



## CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

ORGANIZATION:	ŠENT
COUNTRY:	Slovenia
CASE STUDY NAME/ ID/TITLE	DC Maribor: Marko

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION (i.e. previous learning and challenges, situation...etc)

Marko is a service participant at ŠENT Maribor. He's older than the rest and used to work as a handyman and a factory worker. He's troubled not only by his experience of mental illness but also by a lack of purpose. As a retired person on a disability pension, his issues are partly a result of "having nothing to do", as he puts it. While he has little interest in gardening or permaculture, he's very interested in working, fixing things and helping other members of the team.

### REASONS FOR ATTENDING THE TRAINING

Marko attended the training mostly because he saw an opportunity to get out of the day center and do some work. He was motivated to join the project by his friends and primarily by his mentor, who is very interested in his wellbeing as a part of psychosocial rehabilitation offered by ŠENT.

### EXPECTATIONS BEFORE THE COURSE

As per his interview, Marko expected to help with the gardening and perhaps with some of the initial stages of building a permaculture garden.

### DID IT MEET HIS/HER EXPECTATIONS? WHY?

The course exceeded his expectations by far, as the garden in Maribor proved to be very challenging. The amount of rain, small animals, lack of space and low temperatures meant that it was very hard for the garden to produce any viable soil or grow any vegetables.

Marko saw this as an opportunity to solve these problems and got very involved with permaculture, because creating a garden, and a permaculture garden at that, in those circumstances, required his skills. The project offered him the opportunity to feel useful.

### OUTCOMES FROM THE TRAINING (OR CHANGES) IN THE PARTICIPANT'S LIFE (personal, familiar, etc.)

Marko reports being happier, feeling better within the group and assumed a leadership position. The other participants ask him for directions and he's very happy to provide it. While any long-term effect on his mental health cannot yet be evaluated, he does report increased level of happiness, confidence and desire to attend the programs offered by ŠENT.



Permaculture applied in the recovery  
process of people with mental illness



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PERMIND and permaculture might not have permanently changed his life, but it certainly offered an opportunity for him to exercise his talents, show confidence and, simply put, re-enter life.

#### PARTICIPANT'S NEW PLANS FOR FUTURE TRIGGERED BY THE TRAINING

Marko plans to keep attending the program and work on the garden. He was happy to propose more ambitious projects but does not have any long-term plans. He wants to build rat-proof raised beds and to cultivate a good soil.



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