region (Sicily, Italy) where educational support for disabled adults from public bodies is limited, especially so during the Covid19 pandemic. By focusing on the individual and specific learning needs of adult individuals, the andragogic methodology allows for tailored training objectives which are tested directly in the field. In our opinion, the important goal of this education is to involve families providing them with information on the issues to be assessed and on the skills and competences to be promoted. Thanks to MeTURA, we believe that families will benefit from an important support to conduct their own workshops at home with shared learning objectives. In parallel, there will be therapeutic benefits for adults with intellectual disabilities themselves, as they can learn and become more independent in nature and in the friendly space of their home."

Giovanni Lo Biundo, Centre for Creative Development "Danilo Dolci"



*MeTura project was born from Life. What does it mean this cliché? It means we recognized the general influence of natural environments and physical activity of gardening and cooking the food we Grow from Earth by ourselves on wellbeing of people.*

*Growing evidence of a positive association between contact with natural environments and health and well-being are reported from all parts of the world. This has led us to call for improved understanding of therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking of the produced healthy and rich food among the people with intellectual disabilities cared for by their family members. We, as Educators, connect the wellbeing also to the personal growth in character and knowledge so we were searching the ways how to upgrade the therapeutic activities of working in the garden and cooking with Lifelong Learning skills such as Literacy, Numeracy, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Problem solving, Communication, Cooperation, Adaptability, Curiosity etc. We can conclude that the basic purpose of the MeTURA project was to encourage the families with adult family members with intellectual disabilities to use the time they are investing in taking care for the basic needs of their family members who need support, like preparation of food and work outside in the garden, on different way. Projects aim was to show to the mentors and families how to enrich this mandatory work through different approach. In the activities we emphasize to be more mindful while doing what you have to do anyway, to include the adult family members with intellectual disabilities in everyday care and routine, to change the perspective towards it with the awareness of therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking in order to make the activities more enjoyable and inclusive. The objective we were reaching through all this time was to enhance the quality of relationship and well-spent time together without burdening the parents with more obligations and to use this very time to teach the AFMID new knowledge*

*and encourage them towards the independency, or at least to offer the help in work and kitchen. The feedback we received from mentors, family members and people with intellectual disabilities has shown that the implementation of the methodology and activities it selves make AFMID feel as an included and equal family member and through that an equal and valuable member of the society.*

*Sandra Katić, Education Centre Geoss*





# The concept of »Family education«

Parents and families will be the leading educators for their children, with many opportunities to build the foundation for a lifetime of learning. Families educate their children every day—both in formal and informal ways. Through positive interactions with their children parents promote healthy development and prepare them for school, successful relationships, rewarding work, and better health.

Family education is based on theories and research that have already demonstrated that the promotion of cultural and educational interactions between students and social agents, and more particularly with family members can enhance a students' achievement (Community of Researchers on Excellence for All, n.d.)<sup>1</sup>

Family education is not only about raising a child, but encompasses other factors as well that support familial cohesion, like budget management, economic views of household, family communication, dynamics of interpersonal relations, aging, interculturality (Ličen, 2011)<sup>2</sup>.

Within our project we use the concept of "Family education" for describing an innovative learning methodology for families in both therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking. Project partners discovered, through research, that there are activities available for those with intellectual disabilities, from classes or workshops that provide information on life skills (such as healthy living, legal rights, using money, etc.), excursions (fun days out e.g. to the seaside, shopping etc.), educational visits (to museums, historical sites, etc.), sport activities, art classes, etc., but there are not a lot of activities of lifelong learning that would include the whole family. With this in mind, we wanted to introduce the concept of family education in the activities of therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking. Both these activities have a great impact on an individual's independence, develop skills and improve knowledge as well as their mental and physical wellbeing.

<sup>1</sup> Community of Researchers on Excellence for All, n.d. Family education. Available at: [https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/files/esl/downloads/52\\_INCLUD-ED\\_Family\\_Education.pdf](https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/files/esl/downloads/52_INCLUD-ED_Family_Education.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ličen, N., 2011. Družinsko izobraževanje in učenje v iskanju prikrite harmonije. In: Andragoška spoznanja 17 (3), 5-9.



