

RAZORI ESTATE REHABILITATION CENTRE

The Razori estate lies on the edge of Ljubljana, above the village of Podlipoglav, at an altitude of 477 metres, consisting of more than 15 hectares of arable land and 16 hectares of woodland.

The Razori estate was once a farm belonging to the Stična monastery estate. Since the 14th century, it has been the property of the Ljubljana Psychiatric Hospital, which first used the estate as a work location for patients with less severe problems. In those days, the estate was very active, supplying the whole of the Psychiatric Hospital in Polje. However, the exploitation of psychiatric patients for heavy physical work was questionable. As patients' rights increased, patient work gradually ceased and the estate fell into ruins. During the Second World War, it was occupied by partisans. In 1942, it was burnt down by the Italians. After the War, the Psychiatric Hospital renovated the estate and in 1960 it was rented to the Barje agricultural co-operative. In 1983, it was taken over by the Pugled Hunters' Association. After 1991, Razori was neglected again. After ten years of the meadows being allowed to become overgrown, the orchard and the outbuildings left to decay, it was taken over by ŠENT, the Slovenian Association for Mental Health.

ŠENT began the Razori project in 1998, but ideas about its utilisation go further back. In 1996, ŠENT employees were invited to Sweden via the PHARE – LIEN project, where they had an opportunity to see an estate which carries out tourist activities and employs people with mental health difficulties. They are represented on the open market by their products and services, thereby creating their own image.

The Razori estate's prime obligation is the psychosocial rehabilitation of people with mental health difficulties (**social care services**), who attend employment training on the estate and engage in farm work. Contact with and the care of animals have proved to be a very useful therapeutic method (which has long been recognised elsewhere). The difference between previous and current activities is that those involved are no longer patients at the psychiatric hospital but included in the vocational rehabilitation programme, and that they take on the work (which is paid) voluntarily.

On the estate we implement a programme of vocational and employment rehabilitation. In co-operation with the regional unit of the Employment Service of Slovenia and specialist services within ŠENT involved in employment and training programmes, we include 10 to 15 people per month in the programme. These persons have undergone treatment at the psychiatric hospital and/or are hard to employ due to their mental health problems, are registered at the Employment Service, have no regular employment and work experience and are, because of their mental health, currently not capable of active employment on the labour market. They can be included in the vocational rehabilitation programme for up to a year. Every month, they receive 30% of the minimum wage, travel expenses and are ensured against accidents at work. The programme includes a number of services:

- a) Counselling and motivating those undergoing rehabilitation for an active role on the labour market
- b) Evaluation of the abilities, skills, habits and interests of those involved
- c) Assistance in accepting disability and in inclusion in normal life and work (psychosocial rehabilitation)
- d) Assistance in choosing suitable vocational goals
- e) Development of social skills
- f) Seeking suitable employment
- g) Analysis of the actual job and work environment
- h) Planning how the job and the work environment may be adjusted to the needs of those involved
- i) Planning the necessary technical aids
- j) Training or assistance with on-the-job or vocational training
- k) Monitoring training and rehabilitation
- l) Monitoring those under rehabilitation at work, after they have obtained employment
- m) Continuous assessment of the success of the rehabilitation process

On the estate, the main activity is that listed under j) (training or assistance with on-the-job training), whilst other services are carried out by advisers involved in the employment and training for employment programme and from the ŠENT day centre in Ljubljana.

Tasks carried out by those included in rehabilitation:

- organic farming (gardens, orchards, goat rearing)
- renovation of outbuildings (stables, pens, etc.)
- renovation and furnishing of the inside of the house (workroom, conference room, kitchen and dining room)
- handicraft workshops (painting on glass, sewing, knitting, embroidery, painting, etc.)
- cookery courses (processing of fruit and vegetables cultivated on the estate, baking bread, courses in how to prepare healthy foods, etc.)

The training goals are:

- evaluation of working capacities and abilities
- widening of the social network
- everyday inclusion in ŠENT programmes
- maintenance of work habits
- punctuality, regularity and taking responsibility for work carried out
- vocational orientation, discovering new vocational interests
- preparation for regular employment

In line with the existing opportunities offered by the programme, we try to fulfil the needs of our users as far as possible, whilst also guiding them towards a better understanding of the operation of the estate (the co-dependence of man and nature; rules enabling harmony between individual wishes and the possibilities and demands of the environment; the attitude towards animals, exercise and creativity).

There are three full-time employees on the estate: a manager, a rehabilitation supervisor and a labourer, who also lives on the estate. The supervisor is a disabled worker, whilst the labourer had been included in the rehabilitation programme and made such good progress that he was able to find full-time employment on the estate.

Since 2002, the estate has been included in controlled organic farming. In line with the guidelines, all types of vegetables and herbs are cultivated, whilst in the greenhouse they grow young vegetable plants. The outbuilding is surrounded by a large grassy orchard, comprising as many as 300 tall trees of various fruit varieties and sorts, which are approximately 50 years old. Most are apple and pear trees, but there are some plum, cherry and peach trees. Apples are processed into juice and vinegar, whilst the other fruit is made into jams. They also rear meat-producing goat breeds.

(commercial activities):

- maintenance of the orchard, the grazing areas and the apiary
- goat rearing
- maintenance of the surrounding areas (learning path, fitness path, footpaths)
- inclusion in the programme of renewal of wooded areas

The renovated indoor premises are intended for conference tourism and school related activities. Various seminars and lectures, thematic workshops and nature days for children, demonstrations of farm work and other activities are held here.

Another important project goal is the development of **leisure activities** for those employed, Šent members, their relatives, volunteers and external staff. With this in mind, we organise various gatherings: those connected to important seasonal activities on the estate (harvest and fruit picking, chestnut gathering, etc.), picnics and similar. Together with the day centre in Ljubljana, we organise sports meetings, trips and walks in the surrounding areas.

As the project is aimed at the **development of the local community**, we work together with:

- local community representatives (participation in the planning and implementation of various activities within the Ljubljana Municipality (clearing the verges of forest roads, the development of tourist footpaths);
- local inhabitants (mutual help to nearby farmers);
- local societies (goat rearing, tourism, etc.)
- and any other interested parties (economic goals, promotion) such as companies, non-governmental organisations, individuals.

Šent's Razori project is financed through funds from FIHO Slovenia (the Foundation for the Financing of Disabled and Humanitarian Organisations in Slovenia), the Employment Service of Slovenia, the Ljubljana Municipality, through the sale of our own services and through sponsorship. The project is one of Šent's employment and work rehabilitation programmes, whilst its ambition is to grow into a wider operation, carrying out activities with which Šent could also appear before the public for

promotional purposes. Long-term plans are linked to the modern trend in the development of non-governmental organisations, that is obtaining one's own additional resources for the development of the organisation. There is a wish for Šent to appear on the market and to create its own trade mark, whilst preserving its original mission, therapeutic work, and vocational and psychosocial rehabilitation of people with mental health problems.

BASIC GOALS:

- EMPLOYMENT REHABILITATION (successful rehabilitation – transition to normal life following a long period in hospital and period of rehabilitation, regular and part-time employment of the disabled, opportunities for voluntary work)
- SOCIAL REHABILITATION (learning social skills, mutual help at work, regular consultation meetings, discussions)
- ORGANISED LEISURE ACTIVITIES (country walks, voluntary work, organised social gatherings)
- CO-OPERATION WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY (whilst renovating the estate, we work together with the appropriate specialist services and take part in village life).