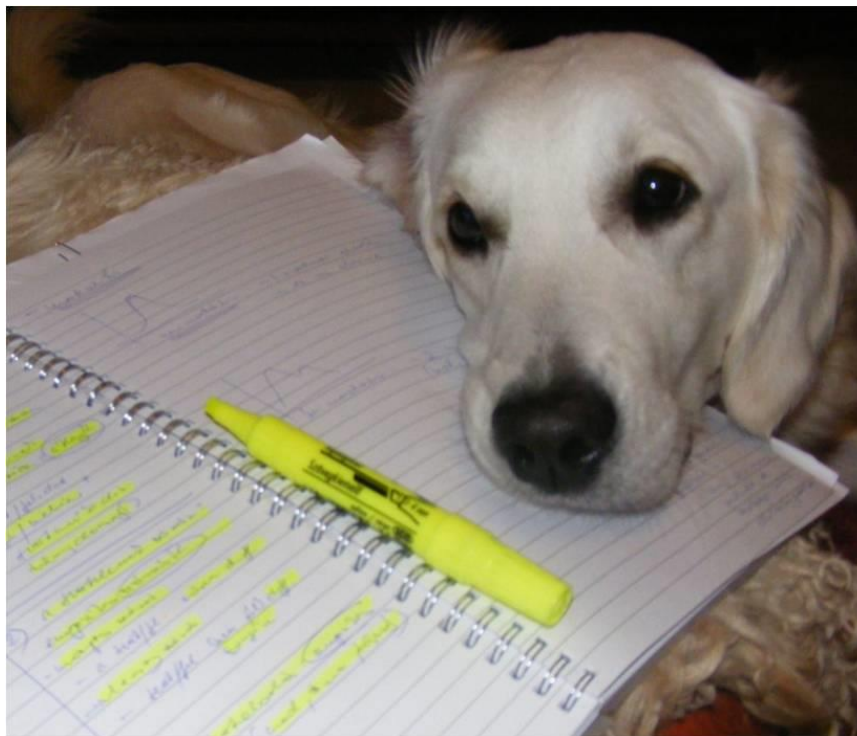


*ELENA – Experiential Learning and
Education for Nature Awareness*

539561-LLP-1-2013-1-DE-COMENIUS-CMP PROJECT

Baseline Study on Biodiversity Education using Living Animals in Schools in Hungary



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Foreword

Nothing provides a better cause for the development, quality assurance and importance of activities aiming to teach biodiversity conservation with live animals than the fact that the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) 2005-2014 is coming to its end, while the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020 is well on its way. For the former, we need to account for the results we achieved, the failures we experienced and the shortcomings we discovered. For the latter, we need to participate as well and actively as possible in the ongoing works.

A thousand threads connect human life with the natural world, its dependence on it cannot be disputed. Humans are an important but not indispensable part of the biosphere of Earth. Their lives depend on the healthy functioning of the biosphere, but the existence of the biosphere does not depend on humanity – at least in theory. Our experience today shows that human activities have broadened to such an extent, both in space and time, that they are endangering the stability and in many places, the survival of living systems in the biosphere – systems that have adapted to the given environmental conditions in the course of millions of years. Through these activities, we have pushed the system of living conditions essential for our own survival to the edge of irreversible degradation. As a result of our thoughtless activities, we have already lost several species that can never be brought back to life, but we still have the chance to save those that are still existing with us, thus ensuring our own survival. Raising awareness and developing the competencies necessary for achieving this goal are key to our survival.

1. Executive summary

The ELENA Project financed by the EU COMENIUS Programme aims to answer the following questions based on the cooperation of three EU member countries (Germany, Hungary and Romania) and one third partner country (Georgia).

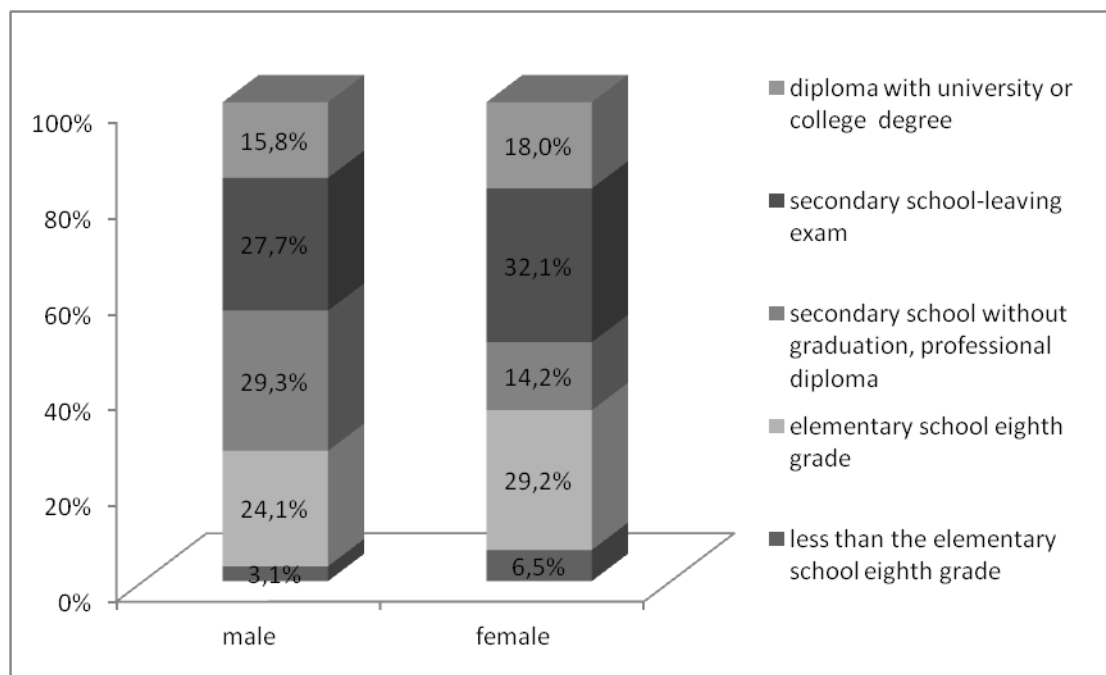
- How can we promote nature awareness and responsibility for nature through animal assisted, experiential learning activities in public education?
- How can we integrate this kind of experiential learning into daily educational practices?
- How can behavioral changes and the development of skills initiated by the emotional experiences through working with living animals support the conservation of biodiversity and the successful employment of youth in the labour market?

The objective of the present study is to map the situation in Hungary and to investigate how important it is to integrate the conservation of biodiversity in public education and to examine the legal frames of animal assisted education in schools. In fact the institutional, human, professional and technical conditions of using live animals in a classroom. We are also aiming to see which organisations can be potential partners in the module development for activities involving live animals and also in the realization of the training preparing teachers to apply these activities in their classes.

It was also our goal to find and introduce two existing good practices related to the field of using live animals for educational purposes.

2. Introduction

According to The Hungarian Central Statistical Office¹ the number of population of Hungary based on the data of the 2011 census was 9 937 628 on 1 October 2011. In the past 30 years, the number of inhabitants saw a continuous drop. Over the past decade the population was largely concentrated in the center of the country and to a lesser extent, in the western areas. The capital city, Budapest, is the most densely populated area. The ratio of the population with an education of less than eight grades is less than 5 percent. The percentage of the people who had graduated increased in the last decade from 11 percent to 17 percent. In the 1. figure, we can see the 15 years and over population by highest educational attainment, by gender in Hungary.



1. figure

It is apparent that the trend characterized by the migration and concentration of the population into the capital, larger towns and economically stronger, more developed

¹ Hungarian Central Statistical Office: 2011. ÉVI NÉPSZÁMLÁLÁS 3. Országos adatok, Budapest, 2013

ISBN 978-963-235-417-0

http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/nepsz2011/nepsz_03_00_2011.pdf

regions and the ever higher levels of education is also present in Hungary. From these facts, we can draw the conclusion that most of the population does not or only to a small extent experiences personally the natural world surrounding them, while their knowledge base is increasing.