Within Family education MeTURA - Back to the roots parents and other family members take the role of a mentor and together with their adult family members with intellectual disabilities get to know:

- how to motivate their adult family member with intellectual disabilities to take part in lifelong learning activities,
- different techniques and methods on how to be a good mentor,
- the concept and benefits of therapeutic gardening and how to start implementing them,
- the concept and benefits of therapeutic cooking and how to start implementing them,
- how we can, through involvement in gardening and cooking activities, provide basic skills and knowledge to adult family members with intellectual disabilities.





# Therapeutic gardening



## Why gardening is good

Gardening offers time in nature, which can allow those with intellectual disabilities to better engage in social activity as well as the activities necessary to grow fruit and vegetables. Let us have a look at how each of these can positively impact those accessing gardening within their lives.

- **Time in Nature:** Access to green spaces and the outside can be hugely beneficial for those growing produce. To have space to enjoy natural environments, move away from the stresses of the modern world and allow yourself to slow down is beneficial to health and supports learning.
- **Social Time:** Gardening provides an opportunity for social contact and teamwork amongst others interested in growing food themselves, whether it be exchanging of growing tips or plants. Adults with intellectual disabilities can develop skills and knowledge from those that share the same enthusiasm in what they do.
- **Activity:** Whether it be digging over a bed, planting or sowing seeds gardening activities support physical and cognitive development. Gardening activities engage our thinking skills in a non-pressured exploratory way enabling those who find traditional learning environments difficult to learn effectively.



## Learning opportunities

Gardening provides plenty of opportunities for learning. Counting and estimation are explored when planting seeds and measuring out distances for planting. The same physical motor skills developed from holding a seed may also help to hold a pen when it comes to writing out labels and reading skills will be improved from instructions provided on seed packets and gardening books.

There is also endless wider learning that can be highlighted or incorporated into gardening. For example, there is biology present in the growing of seeds and physics to be discovered in how pots maintain water levels. We can also look to the vegetables themselves to find where in the world they originated from and how they arrived at our own shores to explore history and geography.

There is creative thinking possible in the garden also, whether that be in making birdfeeders, deciding how to stake your beans or using the garden and vegetables in it as inspiration for painting or craft activities. Gardening offers activity and learning with a huge reward attached.





## *How supporters of those with Intellectual disabilities can use gardening.*

### *• At home*

Encourage the journey made from produce grown in the garden through to the kitchen and onto the plate. It may well be that many things, such as a ripe strawberry, are consumed outside before they have a chance to be cooked or prepared. Family members will have a good idea of what activities or interests would draw those they live with outside. Whether it be encouraging someone who enjoys to water new seedlings or allowing an individual who tends to want precision in their lives to sow a neat row of carrots to pick later. Personal insight can help make that important connection between a family member and the outside space.

