

PLANT ~ Power in Learning and Accessing Nature's Therapies
 Grundtvig Learning Partnership 2013-1-DE2-GRU06-16233 1

Kick-off meeting with Learner Skills Exchange
 Brigit's Garden, Ireland, 30 & 31 October 2013

Participants:

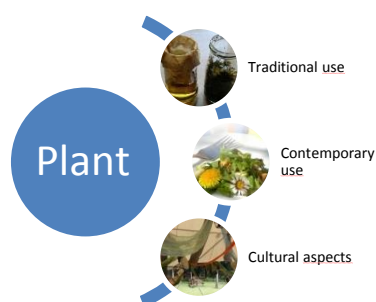
Germany	Sabine Roehrig-Mahhou
	Martin Glewe
	Grit Nitzsche
	Undine Myja
	Luise Schöpflin
Estonia	Rainer Eidemiller
	Ave-Triin Eidemiller
	Heli Aade
	Heilika Nugis
	Meeli Seepter
	Küllike Gergents
Italy	Nick Fouche
Poland	Pietro Colonna-Prete
Greece	Xenofon Strimpis
	Giorgos Papageorgiou
Ireland	Leanne Szklarzewicz
	Lisa Brooks
	Ilze Lazdane



The first meeting day, 30 October 2013, started with a warm welcome by Leanne, who coordinates the project on the Irish side, and Jenny Beale, the founder and director of Brigit's Garden. During a first walk through the Celtic Garden the participants learnt about the Celtic cycle of the seasons. Each of the four gardens represents one of the Celtic festivals -Samhain, Imbolc, Bealtaine and Lughnasa. This seasonal cycle mirrors the cycle of life from conception to old age and death. Having the meeting at the festival of Samhain (Halloween), which took place 31 October 2013, meant for the participants the chance to celebrate the Celtic beginning of the yearly cycle.

Sabine Roehrig-Mahhou, the project coordinator, afterwards presented the project and its aims. She pointed out that the project itself will have a very practical approach with workshop character and focus on the intercultural exchange about the topic.

The participants will learn from each other, experience together which herbs are used in the



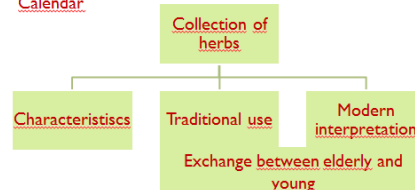
different countries, for which purpose and in which way – as herbal remedy and/or in cuisine or cosmetics. The project does not aim to create another database of herbs but has a more holistic and interdisciplinary approach combining medical, cooking, cosmetic and also cultural-historic elements.

There are often very interesting stories shared about different herbs showing their meaning in a more vivid way and giving an insight of the culture where they were used. With this more creative way of cooperation and exchange similarities and also differences between the partner countries will be found that lead to a better understanding of each other and of one important part of the European culture. By this the main aim, to reinvoke the exchange of traditional folk knowledge about herbal and plant medicine between the generations and between different countries will be reached.

Sabine Röhrig-Mahhou also shortly explained the different project outcomes and invited all participants – staff and learners – to get actively involved, to bring in ideas or recommendations in order to achieve results that will be really useful for the ones that are just interested in this area but also the ones that already work as herbalist or in related fields.

Concrete steps & outcomes

- Creation of herb gardens in the partner regions with/for
 - Transnational Learner skills exchanges
 - Local workshops
- Interactive Website, Handbook & Intercultural Calendar



Lisa Brooks, the herbalist that led the practical workshop in Ireland, afterwards welcomed the participants and informed about the workshop content. She presented different herbs with their characteristics, showed and let us taste different products that she made like the Dragon Cider and also invited the participants to work together.

During the two days, the participants learnt how to prepare

- a room spray based on lavender tea, added with essential oil according to the individual taste
- a body peeling with cane sugar, almond oil and essential oil
- an herbs vinegar with raspberry leaves
- incents with rosemary, vervain, meadowsweet and mistletoe and/or other ingredients
- a tincture with different herbs

- intention sticks for the Samhain eve.



Besides working together on different herb products the participants also had the chance to visit together with Lisa the gardens again and see which herbs are growing in the beds of the herbs garden and also wild at other places of the gardens. They harvested e.g. plantain, dandelion and other wild herbs besides sage, mint or fennel for teas and salads.



It was an interesting and most valuable aspect of the program that also local people from the public were involved in different parts of the programme. They joined the first dinner with focus on herbs where everyone was invited to bring typical food but also took part together with the transnational learner group in a public workshop by Lisa Brooks which was organised for 31 October 2013. Different herb products especially for the winter season were prepared and the participants from the different countries exchange e.g. about traditional remedies against colds. Also one or the other story was shared which led to a fruitful and pleasant experience for all persons attending.



The first learner skills exchange was rounded up by the possibility for all participants to attend the Samhain festivities in the garden in order to celebrate the Celtic New Year.

During the workshop at Brigit's Garden, all learners and staff gained great knowledge about local Irish herbs, their characteristics, cultural background and their use in different ways- traditionally and contemporarily.