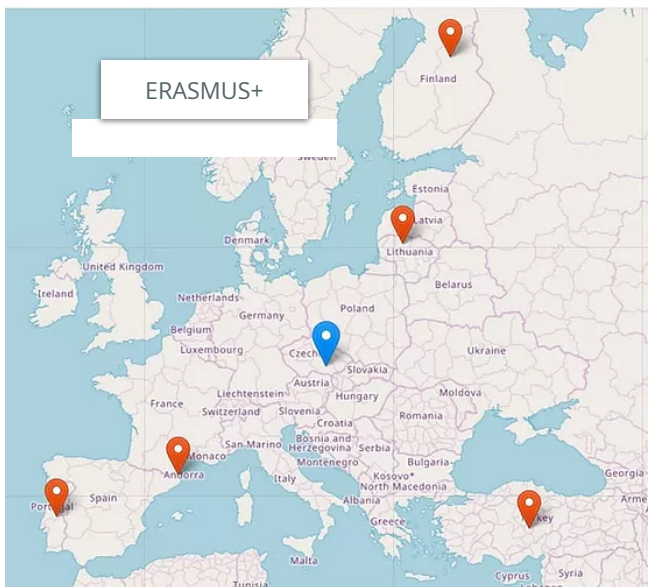


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Why do we need horses today?

Horses have been a part of human society for thousands of years. Although their role has changed significantly in recent centuries, horses are still important helpers and partners for us in many activities. Pushing aside nature and replacing it by the computers has caused noticeable damage to human health. A horse, as a part of the world of living beings, returns humankind to nature. A man and a horse together can perform many activities in which the horse may not only be a participant in social events and sports, but it can also help a therapist in Equine Facilitated Therapies and Activities (EFAT).

EFAT is a long-term procedure of working with horses to support individuals with specific needs. A horse creates social ties with clearly defined rules, which is used to develop social skills and competences. Non-verbal communication among horses become a foundation for a relationship with humans: they do not judge or criticize.

A horse thus often represents a natural authority and replace its absence in everyday life by enabling people failed to adopt social norms and relationships to learn standards of behaviour.

The profession and skills matter,

otherwise nonprofessional therapy could cause harm to the clients' health. A therapy horse is an essential member of the EFAT team. To become safe for engagement in treatment, a horse must thus be selected and methodically prepared for this type of activity.

In Portugal, at School of Equitation Henrique Soares Cruz, Superior School of Agriculture, Polytechnic Institute of Santarém.

This is one of the oldest institutions teaching agriculture in Portugal. It is a polytechnic public higher education institution, at the service of society, committed to the high-level qualification of the citizens, destined to the production and diffusion of the knowledge, guided research and experimental development.

The horses

At this school, specifically, they work only with the Sorraia breed, that is a rare breed of horse indigenous to the portion of the Iberian peninsula in the Sorraia River basin, in the center of Portugal. This breed is known for their excellent skills for the practice of riding, in particular with young people, where they show their docility and ability to interact.



Project Erasmus+ KA 2 – Strategic Partnerships for adult education Training specialists for the preparation of therapy horses for Equine Facilitated Therapies and Activities

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