

Minutes of working group 3 – Policies related to green care
 (Chair Thomas van Elsen; Minutes: Marie Kalisch and Thomas van Elsen)
 Contributions and presentations, 21st of June 2007

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1 Georg Wiesinger, Austria: Green Care Politics in Austria

As already mentioned in the abstract (see book of abstracts p. 57) Georg Wiesinger pointed out that institutions and policies of Green Care in Austria are heterogenous and the institutions (mostly family based) act isolated without communication in networks and without masterplans. Different acts ensure or limit their work:

- Antidiscrimination act from 1995
- Labour act for disabled persons 1999 (compensatory tax for enterprises that employ more than 25 employees, about 209 €per month but disabled people stay unemployed, the sheltered workshops are – in difference to Germany only for severely disabled)
- Seven levels of disability for payments of nursing (from level one with 148€to level seven with 1562 €per month)

Currently there is a discussion on the increase of fees and new schemes (personal budget). The circumstances in Austria are perfect “to start with the topic green care” (projects, networking, research etc.).

2 Katja Vadnal, Slovenia: Conceptualisation of the regional net of social farms

The aim of the research project is to establish a regional network of social services for mentally disabled people on family farms as a supplementary on farm activity and quantify the structural elements (needs, numbers, logistics, ...), external factors (integration into legal framework, general values) and the planning process (money needed, number of farms required). There was a survey conducted on the parents where they was asked if or under which circumstances they would be willing to send their offspring to a farm. There are about 377 disabled young people and estimated 700 adults in Ljubliana whose life quality could be increased, also other client groups could be included.

3 Marie Kalisch, Germany: Analysis of Social Farming in Germany: outcomes of the national meeting

The German partner of the European SoFar research project has organized a national meeting with 22 stakeholders of social farming. The presentation concerned on the difficulty to bring stakeholders of different professions together, attract representatives from administration and politics and develop a common understanding and a strategy on political change.

4 Linda Jolly, Norway: Living learning – the farm as a pedagogical ressource

Until now it is completely ignored that one third of the young people finishing school “do not function” and become unemployed. In Norway initiatives of social farming (5000 social farms, half of them working with schools) are very strong (www.livinglearning.org, “in pa tunet”). Together with the agricultural department and financed via “innovation Norway” (state money) a one years course was established on the Norwegian University of Life Sciences to educate farmers (10 university credits), bring together teacher and farmer and develop a common vision via planning detailed programmes for school classes on farms. The project is very effective and after the year experiencing most schools “become addicted” and pay the farmer for further projects.

(break)

5 Hans ter Beek, Gunter Schwandt, The Netherlands: Health and Care park Hengelo (NL)

In a district with lots of therapeutic and educational institutions in Twente there was the idea to develop a 50 ha big area as a recreational park. Firstly all the institutions were asked in workshops about there exspectations and what they could offer. The planning included issues like climate change (water management), a new road system, common facilities (like a shop, restaurants, wellness, a kindergarten) and the suitedness to the Twente region landscape. They

took the idea of therapeutical landscapes from a park in Vienna and hospital Holzhausen in Germany – in future it should be possible to perform some outdoor therapies in the park that is also open to the public.

Francesco Di Iacovo raised some concerns whether this approach should be referred to as “social farming” or not: “We want farms and not parks”. Jan Hassink mentioned that possibly good combinations could be achieved such as leaving the care for the park for some rehabilitative patients and thus including some “agricultural elements”.

6 Elsa Fjeldal (social scientist), Torill Meistad (economist), Norway: Science and policy of Farming for health

The results of a research on Farming for health literature such as political papers from ministries and municipals were presented. The hypothesis was that science and policy are “two different pairs of glasses”: they differ in intention, knowledge, concepts, actions and legitimacy.

7 Jan Hassink, The Netherlands: Chances for social farming due to the changing paradigms in health care

Until now the medical model was dominant in health care. More and more it is visible that people with diseases and/ or handicaps get isolated from society and patient can not be sufficiently treated through these models (patient stays in a passive role, gets treated by an expert, the treatment is expensive and does not suit for chronic problems). There are new models i.e. to see handicapped people as citizens and focus on the support of strength and possibilities rather than on their medical needs. Farming for health and green care combines those new models: The farmer is a farmer and not an expert, it is about a supportive environment (community care, support) instead of a special treatment and a continuative personal approach.