The size of protected areas of national significance has increased by some 34 000 hectares during the last 15 years in Hungary.² The total area of national parks has more than tripled. These are promising data, but they carry with them the danger that people are becoming ever more separated from their natural environment, considering it a sphere basically existing independently from them, thus only strengthening the above conclusion. Instead of coexisting harmonically with the natural environment, they are striving to preserve it separately. It is our task to reverse this forming attitude by bringing nature closer to humans and raise the curiosity, interest and responsibility in and for the natural values of humans, especially students, and develop the competencies that enable them to be successful in their individual lives, at the same time exhibiting the largest sense of responsibility and commitment for natural and environmental values in their decisions and actions.

To facilitate and achieve this goal, the German-Hungarian-Romanian-Georgian trans-European ELENA cooperation project is attempting to adapt, prepare for use, pilot and assess the effects of „Tiere Live“, a practice-oriented collection of modules developed by the Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation and Landscape Management (ANL). These modules cover certain animals and they are designed to develop students' social competencies through multiple lessons that often span several weeks.

Hereinafter, we are setting out to detail the legal, health, ethical, institutional etc. background, requirements, and supporting schemes of keeping animals in the classroom for active, practice-oriented lessons that are integrated into education.

² Hungarian Central Statistical Office, FRANCZEN LAJOS: Környezeti helyzetkép 2013, Budapest, 2014 ISSN: 1418 0878

3. Legal framework

3.1 Political commitment

Hungary has signed numerous international agreements that promote biodiversity conservation and the presence of the importance of biodiversity in education. The ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Rio de Janeiro was enacted by the Parliament as an Act (No. LXXXI of 1995).³ Prior to this, the Parliamentary Resolution 103/1993 (XII. 29.) contains the approval of the Republic of Hungary of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, signed on June 13, 1992 in Rio de Janeiro.⁴

It can be read on the official website⁵ of the Convention on Biological Diversity that Hungary has signed and ratified the Convention. Hungary has also signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety on May 24, 2000. The Protocol entered into force on September 11, 2003 and was approved by the Parliament of Hungary on January 13, 2004⁶ with Act No. CIX of 2004⁷, entering into force on April 12, 2004. The Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol was signed on behalf of Hungary by Sándor Fazekas, Minister of Agriculture in 2011.⁸

	Signed	Party	Ratification
Convention on Biological Diversity	1992-06-13	1994-02-24	Yes
Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	2000-05-24	2004-04-12 ⁹	Yes
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing	2011-06-23	-	-

³ http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=24071.254775

⁴ http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=19567.30645

⁵ <http://www.cbd.int/convention/parties/list/#tab=2>

⁶ <http://gmo.kormany.hu/cartagena-jegyzokonyv>

⁷ http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=85596.120124

⁸ <http://gmo.kormany.hu/nagoya-kuala-lumpur-kiegeszito-jegyzokonyv>

⁹ <http://www.cbd.int/countries/?country=hu>

The following list indicates the relevant international conventions and networks for biodiversity conservation that Hungary is a party to as a signatory or partner:^{10,11}

- UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters -Aarhus Convention;¹²
- Bern Convention - Convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats;¹³
- Bonn Convention - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals;¹⁴
- Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS);¹⁵
- African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA);¹⁶
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD);¹⁷
- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention);¹⁸
- European Landscape Convention;¹⁹
- FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA);²⁰
- Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention);^{21,22}

10 <http://www.biodiv.hu/hungary/profile>

11 <http://www.termeszetvedelem.hu/berni-egyezmeny#>

12 http://www.ff3.hu/upload/Aarhus_m.pdf

13 <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ListeDeclarations.asp?NT=104&CM=8&DF=&CL=ENG&VL=1>

14 http://eurlex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&lg=en&type_doc=Decision&an_doc=1982&nu_doc=461

15 http://www.eurobats.org/official_documents/national_reports

16 http://www.unep-aewa.org/about/aewa_range_states_en_nov2013.pdf

17 <http://www.unccd.int/en/regional-access/Pages/countries.aspx?place=97>

18 <http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=246>

19 <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ChercheSig.asp?NT=176&CM=8&DF=&CL=ENG>

20 <http://www.planttreaty.org/map/index.html>

21 <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/national-focal-points-26.html>

- International Whaling Commission (IWC);²³
- Ramsar Convention;²⁴
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);²⁵
- Framework Convention on Climate Change;²⁶
- Natura 2000 Network;²⁷
- Biosphere reserves.^{28,29}

We received no answer from the interviewed institutions concerning the extent and manner of Hungary's involvement in these international fora, or the ways the effects of these conventions on biodiversity conservation are integrated into education. We can state, however, that Government Decree 110/2012 (VI. 4.) regarding the adoption, implementation and application of the national curriculum³⁰ mentions the importance of the conservation of biological diversity and the acquisition of the information encoded in biodiversity in several places (for example during the description of the content of public education).

We should also mention the zoos and wildlife parks here, which provide high quality education and training along with their other functions (see Building a Future for Wildlife – The World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy, 2005³¹ for further reading).

Zoopedagogy has great traditions in Hungary. „Zoopedagogy is a form of environmental education that takes place in zoos, aquaria and wildlife parks and uses special methods with the aim of educating people who will actively take action to

22 http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=96369.136034

23 <http://iwc.int/members>

24 http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-about-parties-parties/main/ramsar/1-36-123%5E23808_4000_0_

25 <http://www.cites.org/eng/disc/parties/alphabet.php>

26 <http://maindb.unfccc.int/public/country.pl?country=HU>

27 http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/info/pubs/docs/nat2000/2002_faq_hu.pdf

28 <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/>

29 <http://www.termesztvedelem.hu/bioszfera-rezervatumok-unesco-mab>

30 http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=149257.256438

31

http://www.waza.org/files/webcontent/1.public_site/5.conservation/conservation_strategies/building_a_future_for_wildlife/wzacs-en.pdf

save the environment and nature”.³² Consequently, the “zoopedagogue is an environmental educator who acquaints and endears students to the flora and fauna and calls attention to the protection of the natural environment, using the opportunities provided by living collections as tools”. There are institutions offering zoopedagogy trainings in Hungary today.

We also did not get an answer from the interviewed authorities regarding the state of political commitment and support for the incorporation of biodiversity into education. We should mention the legal framework here too, which places emphasis on the preservation of the natural world in the broader sense. Act No. CXC of 2011 on National Public Education³³ states in „Purpose and Principles of the Act: ‘The whole of public education is determined by knowledge, justice, order, freedom, fairness, the moral and intellectual values of solidarity, equal treatment and education for sustainable development and healthy lifestyle.’ Legislators are apparently committed to the education of biodiversity protection and create the necessary and sufficient legal framework.

An outstanding good example is the Hungarian Eco-school Network,³⁴ which represents the highest level of sustainability education currently in Hungary. The Network has been operating for nearly 15 years with the professional and financial support of the Ministry of Human Resources and the Ministry of Agriculture and the coordination of the Hungarian Institute of Educational Research and Development, a background institution of the Ministry of Human Resources. According to the definition on the website of the Network, the Eco-school is „the harmony of ecology and economy” and as such, places great emphasis on the protection and education of biodiversity.

Looking at the Fundamental Law of Hungary³⁵, paragraph 1 of Article P of the ‘Foundation’ part formulates the following: ‘All natural resources, especially agricultural land, forests and drinking water supplies, biodiversity – in particular native plant and animal species – and cultural assets shall form part of the nation’s common heritage, and the State and every person shall be obliged to protect,

32 Nagy Irén: ZOOPEDAGÓGIAI HASZNOSKÖNYV - módszertani segédanyag, Fővárosi Állat- és Növénykert ISBN 978-963-06-4045-9

33 http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=139880.244832

34 <http://www.ofi.hu/okoiskola>

35

<http://www.kormany.hu/download/4/c3/30000/THE%20FUNDAMENTAL%20LAW%20OF%20HUNGARY.pdf>

sustain and preserve them for future generations.’ Furthermore, paragraph 1 of Article Q states that ‘In order to create and maintain peace and security, and to achieve the sustainable development of humanity, Hungary shall strive for cooperation with every nation and country of the world.’

