

# INCLUFAR – Inclusive Farming

## A new educational approach in Social Farming

Thomas van Elsen, Gerhard Herz, Hartwig Ehlers, Winfried Schäfer and Klaus Merckens

### Social Farming

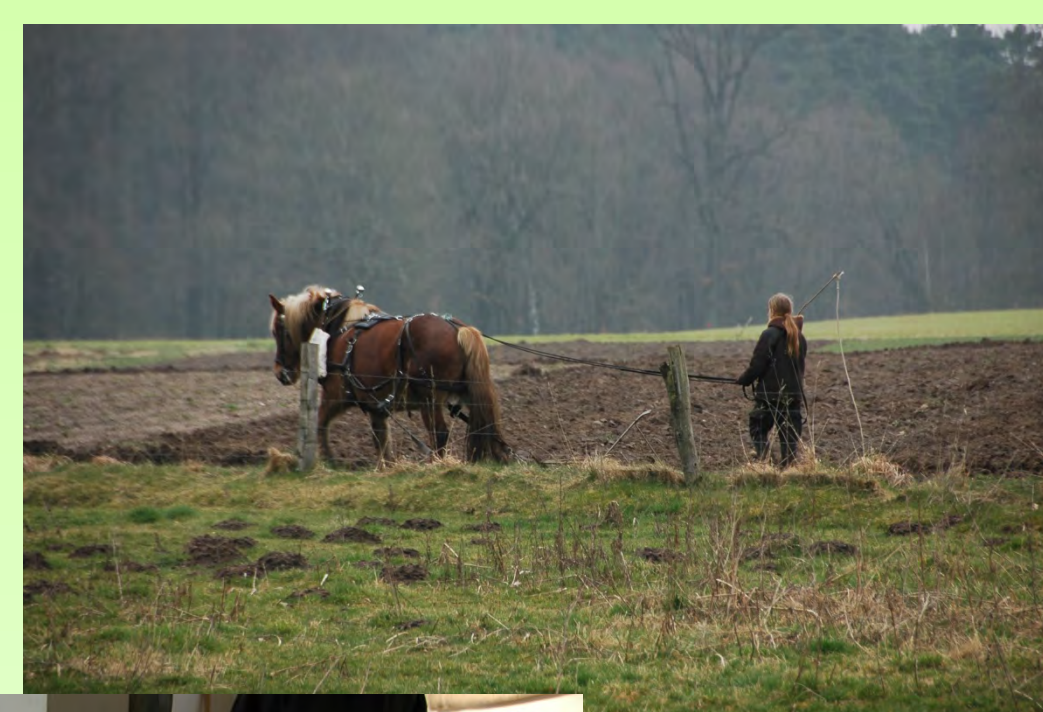
Social farming and Green Care are being developed throughout Europe: farms putting multifunctionality into practice meet the demands of policy makers to create jobs in rural areas and provide social services. Social farming includes agricultural and horticultural enterprises which integrate people with physical, mental or psychological disabilities; farms for the socially disadvantaged, young offenders, those with learning disabilities, addicts, the long-term unemployed and active senior citizens; school and kindergarten farms and much more besides. Social farming includes elements such as provision, inclusion, rehabilitation, training and a better quality of life (van Elsen & Finuola 2013). Three European projects have developed training tools for practitioners which aim to ensure professionalization and quality assurance in social farming activities.



### From DIANA and MAIE to INCLUFAR

Educational needs were identified within the “Leonardo da Vinci -” European Lifelong Learning scheme. The DIANA project (Disability in sustainable agriculture – a new approach for training of practitioners, [www.projectdiana.eu](http://www.projectdiana.eu)) dealt with the requirements of practitioners with different professional backgrounds working on social farms.

The MAIE project (Multifunctional Agriculture in Europe - Social and Ecological Impacts on Organic Farms, [www.maie-project.eu](http://www.maie-project.eu)) developed a curriculum for farmers interested in integrating social work into their farming concept, based on experiences in countries with advanced social farming networks (especially the Netherlands and Italy).



A further step is the new INCLUFAR project (2013-2015, [www.inclufar.eu](http://www.inclufar.eu)). The project “Inclusive farming – transfer of concepts, experiences, skills and training tools for Social Farming and eco-social inclusion” is based on the experiences of two 3-year curriculums (FAMIT and the BALTIC SEMINAR) and aims for a participatory transfer to target countries with very different initial conditions (Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, the Netherlands and Turkey as well as the Northern Camphill Association covering Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Russia). In each country the demands will be identified and a strategy developed to implement a training course in a participatory “team coaching process” together with local stakeholders.



### The INCLUFAR training approach

The starting point is to consider disabled people not as being ill, but as co-workers with specific ranges of performance who are able and willing to contribute to the economic, social and ecological added value of the farm and society. The central idea of the INCLUFAR curriculum is to focus on the abilities of the people and to understand “training” as a path towards the individual development of all the actors on a farm. Participants in the INCLUFAR training will be enabled to create a setting, an environment or a “milieu” within their daily work in which an added value can develop for the people in need of help, the professionals with different educational backgrounds and the farm itself and its rural environment.

### INCLUFAR as a step towards social and ecological inclusion

These skills will have an impact on the quality of work on the farm as well as on the rural area and its different professions (farmers, gardeners, handicrafts, nurses, social workers, civil servants, etc.). The term “inclusion”, as a central concern in the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, will also be applied to improve the cultural landscape and its biotopes. The project aims to improve and support the training path aims of creating a greater awareness of social and ecological inclusion.

### Outcomes of the project:

- The INCLUFAR handbook, providing background knowledge of and concepts for Inclusive Farming
- The INCLUFAR curriculum, available in all partner languages
- New impulses for improving Social Farming in the partner countries through coaching team visits to Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands and Turkey
- Practical steps to implement the INCLUFAR idea and approved measures to improve social and ecological inclusion in the target countries

#### Reference:

van Elsen, T., Finuola, R. (2013): Policies and strategies of Green Care in Europe. – In: Gallis, C. (Ed.): Green Care for Human Therapy, Social innovation, Rural Economy and Education. Nova Science Publishers: 189-213, New York