### *• In education*

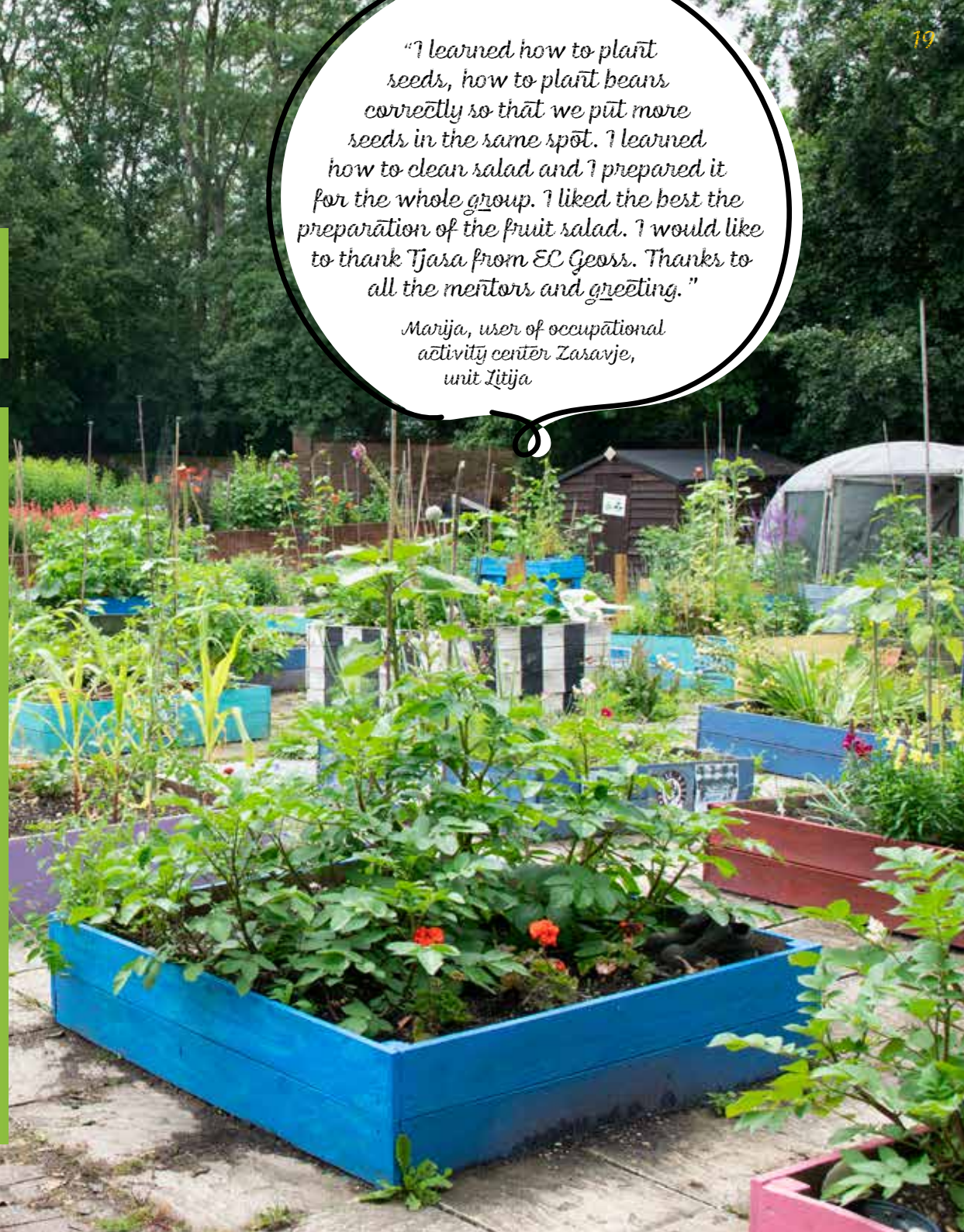
There are a lot of educational goals that can be achieved in a garden space, and you can use your imagination to make them come to fruition. Gardening is broad and most likely there are information about the fruit and vegetables you are growing that someone you are working with will be able to enlighten you on too.

### *• In social services*

Through a variety of gardening tasks people can develop confidence, agency, and independent living skills. The rich range of activities in gardening supports both physical and cognitive skills that transfer to skills enabling people to carry out activities of daily living. From making choices and understanding the impact of their decisions on the plants they grow people can become more comfortable making choices about their own lives. Through their success in caring and nurturing other life they feel confident that they have a purpose and make an impact on the world around them.

*"I learned how to plant seeds, how to plant beans correctly so that we put more seeds in the same spot. I learned how to clean salad and I prepared it for the whole group. I liked the best the preparation of the fruit salad. I would like to thank Tjasa from EC Geoss. Thanks to all the mentors and greeting."*

*Marija, user of occupational activity center Zavarje, unit Litija*





# Therapeutic cooking



For some, cooking is a daily chore, a social experience, or an entertaining leisure activity. For others, cooking is therapeutic.

Therapeutic cooking is the process of cooking and preparing food to improve physical and mental well-being, promote learning and skills development, and improve social inclusion and community engagement. That is, the process of engaging individuals in cooking and meal preparation with the support of educators to achieve specific therapeutic goals, over a period of time with expected learning outcomes (what knowledge and skills are acquired by the learners) with elements of monitoring and evaluation.

