

EU Reference: UK-2013-1805-001

Lessons from Nature: outdoor education for a sustainable future

EU Comenius Course
6th to 10th May 2013

**What can nature teach us about sustainability?
How can learning outside the classroom motivate and improve learning?**



What will the future look like? How will we get there? Where are we starting from? What are the models that provide hope for a bright and prosperous future?

We cannot predict the future, but we do know some facts: natural resources are getting scarcer, the environment is getting more polluted, and our quality of life is threatened by both. The future is uncertain, what role does education have in preparing young people for an uncertain future?

The main objective of the course is to facilitate the development and application of innovative approaches to learning outside the classroom and competency based learning, using ecosystems as a teaching tool. The course will build on the successful EU Lessons from Nature project, and also share a range of approaches to outdoor learning.

Lessons from Nature ask what sort of future young people would like to live in and how this future can be made reality. It challenges traditional assumptions about how things are made, economies managed and lives lived. It attempts to present a more hopeful and realistic way for young people to achieve the sort of future they want. After all it will be their future.

The course will take place at the Dëshka education centre in the village of Gorno Draglishte in the foothills of the Rila Mountains. Staying in local guest houses, participants will have the unique opportunity to be part of the local lifestyle and explore how closed loop systems are put into practice and reflect on how they can transfer this experience to their own teaching.

The course will use learning outside the classroom as a key starting point. Research and experience has shown that approaches based on first-hand experience not only motivate learning and improve attainment but also provide ideal jumping off points to investigate wider issues. Field trips will be augmented with visits to education projects and workshops.

Funding

The cost of the course is €660. Full board accommodation is €515.

There is funding available from the EU to cover the full costs of your participation. You will need to contact your National Agency and they will inform you how to apply for funding. Please use the following link to find your National Agency.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national_en.htm

More information about the training event in Bulgaria can be found on the link below.

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/trainingdatabase/index.cfm?fuseaction=DisplayCourse&cid=33649>

Alternatively you can search the database by using the title or reference number (UK-2013-1805-001) of the course on this link <http://ec.europa.eu/education/trainingdatabase/search.cfm>.

The deadline to apply for a Training Conference is 16 January 2013 – results expected by 13 March 2013.

Who can apply?

This course is for anyone involved in outdoor learning: education providers, teachers, centre managers, education decision makers

Language

The course will be in English

Some useful information to help you apply:

-  Contact your National Agency to obtain information on the grant application procedures and check the deadline for submission of your application.
-  Check with us that there are places still available and ask us to send you a letter confirming your place on the course.
-  Send your application form to your National Agency following the defined application procedure.
-  Your National Agency will inform you if you have been awarded a grant normally 7-10 weeks after the application deadline.
-  Please inform the TIME Foundation (kamen@time-foundation.org) if you require support in applying for funding or have any questions.

Travel information – The nearest airport will be Sofia. TIME Foundation will provide full travel details on request and will arrange for transfers to the Deshka Education Centre. The accommodation fee includes one night accommodation at the start and end of the course in Sofia,

About the TIME Foundation and Field Studies Council.

To find out more about the FSC please visit www.field-studies-council.org

To find out more about TIME Foundation please visit <http://www.time-foundation.org/index.php?lang=en>

If you need to get in touch with us:

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Lifelong Learning Programme

kamen@time-foundation.org



Email:



DRAFT PROGRAMME

Day 1

- 08:30 – Meet at hotel in Sofia and travel to workshop venue
- 12:00 – Arrival and lunch in Gorno Draglishte village
- 14:00 – Introductory session and visit of locality
- 15:30 – Sharing experiences & expectations from participants
- 16:45 – Discussion, reflection and review of country specific experiences on outdoor learning

Day 2

- 09:00 – Observation of teaching session in learning centre
- 14:00 – Presentation of the Lessons from Nature project
- 15:00 – How can we use ecosystems as a teacher for sustainability – SWOT analysis
- 16:45 – Focus on closed loop systems in the Bulgarian village

Day 3

- 09:00 – Outdoor learning - best practices from participating countries
- 12:00 – Discussion: What are the better ways to learning for the future?
- 14:00 – Closed loop systems: exploring local village lifestyles and economy
- 16:45 – Assessing outdoor learning - reflections on evaluation practices

Day 4

- 09:00 – Group work: What are the positive ingredients to implement outdoor learning
- 11:00 – Group work: How can we better transpose closed loop systems in an urban environment?
- 12:00 – Group work: What is the role of blended learning models in closed loop systems
- 14:00 – Review and synthesis of morning group work and presentations
- 15:00 – Group work: How can we plan for the future? Development strategies for applying blended learning in the different countries

Day 5

- 09:00 – Reflection from previous afternoon
- 11:30 – Closing discussion and reflection on the course
- 12:00 – Course evaluation
- 12:30 – Certificates and closing of course

* Lunch will be provided every day between 13:00 and 14:00

** Coffee and tea breaks will be provided every day at 10:30 and at 16:30

*** Ad-hoc breaks will take place based on activities throughout the course