Therefore, it can be stated that the Fundamental Law, which is the ‘highest level legal norm in Hungary’ and ‘no legislation may be adopted that stands in contradiction to its contents’³⁶ protects biodiversity on the highest legal level and creates the necessary background for this protection to gain the widest possible ground in practice.

Returning to Act No. CXC of 2011 on National Public Education, we must mention that the Act states in Section 62 of the part of Obligations and Rights of the Teacher: ‘The fundamental task of the teacher is (...)

e) to teach children / students to love and respect each other, to get acquainted with and respect the values of family life, to cooperate, to be environmentally conscious, to live a healthy life and to be a patriot, (...)’.

Therefore it is a priority task of the teacher to acquaint students with environmental consciousness, and teach biodiversity conservation as a pivotal part of it.

In later parts the Act states in connection with the Management of the Sector, the Minister Responsible for Education and the Regulatory Tasks of the Government:

‘78. (5) The minister responsible for education and the Ministry for Environmental Protection shall assist the execution of environmental educational programmes and the implementation of the Open-air School Programme, Open-air Pre-school Programme, Green Pre-school Programme and the Eco-school Programme by announcing joint programmes, calls for applications and ensuring training opportunities.’

As we stated above, the latter programme is a flagship of sustainability education in Hungary, and its tasks are invaluable for biodiversity protection education.

Unfortunately, the screening of Act No. CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education³⁷ provided no results with regards to elements containing biological diversity or the development of environmental consciousness.

³⁶ <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/mo/az-alaptovereny>

³⁷ http://english.szolfportal.hu/images/prospective_student/act_cciv_of_2011_on_higher_education.pdf

Ministerial Decree No. 8/2013. (I. 30.) of the Ministry of Human Resources on the common requirements of teacher preparation and the training and output requirements of teaching majors³⁸ determines the knowledge, skills and attitudes that teachers who finish each major must possess. This decree mentions biodiversity protection only once, when describing the professional core material of the natural history-environmental studies teaching major as follows:

'...the impact of human activities on the biosphere, its biological indicators; the local, regional and global environmental protection and nature conservation problems; biodiversity and the importance of its conservation.'

The following programmes and initiatives can be mentioned as the most typical examples of the willingness of the Ministry of Human Resources (responsible for education) and the Ministry of Agriculture (responsible for environmental protection) to promote environmental education and biodiversity education as a part of it: the aforementioned Eco-school Programme and its adaptation for pre-school, the Green Pre-school Programme³⁹, the Open-air School Programme and the Open-air Pre-school Programme.

While the former two are institution development programmes with the focus on sustainability and environmental consciousness, the latter two are special learning-organization forms, which are characterized by the following:

- 'it is an integral part of the school curriculum;
- the object of learning is the natural, built and socio-cultural environment of the location of the open-air school;
- the execution of the programme is based on the active actions of students;
- the process of gaining knowledge is primarily built on cooperative learning techniques and the application of project methods,
- it benefits from the socialising opportunities inherent in cooperative activities.⁴⁰

38 http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=158734.254089

39 <http://zoldovodademo.menrich-press.com/>

40 Országos Közoktatási Intézet, Magyar Környezeti Nevelési Egyesület, Szerkesztők: Albert Judit, Varga Attila: Lépések az ökoiskola felé ISBN 963 682 535 1

3.2 Regulatory framework

(for the education of biological diversity and entrepreneurship skills with the use of live animals in schools (ie. Safety, Health)

Short description of relevant current legislation

To map out the legal background of bringing animals into the school for lessons, we have to start with Act XXVIII of 1998 on Animal Protection and Tolerance.⁴¹ Chapter IX regulates animal welfare education:

„43/A. § (1) Education for appropriate behaviour and caring towards animals and acquainting students with animals must be incorporated into elementary school education, vocational education and the dissemination of knowledge.

(2) The carrying out of tasks determined in paragraph 1 is the obligation of state and municipal organs and educational institutions.

(3) The state, in connection with the responsibility to carry out its task of educating for appropriate behaviour towards animals, contributes to the development of the attitude which takes animal welfare into consideration with the dissemination of necessary knowledge extensively, and the provision of information, trainings and education.”

It is apparent that the ethical and appropriate treatment of animals is desired and required at the same time, and educational institutions play a significant part in this.

Government Decree 41/2010. (II. 26.) on keeping animals for leisure purposes and on the trade of pets⁴² partly determine concrete parameters and requirements for keeping animals for leisure purposes and the treatment of such animals. A couple of examples without attempting to be exhaustive:

13. § The animal keeper must possess respective data and documents related to mandatory immunization...

14. § (1) Nourishment for animals, and in the case of rabbits and rodents, chewing materials necessary to exercise their teeth... must be provided.

(3) The animal keeper must check the animal kept for leisure and the location where it is being kept at least once a day.

41 http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=34584.254792

42 http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=131539.255331

(4) The location where the animal kept for leisure is being kept must be of a size adequate to satisfy the movement needs characteristic of its species.

(5) It is prohibited to

c) keep vertebrate animals in circular cages or globular aquaria,

d) keep an adult vertebrate animal in a space smaller than 30 litres.

(11) The aquarium where fish are being kept must be covered with a glass panel, net or other adequate object, otherwise the aquarium can only be filled to such a level that the distance between the level of the water and the top of the aquarium should be sufficient to prevent the fish from jumping out.

15. § (1) Animals must be kept in such a way as to not endanger the safety of other animals... or humans.

The Annex of the Joint Ministerial Decree 3/2001. (II. 23.) on the Regulation on the Establishment, Operation and Maintenance of Zoos and Animal Shelters (KOM-FVM-NKOM-BM) ⁴³ contains criteria for the placement of animals: terrarium sizes (in cm) in the case of insects, Myriapoda, land crabs, snails and arachnids and the necessary body of water in litres for 1 cm of fish that should fulfill the requirements of ethical treatment in a classroom setting.

Ministry of Education Decree 19/2002. (V. 8.) on the architectural-technical requirements of the placement and development of public education institutions⁴⁴ formulates the following in the paragraph on environmental culture: "Internal and external spaces of the institutions should be richened as much as possible by pieces of artwork, carefully chosen colours and the installment of living corners (flowers, aquaria, terraria) for the sake of taste-shaping."

Ministerial Decree 27/2009. (XII. 3.) on the regulation of the training, examination and applicability of assistance dogs⁴⁵ is not strictly part of the object of our study, however, we find it important to mention it, because the Decree states that

⁴³ http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=55565.243253

⁴⁴

ftp://witch.pmmf.hu:2001/Tanszeki_anyagok/Mernok%20Tovabbkepzo%20Kozpont/muszakiellenor/regebbitanfolyamok/2011_tavaszi_tanfolyam/jegyzetek/jogszab-nem%20friss_2009marc/jogszabalyok/miniszt/19_2002_OM.pdf

⁴⁵ http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=124322.178270

„9. § (1) ...the owner and the trainer (hereinafter referred to as person employing the assistance dog) is entitled to stay with the assistance dog and employ the assistance dog in the area of the public service organization, institution, provider and in the area of other establishments which are open to everybody, especially...

h) public education, educational, social, child welfare and child protection institutions.

The definition for assistance dog spans guide dogs, dogs assisting handicapped persons, hearing dogs, alert dogs, personal assistance dogs and therapy dogs. The Decree contains the exact definitions of these terms.

We received the following reply (reference number: JÜ-5480-2/2014) to our questions related to the topic from the National Medical Officer Office of the National Public Health and Medical Officer Service:

„There is no existing legal regulation for taking animals into schools and keeping animals in classrooms. We do not have knowledge of assessments in this topic. It is the responsibility of the leader of the institution in every case to allow the animals in the schools, taking into consideration the general safety principles, and setting conditions for keeping the animals in the school.”