Therapeutic cooking covers the process of cooking and a variety of cooking-related activities, such as harvesting fruits from your own garden, buying groceries, the use of utensils and kitchen appliances, planning and preparing your meals.

Therapeutic cooking uses the kitchen as a safe place to develop one's ability to socialise and learn practical skills that will help them become more independent. Using culinary tasks, educators evaluate and design a range of activities for individuals to improve their competencies and work toward the specific goals they want to achieve.



## Benefits of therapeutic cooking:

- Getting to know food and food preparation and developing a healthy attitude towards food,
- Part of therapy for: eating disorders, mental development disorders, mental health problems, attention and hyperactivity disorders, depression, anxiety and other disorders,
- Learning valuable life skills,
- Stress relief,
- Improving social skills,
- Learning balance and coordination,
- Sensory awareness,
- Ability to plan and organize,
- Better attention and focus,

*"I liked best cooking pizza, preparing smoothies, I helped cut fruits and everything that we prepared was good." Polde, user of occupational activity center Zavarje, unit Litija*

## By participating in therapeutic cooking, adults with intellectual disabilities can acquire and develop the following knowledge and skills:

- communication skills,
- making choices,
- taking responsibility,
- awareness of oneself and one's body,
- creativity,
- emotional expression and adjustment,
- interactions with others,
- teamwork and togetherness,
- accepting support,
- time management.

As part of Family Education MeTURA – Back to the Roots therapeutic cooking for adult family members with intellectual disabilities (AFMID) is an active guided process of "learning by doing" with the appropriate support of educators and family members in a home environment that aims to increase the independence and self-realization of AFMID and creating better connections between family members and enhancing an individual's competencies. Methodology and andragogic materials were developed to help educators in conducting therapeutic cooking, as well as recipes in easy to read.



## STRAWBERRIES WITH WHIPPED CREAM



You will need:



500 g  
strawberries



500 ml heavy  
whipping  
cream



powdered  
sugar

Source of photos: Project Lahko je brati  
([www.lahkojebrati.si/slike](http://www.lahkojebrati.si/slike))

### Cooking:

1. Cut the strawberries.
2. Pour heavy whipping cream into the mixing bowl
3. Add powdered sugar if you want.
4. Mix the cream with a mixer until whipped cream is made.
5. Take a big cup.  
Put strawberries in a cup.  
Add whipped cream.  
Add again more strawberries.  
And more whipped cream.  
Continue until the cup is full.
6. Serve strawberries with whipped cream in a cup and place on a table with a spoon and paper napkins.

Enjoy your meal.



# Learning basic skills and knowledge through gardening and cooking

As the European Commission report (2019)<sup>3</sup> states, key competences and basic skills are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes:

- **Knowledge** is made of of the concepts, facts, ideas and theories which are already established, and support the understanding of a certain area or subject.
- **Skills** are defined as the ability to carry out processes and use the existing knowledge to achieve results.
- **Attitudes** describe the disposition and mind set to act or react to ideas, people or situations. The key competences are developed throughout life, through formal, non-formal and informal learning in different environments, including family, school, workplace, neighborhood, and other communities.

Activities of therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking can be beneficial for gaining and upgrading key competences and basic skills, especially in:

- literacy,
- mathematics and science,
- personal and social competency and developed ability to learn,
- entrepreneurship,
- cultural awareness and expression.

Within the project we have gathered activities and developed activity sheets which can be used by the mentor – parents and family members to guide their adult family member with intellectual disability through the activity. Activity sheets provide a description of the activity, information on what is needed to carry out the activity, how long it takes, what we will be learnt during the activity and which gardening and/or cooking process this activity leads on to.

<sup>3</sup> European Commission, (2019). Key competences for lifelong learning. Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union.



Example:

**Activity:** Create a seed viewer

**Learning area:** Biology

**You will need:** clear plastic cups (can be washed and reused), paper towels, dried beans, water.

**Description:** Ball up a few pieces of paper towels and place them inside the cup until it is full. Pick out 3 to 4 dried beans (avoid using any beans that are split) and place them in between the side of the cup and the paper. Gently water the paper towels in the center until saturated. Place the cup (or cups if you would like to try multiples) on a shelf or windowsill and watch them grow.

