



**LESY Slovenskej republiky, š. p., generálne riaditeľstvo**  
**Námestie SNP č. 8, 975 66 Banská Bystrica**



Európsky fond regionálneho rozvoja  
**Budujeme partnerstvá**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Foresters successfully finished the Establishing a Unique Forest School Project**

- **LESY SR, state enterprise successfully completed construction of a unique “Forest School OZ Levice” as an “interactive book” on forests and forestry.**
- **Its goal is to present the forest and foresters’ work to people in towns and cities and to increase public interest in our natural heritage – forests.**

**LESY SR, state enterprise, together with Hungarian foresters in IPOLY ERDŐ Zrt. successfully completed construction of a unique “Forest School OZ Levice”, located directly in the town of Levice. This way, they have brought the forest to public and offer supplementary education for all interested persons. The goal of the cross-border project “Foresters for Raising the Environmental Awareness of the Public” realized through the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovakia – Hungary is to raise the people’s interest in the Levice Region and Salgótarján in unique natural values in common border area by the means of establishment and development of original educational compound in border area.**

*„ The main goal of the Project is to increase the attractiveness and the visit rate of the border area through natural values with the aim to increase the environmental awareness and natural science literacy of the young generation by the means of education by professionals - forest teachers in new forest schools“, explains the General Director of LESY SR, state enterprise Matej Vigoda.*

*„The newly-built educational complexes in Levice and Somoskő as demonstrative and educational facilities together with forest teachers within the project “Foresters for Raising the Environmental Awareness of the Public” (SKHU/1601/1.1/009) present the forest and foresters’ work to the target groups on the total area of more than 10 000 m<sup>2</sup>“, added the Director of OZ Levice Tomáš Čuka.*

Thanks to the project “Forest School OZ Levice” was constructed on the Slovak side with the total area of 4 100 m<sup>2</sup>, the largest of its kind and as a unique centre of forest pedagogy and environmental education in Slovakia. The project innovation lies in the interconnection of theoretical education at schools with practical demonstrations from forests and forestry in the new forest school complexes. It has an excursion-educational purpose for pre-school and school-age children accompanied by forest teachers. The concept is based on field trips, practical work in workshops, tactile and visual demonstrations of surfaces or samples of forest features. The complex, with its interior useful area of more than 1 000 m<sup>2</sup>, offers places for

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dioramas, creative workshops, a drawing room, a tree hall, an educational room with a terrace. In exterior, the forest school is surrounded by a mini-arboretum with most frequent tree species and bushes to be found in Slovak forests, wooden arbour was built and the complex is supplied with information panels. In front of the Forest school, a green pavement is bringing visitors to the Forest school with wooden facilities for games and relax not only for children but also adult visitors. The “Forest School OZ Levice” attracts attention by its innovative concept, location in the town and apart from visual observations and education features offers possibilities for practical skills development.

Similarly, at the Hungarian side “Visitor Centre and Forest School” was built in the Hungarian border area nearby Salgótarján in Somoskő and it has completed the network of similar character facilities in Hungary at the area of more than 5 900 m<sup>2</sup>.

The project included events for general public. The professional public has attended the exchange of experiences in the form of excursions for forest teachers around Hungarian forest schools and the forest pedagogy course for 20 forest pedagogues. For the children and youth target group various events has been organised during the project (Foresters and Sun, Children’s Hubert, Children - Foresters’ Friends) to recognize a forest in the playful form and through demonstrations of what a forest hides. In addition, educational exchanges has been organized during which children from cross border region basic schools have visited partners countries and have the possibility to get the experience about the foresters’ work and the forest. This way, the project brings the natural environment as a heritage closer to general public and offers a new product absenting at the social scale. Project has established positive relationship to perceive the nature, understand its functioning and ensure its protection.

**LESY Slovenskej republiky, state enterprise, was established by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic. It is a state enterprise to satisfy general public interests whose main task is to administer forests and other property owned by the Slovak Republic. Apart from ordinary forest activities, as for its general public activities it administers the unique forest open-air museum in Vydrovo, more than 35 forest nature trails, but it also employs 250 forest teachers realizing irreplaceable forest pedagogy activities by which they try to environmentally educate children and inform them about forests, foresters’ work as well as other natural values.**

**The Project is co-financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund.**

**„The content hereof does not represent the official position of the European Union“.**

[www.skhu.eu](http://www.skhu.eu)

*Banská Bystrica, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020*

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