„Should the animals necessitate cleaning and disinfecting more than it is usual, the school health service, in cooperation with the local public health institution can provide guidance for the implementation.”

They also called our attention to Ministerial Decree 27/2009. (XII. 3.) on assistance dogs.

We need to mention two more acts, Act C of 2012 on the Criminal Code⁴⁶ and Government Decree 40/2013. (II. 14.) on animal testing.⁴⁷

Section 244, Article (1) of the Criminal Code states that:

„(1) Any person:

a) who is engaged in the unjustified abuse or unjustified mistreatment of vertebrate animals resulting in permanent damage to the animal's health or in the animal's destruction;

46 http://www.academia.edu/4602286/Criminal_Code_of_Hungary_2012

47 http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=158951.261796

b) who abandons, dispossess or expels a domesticated vertebrate animal or a dangerous animal; is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment not exceeding two years.”

The text of the other Decree states that animals cannot be subjected to pain, suffering, torment or lasting damage to health on the level of or higher than that caused by pin-pricks.

3.3 Network opportunities

Regarding answers to our question about the ministries/departments taking part in the development of legislature related to education, and the departments of each institution responsible for biodiversity education and the facilitation of environmental education, we can conclude the following.

The aforementioned Ministries of Human Resources and Agriculture are competent in the preparation of such legislature. „The Ministry of Human Resources is responsible for the operation of Hungary’s social and healthcare systems, the development of school education, the preservation of our cultural values, the representation of the interests of children and youth and the implementation of the Government’s vision concerning Hungary’s sport life.”⁴⁸ Inside the Ministry, the State Secretariat for Public Education is responsible for education, public education and science policy.⁴⁹ As a background institution, the Institute of Education Research and Development, specifically its Development and Innovation Centre serves as the place where Hungary’s central environmental education initiatives are born.

Inside the Ministry of Agriculture, environmental protection, nature conservation, water management, national parks and water governance fall under the responsibility of the State Secretariat of Environmental Affairs, Agricultural Development with responsibility for Hungarikum.⁵⁰ We received the following reply to our e-mail inquiry: inside the Ministry, the Biodiversity and Genetic Resources Conservation unit of the Strategy Department addressess the area of our inquiry. The organograms of these two ministries can be found in the Annex.

We must emphasize that a broad public consultation preceded the preparation of both the National Core Curriculum and the Act on National Public Education in

48 <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/emberi-eroforrasok-miniszteriuma/szervezet>

49 <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/emberi-eroforrasok-miniszteriuma/oktatasert-felelos-allamtitkarsag>

50 <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/idekfejlesztési-miniszterium/kornyezetugyert-felelos-allamtitkarsag>

accordance with Act CXXXI of 2010 on Public Participation in Developing Legislation⁵¹, thus ensuring the opportunity for the public to contribute proposals.

In Hungary, several civil society organizations, institutes and associations exist, which can easily be included in networking.

Without the claim of being exhaustive, the following organizations come to mind from the professional and commitment points of view:

- There are currently 10 national parks in Hungary.⁵²
- Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society⁵³
- Hungarian Society for Environmental Education⁵⁴
- National Association of Educational Centres for Nature- and Environment Protection⁵⁵
- CSEMETE Nature- and Environment Protection Society⁵⁶
- Orpheus Animal Welfare Society⁵⁷
- Nimfea Nature Conservation Association⁵⁸
- National Forestry Association – Forestry Open-air Schools⁵⁹
- Hungarian Therapy and Assistance Dog Association Society⁶⁰
- Budapest Zoo & Botanical Garden⁶¹
- Szeged Zoo⁶²
- University of Szeged, Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty, Interactive Natural Sciences Knowledge Repository⁶³

51

http://www.regatelobbying.com/images/Hungary_New_2011_act_on_public_participation_in_developing_legislation.docx

52 <http://www.nemzetipark.gov.hu/>

53 <http://www.mme.hu/>

54 <http://mkne.hu/>

55 <http://www.kokosz.hu/>

56 <http://www.csemete.com/>

57 <http://www.ebrendeszeti.hu/>

58 <http://www.nimfea.hu/english/index.htm>

59 <http://www.oeo.hu/erdeszeti-erdei-iskolak>

60 <http://www.matesze.hu/>

61 <http://www.zoobudapest.com/en>

62 <http://www.zooszeged.hu/index>

- Hungarian Network of Eco-schools
- Hungarian Veterinary Chamber⁶⁴
- National Public Health and Medical Officer Service (ÁNTSZ)⁶⁵

3.4 Conclusions

From the screened documents, legislation and the answers to our written and telephone inquiries, we can conclude that Hungary is committed to the conservation of biodiversity and its integration into education as widely as possible. This fact is proven by the signing and ratification of numerous international agreements. In accordance with this international environment, Hungary's legislation, from the Fundamental Law of Hungary to the National Core Curriculum, provides appropriate opportunities to introduce the variety of the natural world and protect its values. The development of legislation was and is based on broad public consultations and varied civil society contributions. Central initiatives were started and are still running with success for the practical implementation of biodiversity preservation principles. However, it is difficult to determine the responsibilities in the upper levels of management for the implementation, the legal background is complex, and clearly defined criteria for the use of animals during lessons in school do not exist – this latter does not necessarily pose a problem. The compilation of legislation listed and detailed above may provide pedagogues an adequate framework and guidance and does not create the need for the development of an over-regulated legislation which would be difficult to enforce and control and would only place extra burdens on teachers. Apart from all of this, zoopedagogy is very successful in Hungary, its full-fledged methodology, broad practical experiences and tried and tested set of tools can prove a useful background for the development of „Tiere Live” modules.

63 <http://tudaskapu.hu/>

64 <http://www.maok.hu/index.php?pageid=285>

65 <https://www.antsz.hu/>

4. Educational frame

The Hungarian public education system is multileveled, the levels build on each other, starting with pre-school education, followed by the period of elementary, then secondary education. In this regard, it is our opinion that the adaptation of the „Tiere Live” project is possible both in pre-school education and elementary and secondary education as well. The institutional system of public education has a broad spectrum, based on their specialization, they are as follows: pre-school, elementary school (primary and middle school), secondary school (gymnasium), secondary vocational school, vocational school. The following legislation regulates education: *Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education*, *Ministry of Human Resources Decree 51/2012. (XII.21) on the rules of issuing and approval of framework curricula*, *Government Decree 110/2012. (VI.4.) on the issuing, introduction and implementation of the National Core Curriculum*. A fundamental common aspect of these is the integrated pedagogical process of education, where the National Core Curriculum determines the pedagogical content of school education and key competencies to be developed for each educational subject. The basic goal of public education is to develop students’ moral sensibilities, thus providing an opportunity to understand and discuss different approaches to essential questions regarding human existence and the world surrounding humans. In this context, a further goal of education is to induce a committed attitude which is based on the knowledge and love of nature and the environment, therefore, institutions must prepare students to practice their civil rights and obligations in connection with the environment.

- ✓ Are there schools which are particularly committed to environmental issues?
(e.g. in the school profile, environmental school of Europe and other)

We can find a couple of pre-school institutions which integrate the basic principles of sustainability and environmental education as an organic unit into their pedagogical programme, these are the so-called green pre-schools. We can also find some public education institutions that treat the development of an environmentally conscious way of life as a priority, these are the eco-schools. The main difference between an eco-school and a regular school is that the principles of environmental education and sustainability pedagogy do not only prevail in education, but in every aspect of school life, such as the operating of the school, the meals of students or the organization of camps. These institutions consider the organized involvement of local

communities key for the realization of their goals, so these points of view must be present in the pedagogical programme as well.

Furthermore, every institution of public education is required by law to develop its own pedagogical programme. Educational work in pre-school, school and college is based on the pedagogical programme. As part of its pedagogical programme, if the law does not specify otherwise, the school prepares a local curriculum supplementing the core curriculum issued by the Minister. As part of the local curriculum, the teaching staff of the school prepares an environmental education programme, where competencies related to learning and sustaining the natural world necessarily appear, and the strategies designed to realize the formulated goals are also developed.