8 Olga Travkina, The Netherlands: Education in Green Care. A first European overview of the provision in education and training for Green Care workers

Olga Travkina presented an overview on possibilities of education and training in green care that were collected in a survey within the *Farming for Health* Community of practice. There are 48 courses in 28 institutions in different European countries and with different focus and profession (gardening, animals, education, therapy etc.). Information will be available in the internet soon. Linda Jolly contributed that not only the formal but also the practical competences should be rewarded as it happens in Norway, where farmers get university credits to enable them to work with schools.

9 Short presentations of participants:

9a) Björg Jónðóttir: Situation of Green Care in Iceland

There is no term for Green Care in Icelandic language, no established networks but several initiatives, such as animal therapy with dogs (there was the advice if people fear dogs to try rabbits.), school gardens on farms, farms for teenagers that do not fit into society etc. Some questions could be raised on the effects of green care (beneficial effects, basis), suited Clientgroups and suited farm sites and the problems involved.

9b) Anna Kirveennummi: School projects in Finland

There are several school projects taking place in gardens and forests in Finland. They get some money from ministry and try to collaborate with all possible partners. They are in the phase of “learning by doing”.

9c) Beatrice Winterstein, Greece: Greek farm seeks for support from abroad

Beatrice Winterstein runs a farm near Thessaloniki that “slivered into” green care. They employ a psychologist who does some riding therapy and offer some summer programmes. They have lots of visitors such as schools and schools for handicapped children but they lack of formal and financial support from municipalities or networks. They “feel used”.

9d) Charlotte Eriksson: Forests as Green Care site in Sweden

Presentation of a rehabilitative programme in forests that is conducted as a collaborative initiative of a state owned rehabilitation organisation, *Arbetslivsresurs* and the Swedish Forest Agency. They have made very good experiences with rehabilitation of depressive people in rehabilitation. The social value of forests should also be included in the term green care. (www.skogsstyrelse.se/minskog/templates, www.Arbetslivsresurs.se)

9e) Debbie Wilcox: (NCF in UK)

Green care as probation for offenders grows in the UK. Debbie Wilcox reports about the national care farming initiative in Britain.

10 Sub-Working-Groups during the Meeting

In the last phase the participants split into three subgroups.

10a) Trends in Agriculture, historical framework and future development of Green Care

Minutes taken by Georg Wiesinger, Debbie Wilcox



1. Market implications

Is there or should there be a (free) market for Green Care?

Relationship between demand and supply: generation of supply and demand

To what extent shall GC be market-orientated?

General trend across Europe towards privatisation and PPP (Public-Private-Partnership)

How to enhance quality and avoid a lower level of service?

Restructuring of the Health sector

Is GC really cheaper?

How to simultaneously ensure quality and care standards?

Public framework

Public financial support

Legal framework, restrictions

Fundamental human right to choose the form of care/support – the funding should follow this choice.

Note:

In U.K. there are direct payments which could allow clients to make the choice of going to a care farm similar to the personal budgets in Holland.

2. *Clients and patients*

Should we only talk about clients (persons with physical or mental illness, peoples with disabilities etc.) or should we focus on a more holistic approach regarding the wellbeing of individuals.

Every human being might profit from the impact of nature and GC (stress, burnout, alienation from nature) Is this distinction the difference between GC and Care Farming.

The prevention aspect is equally important.

Note

In U.K. there is particular interest from professionals dealing with young offenders.

3. *Farms*

We always talk about farms, family farms etc. but we never define this term accurately.

The meaning of farm is different according to the national, regional or local context.

Different forms of farms may provide different forms of services, advantages or risks.

Therefore we will have to analyze the special impact of productive farms, specialised care farms and token farms, of family business farms, farm co-operations, community farms, farms with and without farm animals etc.

4. *Impact of agricultural and rural development policies*

General trend of farms towards diversification and pluriactivity, social services may play a crucial role in this story.

EU CAP reform puts its emphasis exactly in this field (Agenda 2000, Second pillar, axis 3 of the new programme period 2007-2013)

GC may contribute to farm sustainability, environmentally sound production schemes, landscapes, biodiversity, natural and cultural heritage, social inclusion in remote rural areas (through employment)

Contribution of GC to the health sector: budget saving, enhancement of health and quality of life

Special offering of organic farming and agri-environmental direct payment schemes

5. *State of Green Care in different countries*

What are the main historical and structural reasons for either a rapid or slow development of GC in different countries?

In favour:

Consulting systems for the setting up of care farms, social farms, GC institutions

Particularly, Norway (Innovation Norway, advisory boards in each of the 18 provinces),

Holland (the National Support Centre), Belgium (Green Care Support Centre). UK at early stage.