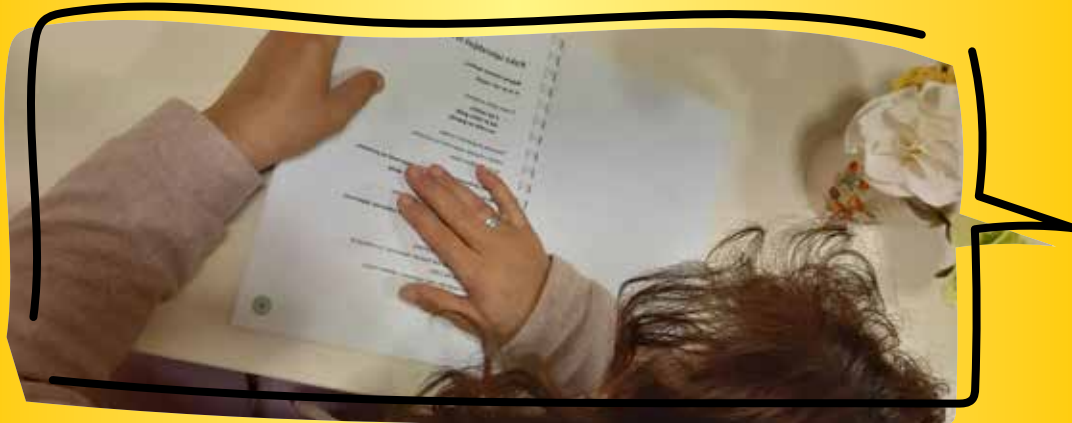
**Results:** Understanding the process of plant growth, getting to know different parts of plants.

**Related to gardening activity:**

It is advised that this activity is done prior or together with planting of beans activity. It will show how beans grow and what conditions the plant needs for successful growth.



# Necessary competences of a good mentor



Through research related to this project it was discovered that adult family members with intellectual disabilities (AFMID) have lots of opportunities to participate in activities of lifelong learning (LLL) outside their homes but not so much within them. On top of that, families (parents) often lack time to participate in these activities together with their AFMID. Because of this, project MeTURA – Back to the Roots explores and enables the potential of activities that happen daily in most households (cooking and gardening) and the learning potential of family education, where the parents/family members become the mentor for their AFMID. The developed methodology and andragogic material solve the real need of target groups since it provides guidance and useful tips for mentors on how to implement therapeutic gardening and therapeutic cooking for AFMID within the home environment.

A mentor provides advice and guidance and acts as a facilitator within the learning process. The mentor will look for the right educational path: directing it where the learner has chosen, according to his own needs and means. It will have an overview of the learning process, to be able to guide the mentee. The mentor must remember that time, objectives, activities, goals, are to be acknowledged and that there is a positive impact in the social life of the learner. He/she must implement a method of working and framework that promote the autonomy of the mentee.

*Some skills that are important for being a good mentor:*

- 1) *Professional knowledge:* It is necessary to support the need for growth of the mentee. To know how to structure the activities to meet the physical, social and intellectual needs of each individual learner.
- 2) *Self-awareness:* It helps to objectively observe behaviour, and question why it occurs. A good mentor will enable those they are working with to analyse the consequences of their own behaviour on others and their lives and learn how to instigate change if necessary. Awareness is essential and is the basis of learning and the mentor must be able to pass this on to the mentee.
- 3) *Understanding of others:* Empathy is one of the necessary skills for a good mentor. Understanding the emotions of those, they work alongside, understanding body language, helping to manage anxiety and fears, being positive and encouraging. Knowing how to predict the consequences of a certain behaviour. Knowing how to give honest and constructive feedback, as well as knowing how to receive feedback yourself.
- 4) *Effective communication:* Listening carefully to what others have to say without interrupting and anticipating what is about to be said. Knowing how to handle silence and using the opportunity to understand any non-verbal communication being exhibited. Above all, knowing how to ask the right questions and allowing the mentee to find a solution independently of advice.
- 5) *Knowing how to build an engaging relationship based on trust:* For a successful relationship, the mentor must have a positive influence on the mentee, by having an honest and direct approach in reporting successes or failures, by displaying a sense of humour to encourage continued engagement. Respecting any personal information and keeping confidential information to themselves. Being non-judgmental is also a key part of developing a lasting relationship.