- ✓ For which curricular framework is the project suitable? (e.g. biology, environmental subjects)

In accordance with the relevant legislation, the National Core Curriculum (NCC) is the governing primary frame for the arrangement and development of the curricula. However, the principles, goals, development tasks and educational content formulated in the NCC take shape in the general curriculum, documents prepared in different versions fitting the characteristics of the educational phase. The local curricula of the schools adapt the general curriculum, specifying the public education content of each subject. The general curriculum is considerably rigid, schools can adapt them in their local curriculum only to a certain extent what is more the curriculum of natural sciences is only a section of the general curriculum. This can lead to difficulties when adapting the Tiere Live model in public education as the implementation of the activities is reasonably time consuming.

The adaptation of the project units would be most advisable for feasibility purposes primarily in the frame of natural sciences subjects, such as environmental studies (topic areas of endangered species and responsibility for animals), natural history (topic areas of general body composition of animals: comparing the body composition of vertebrate and invertebrate animals, living conditions of animals /nourishment, habitat conditions/, main characteristics of animals' way of life /active movement, ways of obtaining nourishment, procreation and caring for the offspring, behaviour/, body composition, the connection between body shape and the way of life /predators, ungulates, fish, birds/, the variety of body shapes /the diversity of species/) and biology (topic areas: the connection between body composition,

lifestyle and environment for the main groups of organisms through examples of the examined species).

At the same time, the subject of moral philosophy can also be included in the adaptation of the contents, since the topic areas of man and nature, man and its environment are clearly present. Furthermore, the subject of ethics in public education can also serve as a potential arena for the adaptation with the topic areas of today's moral challenges, such as the ecological crisis as a moral problem, our responsibility for other living beings, environmental consciousness.

- ✓ Which practical references are available in the curricula? (e.g. compulsory education, working groups)

For the joint execution of project tasks and curricular requirements, the conditions are set by mandatory classroom education, however, opportunities provided by extracurricular education, such as study groups, self-education groups and clubs may also be suitable for our purposes.

- ✓ Which teachers/departments have interest/competencies in the topic of living animals?

Pedagogues with natural sciences qualifications can work toward the basic goals, accounting for the professional aspects as well: biology, natural history-environmental studies, chemistry and physics teachers. Since environmental education pervades every arena and subject of education and it is the obligation of every teacher as such, a broad spectrum of teachers could be included.

After the careful consideration of the training and output requirements of teacher training in higher education, we can safely conclude that biology and natural history-environmental studies teachers are the most optimal for the implementation of the project adaptation based on their subject matters.

4.1 Extracurricular partners

- ✓ Which extracurricular partners see schools as an important target group of their work? (e.g. environmental education institutions)

It is essential to include external groups of experts and partners for the feasibility of the project. We are planning to involve the following partners:

- CSEMETE (Nature Conservation Society of Csongrád County)

- Hungarian Society for Environmental Education
- Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society
- Nimfea Nature Conservation Association
- Orpheus Animal Welfare Society
- Hungarian Veterinary Chamber
- Inspectorates for Environment and Water

Of the above, the associations/societies are:

- CSEMETE, contact person: Ferenc Bojtos.
- Hungarian Society for Environmental Education
- Nimfea Nature Conservation Association
- Orpheus Animal Welfare Society

State institutions:

- Hungarian Veterinary Chamber
- Inspectorates for Environment and Water

- ✓ What interest do extracurricular partners have to promote educational projects?

The expertise and specialization of these extracurricular partners can help us with the following aspects:

- transfer of increased environmental consciousness, knowledge and responsibility
- they can provide strong points for knowledge related to animal health care, animal keeping and the development of methods
- transfer of animal care and animal welfare knowledge
- they can be arenas for dissemination
- they can provide the starting point for the involvement of local communities and strengthen cooperation
- development of decision-making skills
- development of the skill of critical thinking

- development of conflict resolution skills
- sharing and conveying experience
- development of conscious perception
- ✓ Which extracurricular partners can support the teacher training as well as the implementation of actions with school classes? (The access to living animals is advantageous for actions. Examples: Beekeepers associations – Bees, chicken farmers – chickens)

The partners who will assist in the teacher training:

- CSEMETE (Nature Conservation Society of Csongrád County)
- Hungarian Society for Environmental Education
- Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society

4.2 Adapting and developing the handbook „Tiere live“

- ✓ Which animals or animal groups are particularly suitable for your country and your school system?

During the adaptation of the project, we will process the following animals taking the Hungarian characteristics into account:

- I. Common earthworm (Annelida, Oligochaeta, Haplotaxida, Lumbricida, Lumbricidae, Lumbricus terrestris)
- II. Ants (Camponatus, Lasius emarginatus, Lasius niger, Tetramorium caespitum, Formica rufa Messor sp., Formica fusca, Lasius flavus, Monomorium pharaonis)
- III. Dog (Chordata, Mammalia, Carnivora, Canidae, Canis, Canis lupus familiaris) and wolf (Canis lupus)

- ✓ Which specific references to these animal groups are present in the curricular?

The NCC clearly determines the content frame of education, its realization is ensured by general curricula. Institutions of public education develop their own local curriculum whilst preserving the coherence of principles and requirements.

The following specific elements appear in the contents:

- the characteristic body composition of vertebrate and invertebrate animals (similarities and differences)
- general build of animals (ie. worms, reptiles, vertebrate animals)
- living conditions of animals (nourishment, lifestyle, habitat, body composition)
- life cycles of animals (active movement, nourishment, reproduction, behaviour)
- biodiversity
- ✓ Are there divergent juridical regulations for the application of living animals in the classroom, especially in relation to the protection of species (legally protected species) and animal welfare legislation in the respective country? (Note: The German regulations are very strict. Perhaps, there are less stringent requirements for the application of living animals in schools)

Hungarian legal regulations concerning activities involving live animals are very strict. Recognizing that the protection of natural values, natural heritage and biological diversity, and the harmonic relation between man and nature form an irretrievable component of the national wealth, Act LIII of 1996 on Nature Conservation in Hungary was adopted. Ministry of the Environment Decree 13/2001. (V. 9.) about listing protected and strictly protected species of plants and animals, strictly protected caves, and the animal and plant species of Community interest declares the scope of protected species (including the *Formica* species). The Parliament, aware that animals are living entities capable of feeling, suffering and expressing happiness, therefore, respecting them and ensuring that they would generally feel good shall be everyone's moral obligation, and recognizing the outstanding value of the fauna as a whole and its members individually for humanity, adopted Act XXVIII of 1998 on Animal Protection and Tolerance. The Governmental Decree implementing this Act is also important in this regard, as Governmental Decree 41/2010. (II. 26.) on keeping animals for leisure purposes and on the trade of pets clearly regulates the keeping and treatment of animals for leisure purposes.

4.3 Conclusions

In Hungary, the NCC, the general curricula and local curricula determine the content of education. Our aim in frame of this project is to implement the goals ELENA undertook to achieve through the examples of 3 animal groups, connected to the

arenas of pre-school education, elementary and secondary education and the local curricula of the institutions. The most optimal way to achieve these units of content is to apply the method of infusion, namely, to integrate the set objectives into the already existing curricular targets. This way, the development of specific contents (characteristic body composition of vertebrate and invertebrate animals /similarities and differences/, general build of animals /ie. worms, reptiles, vertebrate animals/, living conditions of animals /nourishment, lifestyle, habitat, body composition/, life cycles of animals /active movement, nourishment, reproduction, behaviour/, biodiversity) can be achieved with the 3 chosen animals: common earthworm (Annelida, Oligochaeta, Haplotaxida, Lumbricida, Lumbricidae, *Lumbricus terrestris*), ants (*Camponatus*, *Lasius emarginatus*, *Lasius niger*, *Tetramorium caespitum*, *Formica rufa* Messor sp., *Formica fusca*, *Lasius flavus*, *Monomorium pharaonis*) dog and wolf(Chordata, Mammalia, Carnivora, Canidae, *Canis*, *Canis lupus familiaris*). We plan to include external partners to achieve these goals.

