



ERASMUS+  
Key Action 1

YOUTH EXCHANGE

# Back to Nature, Back to Yourself

June 14<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> 2017



**Working language:** English

**Venue place:** Slovenia (Organic farm Metta, Rakova Steza 4, SI-3213 Frankolovo)

**Participating countries:** Italy, Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia

**Organizer NGO:** Metta Association (Slovenia)

**Age of participants:** 18 - 30 years

## Project themes:

Self-awareness, solidarity, integrity and personal growth, reconnection to our roots, ecology, environmental protection and sustainability

## Project aims:

- to contribute to better physical and mental health of the participants through a renewed contact with ourselves and with nature;
- to raise self-awareness and find inner balance, inspiration and source of energy;
- to explore and test possibilities for sustainable living, encourage sustainable attitudes and environmental protection;
- to raise awareness of the positive role that each individual has in determining the quality of the territory in which he lives;
- to inspire a more active participation in society and to promote the development of skills necessary for it: autonomy, creativity, solidarity, sense of responsibility, initiative, cooperation, solution focus;
- to strengthen European culture of social and environmental responsibility that values the Earth and its resources;

- to meet participants from foreign countries, their culture and practices, in particular in the field of ecology; to encourage the exchange and facilitate the building of good relationships between young people from different social and cultural realities;
- to strengthen their linguistic skills, especially communication in English;
- to create a synergy of our knowledge and experience and to expand the network of international cooperation of youth organizations, in particular those working in the field of personal growth and environmental protection.

#### **Planned activities:**

- team-building activities and trust-building games,
- wild edible plants workshop, herbs and spices workshop,
- ecology & footprint workshops,
- survival in nature, bivaque construction,
- summer solstice celebration, sweatlodge ceremony,
- leisure activities: swimming, paddling... on a nearby lake,
- trip to the historical centre of a nearby town,
- Open Space workshops designed by participants,
- ...

#### **Financial rules:**

- participation fee: none
- accommodation costs: all expenses for accommodation and meals will be covered by Metta Association
- travel costs: will be reimbursed upon the submission of travel tickets, up to the sum of:
  - 80 eur per person for Italy, Hungary, Czech Republic
  - 170 eur per person for Romania

**This project shall include young people with fewer opportunities.**

#### **Project summary:**

With this project we will honor Mother Earth and thank her for our existence. In overabundance of today's consumer world we will try to discern what one really needs for a good quality life and get rid of the clutter that all too often just hinders our inner happiness. We will try to find a deeper connection with the nature and to feel our roots. Because it is only in connection to the nature and to ourselves that one can really listen to his heart and find his own path, his joy and satisfaction, his true mission in life.

Youth exchange will be held in the end of June (14th-24th) 2017. It will bring together 30 motivated participants from 5 European countries (Czech Republic, Italy, Romania, Hungary and Slovenia). It will take place on a small organic farm near Celje, Slovenia.

Our living together will be an inspiring mix of experiential learning, interaction and simple life in close contact with nature. Most of the activities will be held outdoors. Participants will exchange their knowledge and experiences through different workshops, designed and led by themselves and shared by the method of Open Space. We will explore our ecological footprint and recycling and learn many examples of good practice. We'll discover the

astounding power of herbs and edible wild plants, which will be regularly included in our menu. We'll explore the benefits of nature- and human friendly food production and the importance of natural balance in a healthy organic garden and orchard, and make bird nesting boxes as well as insect and bat hotels. We'll discover our roots and explore how our ancient ancestors lived. We'll build a sweat lodge to experience rebirth and a deep cleansing of our body and soul. The peak of our project will be the summer solstice celebration. Solstice represents a symbolic marriage of the Sun and the Earth - a moment of perfection and harmony. It introduces harvest time, the time of fertility. We will honour this magical moment with a bonfire and a shamanic ritual. To this event we will invite the local community, media and other organizations and prepare a pleasant intercultural evening.

### **Accommodation & Meals**

The accommodation on the farm is simple (shared bedrooms in a barn, solar showers, nice and clean compost toilets...) but pleasant. Meals are vegetarian, we can provide for special diets.

Please note that there is a STRICT NO ALCOHOL AND NO DRUG ABUSE POLICY to be respected throughout the youth exchange.

### **Do you want to join in?**

We will spend 11 beautiful days together, playing, learning, laughing, growing and thankfully sharing whatever the experience brings to us. We'll cook our own vegetarian meals, sleep in a barn, tell stories by the campfire or watch the stars in long summer nights. In whatever we'll do, we'll work on the establishment of a loving and responsible attitude towards oneself, other people and the environment, as only such an attitude allows a full development of each individual and is also a necessary foundation for a healthy and harmonious society as a whole.

If this appeals to you, do not hesitate to contact the partner organization in your country to apply.

We'll be happy to meet you! 😊

### **Contact person in Slovenia:**

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