### 6) *Interest in promoting self-improvement in those you work with:*

it is necessary to be available and dedicate time to those you work with. Accompanying him/her through learning opportunities and participating in the continuous exchange in a never-ending learning process. Demonstrating openness to change him/herself.

**7) Focus oriented:** It helps to identify and pursue the mentee's goals. Maintaining a focus on the end goal of the work being carried out will increase productivity. Remember that a mentoring relationship flows parallel to real life. While supporting the mentee in unexpected or occasional problems, the mentor must help him/her not to lose sight of the true goal. It may be that you work towards redeveloping set goals if necessary.

**8) Relationship development:** The ability to build a network of meaningful relationships and support others to do the same is essential. For the mentor him/herself, having a support network to turn to will be useful when he/she faces unfamiliar challenges and will help them further support the learner.

**9) Good character:** Patience, availability, positivity, humility are indispensable characteristics for a mentor. Remember that your main purpose is to support the mentee in their development. Do not show off or make the process revolve around your own success!

**10) Flexibility:** The mentor must adapt to the situation he/she is faced with. Depending on the mentee and the circumstances surrounding them. They must be a coach, counsellor, trainer, networker, guide, be challenging or welcoming, be proactive or indulge the learners needs when necessary. The mentor must be able to help the mentee manage change.

**11) Setting a good example:** By acting as a model to your mentees, you can help them onto future paths that excite and motivate.

*"I liked best the art workshop with Tjaša from EC Geoss, where we were making wooden butterflies, coloring them and draw and write on them the names of the plants and herbs that we planted on previous workshops."*

*Peter, user of occupational activity center Zavarje, unit Litija*

*"When I was 30 I took over guardianship over my brother Enzo, after our mother died. We started to get to know each other even though it was hard to find a way to grow. We had to learn together how to make Enzo autonomous. If in this strenuous path I had been accompanied by professionals who should have guided us with tools and methods such as those experimented during the workshops (MeTURA activities), it would have been easier and less painful. Initiatives like these should be proposed since they are children and to be accompany the lives of disabled people and their families."*

*Pippo, family of adult family member with intellectual disabilities*



# MeTURA pilot workshops

Pilot workshops were conducted in all partner countries (Slovenia, Italy, Croatia and in UK) in the classroom, in the garden and in the kitchen. One of the activities in the project was a 3-day training course of therapeutic gardening led by project partner Thrive, The Society for Horticultural Therapy who have more than 40 years of experiences in the field of therapeutic gardening. On the training, participants gained knowledge that was then transferred to other potential mentors and family members who wished to carry out therapeutic gardening and cooking activities for those with intellectual disabilities in their institutions or home environment. This workshop was followed by a workshop in the classroom for families and their family members with intellectual disabilities. Several workshops in both the garden and in the kitchen were conducted as well.

Project partners have invited to the project associated partners that work with persons with intellectual disabilities or conducted the workshops with their daily users.

Workshops have been conducted in cooperation with Occupational activity center Zasavje in Litija (Slovenia), Occupational activity center Sožitje Ptuj (Slovenia), Occupational activity center Sožitje Maribor (Slovenia), Community center Ozalj (Croatia), Paradise Bird - Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities Karlovac County (Croatia), La fraternità (Sicily, Italy) and with the users of Thrive (Reading, UK).

With help and guidance from the mentors, adults with intellectual disabilities themselves helped build and set up raised garden beds, they planted seeds, grew vegetables, and then used them in the kitchen to prepare meals. During the processes they also improved their basic skills and knowledge through activities related to gardening and cooking like improving their literacy whilst writing plant labels and improving their maths by measuring units for cooking and so on.

Participants were enthusiastic and proud of the workshops and their contribution to their success. Whilst workshops were being carried out they had a lot of fun, socialized and connected with each other through their involvement. Everyone learned something new and was rewarded by a successfully prepared meal prepared with the food they have grown themselves.