5. Training needs analysis for teacher trainings

5.1 Organization

- ✓ Planned location:
 - Szeged Zoo, Center for Nature Conservation Education, Szeged
 - SZTE-JGYPK Interactive Natural Sciences Knowledge Repository
- ✓ Planned instructors:
 - Árpád Vajda, JAM
 - Erika Köböl, SZTE-JGYPK
 - Ildikó Kovács, JAM
 - Katalin Czippán, ANL
 - experts of the modules to be developed are also planned instructors
- ✓ We plan to inform the target group about the teacher training through direct contact with the school directors of eco schools and members of associated partners
- ✓ The planned duration of the teacher training is 3 days.
- ✓ We plan to complete the evaluation of the teacher training with the survey method.

5.2 Network of organizations

- ✓ What is the central institution of teacher training?

The registry of accredited teacher training programmes is kept by the Education Office. During the process of accreditation, the state determines whether a programme meets the standard requirements or not.⁶⁶ A separate legislation regulates teacher trainings: Government Decree 277/1997. (XII. 22.) on teacher in-service training, teacher examination and on the benefits and reductions provided for participants in in-service training.⁶⁷

⁶⁶

http://www.oktatas.hu/pub_bin/dload/unios_projektek/tamop315/Pedagogus_tkpz_programok_akkreditacioja.pdf

⁶⁷ http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt_doc.cgi?docid=31239.251683

- ✓ Are there any non-governmental providers of teacher trainings?

There are, universities and for example the Humusz Alliance⁶⁸ and Junior Achievement Hungary also offer accredited teacher trainings.

- ✓ What governmental and non-governmental organizations could be involved in the „Tiere Live” teacher training?

All the organizations mentioned in Chapter 1.3 - Network opportunities could be open to cooperation. In future, it would be beneficial to examine how the teacher training based on „Tiere Live” modules could be integrated into accredited teacher training programmes.

5.3 Financing

- ✓ What financial resources are needed?

Seeing as the financial resources are limited, we attempted to economize the available funds by delimiting the target group. Teachers in the Southern Great Plain Region are our chosen target group, so we do not need to account for accommodation and travel expenses of participants. This way, costs will include room, the honorarium of trainers and instructors, „fees” of participants, tools and coffee break expenses.

5.4 Target group of the training

- ✓ From what type of school are we expecting participants?

Primarily elementary schools.

- ✓ Which subjects will it be connected to?

Primarily natural sciences, biology, ethics and crafts.

- ✓ Will the training be voluntary?

Yes, it will require application.

- ✓ How many teachers are planned to participate in the training?

15 at first.

- ✓ Will the teachers need to apply what they learned during their own teaching?

Yes, they will need to pilot 2-3 activities, provide feedback and assess the impact.

68 <http://www.humusz.hu/oktatas/pedagogusok>

5.5 Training: contents, timing and sustainability

- ✓ Duration of the training:

3 days are planned.

- ✓ Importance of including live animals in education:

The population in Hungary is increasingly concentrated in towns, its contact with the natural world is increasingly limited. A cardinal principle of environmental education is gaining experiences which influence emotions actively. „Tiere Live“ modules implement this practical way of education in a classroom setting. The difference between the previous „living corner in the classroom“ practices and „Tiere Live“ modules is that the latter were specifically created to develop certain competencies. The changes and development in students' attitudes is not only a result, but a clearly expressed goal of the lessons with animals.

- ✓ Structure of the „Tiere Live“ modules:

Every module of „Tiere Live“ is based on the structure detailed below:

- Biological description of the animals
- Relevant legal and health laws and regulations
- Data of contact persons
- Description of activities

5 main goals:

- discovering the diversity in the local environment,
- creating a sense of responsibility for living entities,
- introducing appealing and disagreeable animals, should it be relevant for the given species,
- „problematic animals“ in our society (for example the wolf),
- successful implementation in the classroom.

It is important that the activities fit the curriculum and the type of school.

The activities should have a precise and achievable description.

Structure of the beaver (from the animals available in English)

Beaver:

- A few general sentences about the beaver and the relation of man and beaver.
- A few sentences about the basic goals of the activities, for example:
 - ✓ Discovering the traces and habitats of beavers,
 - ✓ Experiencing how the beaver changes the landscape,
 - ✓ Outlining the causes of conflicts related to beavers, discussing the possibilities and evaluating the activities, according to the age characteristics.

1. Factual data about beavers

- ✓ Historical overview, past beliefs about beavers
- ✓ Reasons of its extinction
- ✓ Reintroduction.
- Differences between the beaver, muskrat and coypu
- Teeth
- Adaptation to the aquatic lifestyle
- The beaver dam
- Lifestyle
- Habitat
- Beavers in the cultural landscape
- Possibilities for a conflict-free coexistence
- Literature
 - ✓ books
 - ✓ educational materials
 - ✓ brochures
- Internet links
- Contacts

- ✓ Contacts, for example zoos
- ✓ Contacts with people

2. Legal background

3. Activities:

For example

- A1 Following the beaver: looking for traces of the beaver, exploring its habitat.
- A2 Role playing: „Dear Beaver”: illustrating different interests, improving conflict resolution
- A3 The beaver as a problematic species.
- Further materials, tools
 - ✓ Booklets (Rodents, traces on trees, etc.)
 - ✓ Projector (The beaver, etc.)

A1 activity (title: Following the beaver)

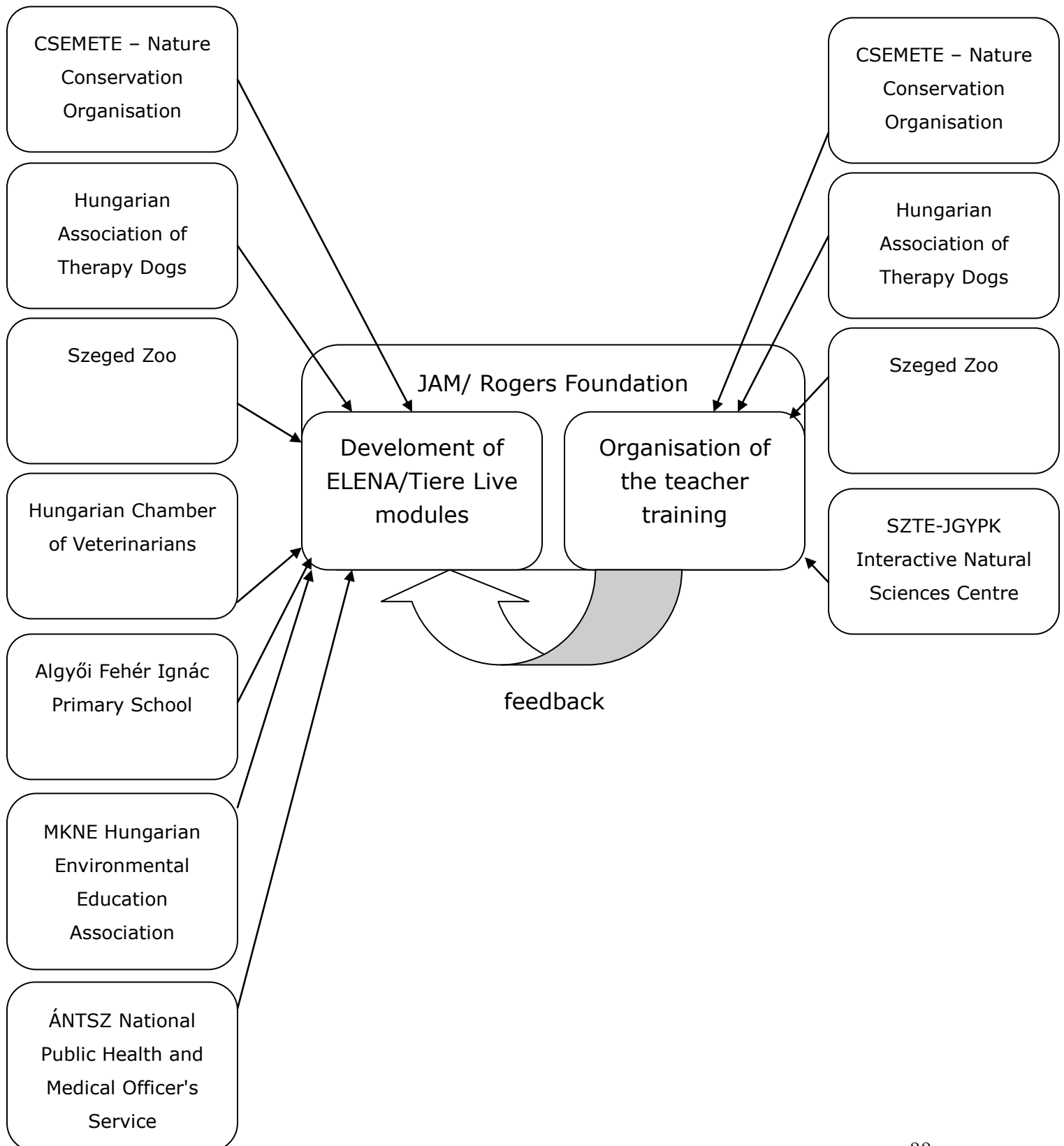
- Objectives of the activity:
 - ✓ Discovering the habitat of beavers with the help of their traces.
 - ✓ Learning and understanding that the activities of beavers actively shape the waterfront.
 - ✓ Understanding that beavers are a part of the landscape.
 - ✓ Recognizing that these dynamics are important for the development of the landscape.
- Materials, tools:
 - ✓ Camera to film the holes, exits and the toppled trees.
 - ✓ Further materials, tools
 - Booklets
 - Projector
- Indicating the time of the activity, for example from December to March
- Indicating the grade