Generation of networks, knowledge exchange, fostering scientific research

Investment support

Against:

Obstacles

Care scandals in the past which generate negative attitudes in the public opinion (e.g. Austria and UK), prejudices and rumours.

Note: Farmers' motivation is important. Is a desire simply for a commercially viable future enough or does the farmer need a certain level of altruism?

What are the best ways to overcome obstacles?

Public Relation, media campaigns, websites

Lobbying

Networks amongst farmers, practitioners, experts, scientists (linkages within and between these groups)

EU wide cooperation and exchange of experience and best practice at all levels

International databank of best practice examples

Need of qualitative and quantitative research evidence

Publication of a trans-national strategy document

10b) Towards a research agenda for Green Care

with Elsa Fjeldavli, Katriina Soini, Björg Jonsdottir, Toril Meistad, Kirsti Solo, Linda Jolly, Bas Pedroli After notes taken by Bas Pedroli



■ *Farming for Health* proposal as submitted to FP6 (13 April 2005; it failed): Concerted action to survey and assess green care initiatives in Europe, with as main line: European co-ordination of innovative practice and research experiences with the combination of social health care, farming and landscape management

- comparative research on effects of practical learning on farms (school children, youngsters)
- longitudinal effect research (e.g. follow school children that had been offered experience in farm work)
- effects of Farming for Health initiatives on rural identity, landscape quality
- effects of the farm (or institution) environment on the healing atmosphere (both disabled and socially completely included people)

- concentrate on policy! (or not?); what is the niche of 866?
- (make use of the impetus of SoFar!)
- Underlying problems where Green Care etc. could offer a solution

We need to focus !

so, try to achieve a publication in Nature within 5 years:

- “ Farming for Health more effective than in-house treatment “
- focus:
 - be responsible for yourself
 - farm learning creates motivation

RESOURCES

- identify the potential motives of initiating green care (incl. sense of place, sense of belonging, identity, quality of life, etc.), including the preventive effects of it
- do a literature study on the connectedness of children to nature, having influence on obesitas, attention deficiencies, etc. (compare German sociological study, already longitudinal type of study); what are the determining factors ?

EFFECTS

- develop (interdisciplinary) methodology for analysing the (both short and long term / retrospective!) socio-economic costs and benefits of green care initiatives
- promote qualitative methodology to demonstrate the effects of green care (personal stories may be more convincing than statistics)
- international comparative study of financing the services provided by green care initiatives; include as far as available societal cost – benefit analyses (differentiate by target groups / types of initiative)
- compare traditional care strategies with green care (use accepted indicators and criteria)
- carry out feasibility studies on green care in countries where green care is not yet well developed
- assess the benefit of green-care-like educational facilities for children and adults in the perspective of environmental education (awareness raising in relation to e.g. climate change)
- meta-analysis, in the form of action research documenting the co-operation as it develops

10c) Compose a transition strategy paper: how to effectively influence policy?

After notes from Francesco Di Iacovo



The working group applied to the lecture of Francesco Di Iacovo held in the plenum at 20th of June. There should be research on how to effectively influence policy and the way of how to support social farming most effectively. In order to do that the political framework in different countries must be analysed, i.e. position in the transition cycle in the various countries; compare national policies with EU policies. The research group and WG3 members should develop a methodology (how to build it?) for interdisciplinary analysis. It should contain the following points:

- Defining the subject
- Theoretical framework
 - Transitional change
 - Policy networks and processes of change
 - Policy for innovation
- The political framework in EU
 - The political process of change in each country (policy networks - actors involved, stages, crucial moments)
 - Weak points in each of the countries (i.e. interconnections among sectors, dialogue, etc.)
- Some lessons from the SoFar process and other inter-national projects.

The goal of the group work should be a recommendation that gives advice for problem solving and instruments of intervention.

11 Short summary about "100 ideas for development of green care"

Roberto Finuola



In December meeting in Bruxelles wg3 decided to collect cases and short descriptions of care farms from different countries to present inspiring examples of green care in a very appealing way and also to realize a book called "100 ideas for development of green care" useful for researchers and policy makers. Wg3 decided to adopt criteria of SoFar and SoFar results adding cases from missing countries and also additional cases from SoFar countries. All wg3 participants received a blank form to collect cases. Unfortunately no answers arrived apart one from Sweden. In Vienna wk3 confirmed the objective of 100 ideas and it decided each country have to fill the standard SoFar form (4 pages) for the most important initiatives (2 at least) and the short description (1 pages) for other cases"

A final date to collect cases (next September, October?) should be put, and a new mail should be sent to press for the answers after summer.