*"During the workshops, it was nice and fun to work with the guys who always show so many abilities. We have confirmed that we can always learn and that we learn by doing and doing together."*

*Anna, family of adult family member with intellectual disabilities*

*"I am very happy with gardening. I liked that we put soil and planted. I put the soil in the flowerbed and planted tomatoes, peppers, parsley. I learned how to prepare the ground for planting and how to plant vegetables. I would like to hang out again."*

*Dragan, user of Center for Community Services Ozalj*

*"The guides were very useful" / "I want to come back!" / "I do not do cooking at home... I might do more" / "Can I come back next week?"*

*participants of the pilot workshop at Thrive*



# Acknowledgment

"We thank all collaborators who participated in the implementation of project activities, and selflessly shared their knowledge and experiences that have enriched the results of the project. Collaborating organizations are: Center for Community Services Ozalj, Center for Education of Children and Youth Karlovac, SUVAG - Karlovac Polyclinic for Rehabilitation, Family Center of Karlovac County, Association of Associations of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac County, Paradise Bird - Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities Karlovac County, Association SUNCE

Association of Families of Children and Persons with Developmental Disabilities." Gordana Jurčević, Ivana Mastelić Ivić, Paulina Šepac, Mario Žeger - Association of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac County

"We would like to thank everyone that participated in the studies and filled out our questionnaires (families and mentors). We would like to thank test readers that enabled us to transform our text into easy-to-read form. We would like to thank Occupational activity centres VDC Sožitje Ptuj and VDC Sožitje Maribor for their participation in the workshops and much needed feedback. We would like to thank Irena Borštnik for her contribution on the project and also for organising site visit of CUDV Draga. Last but not least we would like to thank our project partners IC Geoss, UOSIKAŽU, Thrive and CSC Danilo Dolci for great cooperation and a well-executed project. We are delighted to have met all of you and hope to work together again."

Jasmina Kebe and Mateja Turk, The Slovenian association for persons with intellectual disabilities

"Thank you to everyone that contributed in any way to a successful realization of the MeTURA project. Especially thanks to all the educators and all the families and adult family members with intellectual disabilities to participate in our research and then in pilot workshops, testing the project results. We would like to thank our associated partner Daily occupational center Zasavje, unit Litija and Društvo Sožitje Litija Smartno, to all the mentors and users, for disseminating project results and participating in the activities. Without your help and feedback, we could not provide such quality results. Thank you as well our dear project partners. We have learned a lot from you and we believe that the combination of our knowledge and expertise provided us with great project results. It was a pleasure working with all of you."

Sandra Katič and Tjaša Dragoš, Education center Geoss



*We want to express our sincere gratitude to all the educators, mentors, volunteers, families, adult participants and staff of the partner organisations in Palermo, for the active implementation of the project. In particular, our sincere gratitude to the educators Patrizia Pappalardo and Nunzia Manno for their direct involvement in the training and piloting, and to the experts and staff members that attend our conference with a worthwhile contribution of "La fraternità", "Edificando", "AFD Palermo".*

*Giovanni Lo Biundo and Dario Ferrante, Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo Danilo Dolci*

*We would very much like to thank the individuals and families who have supported us in the research needed to create the gardening resources and continued in their support by offering their advice and opinions as they moved towards completion. Your knowledge and insight both enabled us and benefited the project going forward. Special thanks also to the adults with learning disabilities who supported the work done and made their voices heard through what has been a challenging time for many. We would also like to thank our project partners Education centre Geoss, Association of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac, CSC Danilo Dolci and the Slovenian association for people with intellectual disabilities, it has been great to work alongside you and share in the combined expertise and enthusiasm present during what we set out to achieve.*

*Mark Emery and Damien Newman, Thrive*



Texts and photos: Danilo Dolci, Education centre Geoss, The Slovenian association for persons with intellectual disabilities, Thrive, Association of Persons with Disabilities of Karlovac County

Publisher: Education center Geoss Ltd.

Graphic design: Meta Gabrijel

Litija, August 2021

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Project Number: 12018-1-SI01-KA204-047051



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

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