- Indicating the difficulty level
- Factual background of the activity (for example: the beaver is a nocturnal animal, we can guess their presence based on their traces. Children enjoy investigating, so looking for the traces is enjoyable for them. It is easier to read the traces in winter. Size of the beaver's territory, the trees whose bark they prefer etc.)
- Execution of the activity
 - ✓ Gathering information, contacting the experts, for example the National Park.
 - ✓ Preliminary visit to the area.
 - ✓ Touching on the traces and using the connected materials during the lesson.
 - ✓ Looking for traces indicating the beavers' presence with the students.
 - ✓ Assess the discovered habitat with the students using the attached materials. Is the habitat suitable for beavers?
 - ✓ After the activity: organize an exhibition about the beaver.
 - ✓ How can the programme be sustainable?

We plan to assess the impact of the training with follow-up surveys.

6. Identified potential partners

Mapping the stakeholders



7. Good practices

We examined the following points of view for the good practices described below:
(Who? Where? Why? How? When?)

- Why is it a good practice?
- Who was the target group?
- What methods and tools did they use?
- Which competencies did they develop?
- How did they measure success?

7.1 The World Animal Day Programme of the Fehér Ignác Elementary School in Algyő

The Fehér Ignác Elementary School in Algyő, a Perpetual Eco-school, treats the broadest possible integration of local values, specifically natural values into education as a priority. This is stated in the Pedagogical Programme of the school: „The school celebrates the international days of nature- and environment protection and health in frame of school lessons and also by organizing special programmes, thus raising awareness of their importance. The school organizes competitions, actions or outings and projects suitable for the occasion.”⁶⁹

One of the most popular programmes of the school among students is the World Animal Day every year on October 4, and the organization of the „Pet exhibition”, for which children can bring their pets to the school and introduce them to their classmates. On one such occasion, a horse was brought in front of the school.

The aim of programmes such as these is to introduce the animals, raise interest, form emotional attachments, introduce the basic hygienic practices during the care of the animals.

Based on the experiences, such initiatives have a complex effect on students' personality development, they develop every competence. The introduction of the pet through the presentation improves communication skills and boosts the student's

⁶⁹ http://www.algyoiskola.hu/Algyo_pdf/pedagogiaiprogram.pdf

confidence. The drawing or essay about the big day can improve expressiveness, graphomotor skills and eye-hand coordination.

7.2 Budapest Zoo and Botanical Garden

General information

Name of the programme: Natural Sciences Research programme

Name of programme coordinator: Nagy Irén – zoopedagogue, demonstrator

Organizer: Zoo & Botanical Garden

Website: www.zoobudapest.com

Target group: from kindergarten to university

Location: Hungary, Budapest

Author of the case study: Csizmazia Katalin és Turóczy Levente

Aim:

Main aim of the zoopedagogy programme running in the Budapest Zoo and Botanical Gardens is the shaping of attitude. Due to the large number of visitors zoos have the advantage of reaching a wide range of people so it is their responsibility to support the conservation of biodiversity and to educate people about it.

In addition it is also their goal to offer activities that can replace the usual classroom activities in public education with the addition of activities that are satisfying the demand of people motivated to gain new experience and information about nature.

Almost everything is provided there on spot including sufficient interactive equipment, tools and material. However, it is necessary to note that the most important things to reach their goals are always there too, namely the living animals themselves.

Development of skills and competencies

Due to the speed of the modern era the youth have forgotten how to focus on something, to do analytic work or research. So the first applied method is observation where all senses are involved. Through observation students can learn from their own experiences which in return becomes an inner motivational force. This supports the final aim of zoopedagogy which is to help people become active members of their society willing to take actions for nature, for sustainability and the conservation of biodiversity.

Applied methods and tools: teamwork, activities that provoke thinking, communicational activities and also tasks that reinforce individual work and responsibility for actions.

Tools and methods for competency development, general description of the programmes

Budapest Zoo and Botanical Gardens have been involved in zoopedagogy from the early 70s, which started as guided walks and now it includes customized programme packages offered to educational institutions.

Since the opening of the Magic Mountain in 2012 May the emphasis has shifted from the very young to the secondary school students. In both the Magic Mountain and the BASF Kids Lab the young can take part in activities where they observe living animals.

The services have been supplemented with an online platform recently (<http://www.zoobudapest.com/oktatas/>), which is offering resources and educational material to teachers. The programmes depend on the demand, the statistics about their popularity and other important factors.

The name of the programme is Natural Sciences Research Programme

It can be divided into various sections:

1. Research and experience programme(formal education)

This programme resembles the most to the Tiere Live activities because here the participants can observe and touch the living animals and can learn about their biology and role on the ecosystem. This programme is accompanied by presentations and experiments.

In cooperation with the BASF students can observe chemical interactions and become active members of the learning process, the target group mainly consists of the young from kindergarten to the end of secondary school.

2. Nature sciences- biological tour (formal education)

Participants can get acquainted with the animals in thematic order, this relates closely to the national core curriculum and tertiary education. This is also the part of teacher training courses.

3. Natural sciences- informative programme (informal education)

In one programme students have the chance to meet the animals at their enclosures while meeting their keepers, the other is a guided tour after closing time, where students have the chance to meet the animals in a different way, to discover areas not accessible to the public otherwise.

4. Other tailor made programmes:

One initiative was made in cooperation with Rogers Academy involving a small group of 10-15 students for various sessions in the Zoo. The experiments here were conducted by the students so they were active in the process. This way students became more motivated and were able to get into direct contact with the animals.

The other was a more complex activity where the participants had to design their own zoo and maintain it within a project, meanwhile they actually built the model of the zoo. Students survey the demand, define the functions and roles, This latter is decided in the form of a job interview. They lay the rules of the zoo and arrive at a common decision on how to implement their ideas.

The age, special features of the programme participants, arising obstacles (efficiency), evaluation methods.

Programmes have to meet the needs, wishes and demands of the particular age group. It is essential to find the right method, tool and techniques because that is the only way to keep up the interest of the subjects.

Regarding in-service teacher trainings and tertiary education quality assurance is an indispensable part of education. This is also an integral part of this project as the participants have to be able to prove what they have completed and performed.

Three main age groups:

- Preschoolers (age 3-6): perfect method is experiential learning, short attention span so they are the hardest to keep engaged, best methods are drama and everyday examples
- Lower grades (age 6-12): more games, where they can reduce their fears, and make them feel safe
- Upper grades (12-18): initially biased against zoos, they can best relate to research project or presentations matching their interest and needs

7.3 Dog Assisted Training – Rogers Foundation

General information

Name of the programme: dog-assisted training

Duration of the programme: 1 week and two one-hour follow up session

Coordinator: Katalin Csizmazia, head of Rogers Academy

Organizers: Rogers Academy, Budapest

website: <http://www.kutyasterapia.com/>

Age of participants: 14 - 21

Place: Rogers Academy, Budapest, Hungary

Writer of the case study: Katalin Csizmazia

Trainers: Noémi Bámszky and Kata Pázmándi

The dogs: Shaco and Oszkár

This case study is based on the study of Kata Pázmándi.



Bámszky Noémi



Pázmándi Kata



Shaco



Oszkár

Goals

The main goals of the project is to enhance the coping strategies of the participants. An other important aim could be the group getting into a more coherent stage. Both the social and the psychological effects of the training are important in teenager year both develop skills necessary in everyday situations.

Competencies and skills developing throughout dog assisted training.

During the dog training (therapy), during the communication and relationship with dogs, the inner experiences are reflected, at the same time it ties the participant to the reality out of him, helping him to create a situation that leads to better connection to reality.

Dogs are sensitive to human **non-verbal communication** (mimics, gesticulation, tone of the voice etc.) They are able to cooperate, make and maintain contact, attachment. This helps youngsters learn more about non-verbal communication. They have to be precise and definite in expressing their will, that are the first steps to **empathy** and **assertivity**. It also teaches a lot about **problem solving** techniques.

The presence of dogs in therapeutic situation usually **calms anxiety and depression**; it lowers the level of stress. Many teenagers suffer depression, but this type of training may help not only in as cure but as a prevention also.

Learning good **coping techniques** make people more **decisive, emotionally more controlled**. As a result, many kids become **more motivated**, their psychological immune system is getting stronger. Stress management – in most cases – is sure to teach effectively by animal assisted projects.

By the continuous feedback of the dogs **attention, responsibility and respect** are taught to people by dogs. The participants must control their behavior.

In group training or therapy the exercises have a definitive **group building effect**. We will have common actions, common experiences that help social contact develop in the group.

Our project

In our project there were involved two trainers specialized in animal assisted trainings and the two dogs: Shaco and Oszkar. The participants belonged to the Rogers Academy, Budapest (Hungary). There were eight 14-20 year old kids (3 girls and 5 boys) but only six of them was present at all the days. The project consisted of one hour sessions on five successive days.

The structure of the project

There were 5 occasions always with one opening and one closing session. The opening phase we talked about how kids arrived, what mood they have. The trainers talked about the coming exercises, their goals, topics, the challenges. In the closing phase they shared the experiences and reflection. There was a common feeling that the exercises were easier than expected. It always produced good feeling when they were successful.

1. occasion – getting acquainted: tricks and mirrors

The participants gets to know the two dogs and learn some tricks. After some time they – one by one – choose a dog and show how they manage to work together. Tricks like – sit lie, bark, turn round. It is not an easy situation: dogs and the situation are rather new to them, success depends on tolerance, concentration, insistence and skills, they are watched by others. After the first minutes' fears, they looked for challenges, and tried new tricks. The control over another living creature made them more self-determined and gave them the feeling of success.

Following this exercise the group could watch the tug-of-war of the two dogs different in all aspects: size, color, strength and attitude. The audience concentrated on their behavior to each other. The task was to find some similarities of temperament or attitude that resembled of him / herself. All of them recognized the mirror from the playful rivalry of the dogs.

As everybody chose a dog, they formed two groups. The job of the group was to plan and build a slalom – route for their dog. It needed cooperation, concentration and attention not only to the dog, but to the group members also.

At the end of the first occasion they had a reward: some dog food was put on different points of their bodies (hand, cloth, shoes, even to the face and dogs ate these pieces from them. This stress – managing exercise showed how their attitude

changed from the beginning. Boys were more courageous: one of them let the dog eat its piece from the boy's face. Girls were more distance keeping in general.

2. occasion: obstacle race, challenge, conflicts, coping

This time kids had to make an obstacle race. The only instruction they got was race must have a definite winner. The winner cannot be a dog. All the other things they had to decide on their own. They formed groups, prepared a race track, made the rules.

At the beginning it was not easy for them: they did not find their place, their role. Out of the six kids two were giving instructions while one started to build a track on his own, while another one did not make a move at all. The two groups worked separately for a while, but they soon realized that in order to compare the two tracks they have to share ideas about the tracks and about the dogs (because the dogs were of different abilities, skills)

After a time they started cooperating and managed to solve their conflicts too.

3. occasion: A theatre play: conflict managing or cooperation

The topic of this session was still conflict – managing. The task was to prepare a theatre play including the two dogs. Roles were similar to the former occasion: there were some giving ideas, others were instructors, some were passive again. As at the end it became clear they could reflect on their own role: they saw perfectly how much each of them put in the work. Not everybody was happy about his own achievement, but as a whole all were happy with the result of the group. They produced a humourous story where everybody found his own place and was happy to take part.

4. occasion: trust - building

Kids experienced trust first in pairs. One of the pair has got his eyes tied up, the other leading him and a dog through a simple obstacle track. The same exercised was repeated in bigger and bigger groups. The dog helps the „blind“ kid. They

experienced what it was like to lead and be led, they got feedback. Some had difficulties in leaning on the other, because they did not feel the leader skilled enough

It was interesting to see that the kid who before was always slow to enter the activity this time enjoyed being trustful. He was more initiative with the dogs too.

Leading the dog on the lead in a right way (not too tight, not too loose) could be an important source of information - it could symbolize the connection, control or leadership. They have to find a decisive, harmonic, assertive way in which the connection with the dog is an important element. Just like in human contact.

5. occasion: rejecting food

Rejecting food is a difficult exercise. The goal is showing and maintaining limits. Kids experience their and dogs' limits, the difficulties and the consequences. It needs persistence, assertivity and problem solving skills. Dogs in this activity show up immediate and definite mirror putting their weakness and strength, and adequate communication into light. Non- verbal communication and empathy also badly needed.

Repeating the dog – feeding task proved to be a good way of evaluating progress. Changes in attitude and skills were unambiguous.



Summary

Dog – assisted program is a good practice for Elena project. The pedagogical aims are identical: working with living animals in classrooms in order to develop consciousness and skills through self - experiences. The methodology is worth adaption: there are a number of exercises already prepared for different aims – prevention or cure for younger or older teenagers.

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8. Interviews

We conducted 3 personal and one telephone interview for the baseline study. An education researcher, an elementary school principal and a university teacher specializing in dog therapy were personally interviewed. A person involved in veterinary training and education with animals was interviewed on the phone. The answers we received during these interviews were used for the baseline study.

The interview questions we asked the elementary school principal are listed below:

1. In your experience as a principal and pedagogue, to what extent is Hungary committed to include biodiversity in education?
2. Do the NCC and other documents regulating education demand that biodiversity protection be integrated into educational work?
3. Does the school receive any support from governmental organizations to teach biodiversity protection?
4. To which non-governmental organizations, partners can the school turn to?
5. In your experience, is this issue a focus of teacher training?
6. Does biodiversity education have a place in your school?
7. Do you think bringing live animals to the classroom is important?
8. Do you have classes where students meet live animals in the classroom (for example therapy, guide dogs)?
9. And outside the classroom?
10. Is there any legislation that regulates these types of activities?
11. Does the school have any such special regulations?
12. Would it be possible to incorporate lessons involving actively caring for animals for several weeks into your educational activities?
13. Which animals, animal groups would you welcome in a class?
14. What are the potential obstacles?
15. What could be the benefits of such classes?
16. Which competencies, skills and capabilities are developed through the classes with animals?

17. Are these important and beneficial on the labor market later?

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