

ESC Project

"Sustainable Community Development"

Duration of activities: 13th of March till 10th of May
Venue: Latinovac, Municipality of Čaglin

To begin with, thank you for your interest and taking into consideration to come to Croatia, do your ESC here and give your contribution to this project and rural development. Herewith, we kindly would like to give you some basic information about our way of living. This info pack serves as a means to provide you with valuable insights and information prior deciding to come to Latinovac, Croatia.

1. Information about the Organization

Our organization is called Eko Centar Latinovac. It was founded here in Latinovac, Croatia, in 1995 and received its legal status three years later in 1998.



The main goals of our organization are: (1) the promotion and support of peace building in the local community, (2) the protection of the environment and the exertion of an ecological way of living, (3) intercultural learning; promote differences among human beings and decrease prejudices, (4) to inform and raise awareness about environment degradation and ecosystem, (5) the support of personal growth and community development, (6) the promotion of philanthropy and cooperation and finally, (7) the development of rural tourism.

All activities will be based upon an educational and practical part responding to the principle of lifelong learning. The goal of our organization is to contribute to the community development, connect and network with local people, attempting to create possibilities for a better life & future providing a higher quality of living for both generations. Examples to achieve this are for instance different programs, touristic offers, social and small entrepreneurship and sustainable living education.



2. Information about the village

Latinovac is one of the smallest villages in Croatia located in eastern Croatia. It is part of the municipality of Čaglin with approximately 50 inhabitants. This municipality is on the eastern part of the county of Pozesko-slavonska. It is consisting of 31 settlements. Altogether, this counts a population size of 2142 inhabitants according to the 2021 population consensus index. What is striking, however, is a constant decrease of the local population from 312 inhabitants in 1961 to currently 50 living inhabitants in 2021.

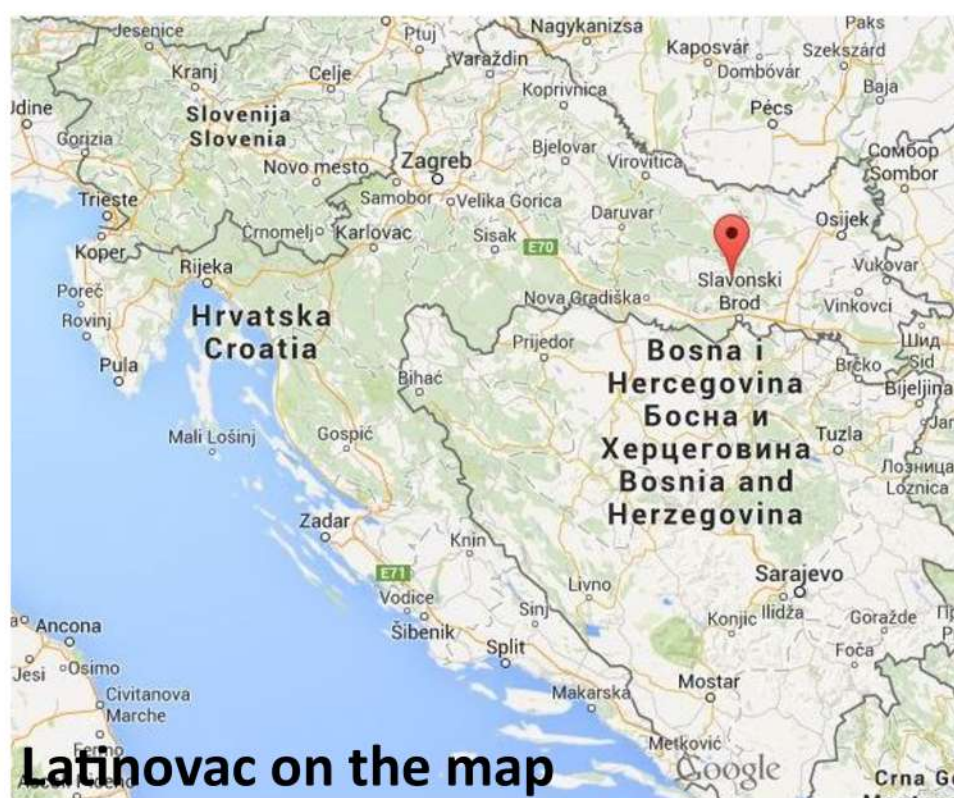
This area is characterized by outstanding beautiful nature reserve and protected areas. The area illustrates enormous potential for development. As the number of inhabitants already indicates Latinovac is very little village and somewhere 'in the middle of nowhere'. We don't have lighting on the streets in Latinovac. There are no shops or anything similar in our lovely village. The closest shop is in Čaglin with approximately 3 km's distance reachable by walking. However, there are two mini mobile shops passing



through Latinovac twice a day providing you with certain products.

Nearby bigger cities are Požega, Slavonski Brod and Našice with a distance of more or less 30 km. Thereby it is worth mentioning that Požega is the main city of our county Pozesko-slavonska. There you will find coffee places, shops etc. Zagreb is 200 km away and Osijek 80 km.

Major challenges our village is faced with are (1) the abandonment and extinction of the village leading to declining population, (2) low economic activity causing young people to move away and search for better career and educational possibilities out of Latinovac and thirdly, passivity among the younger and older generations.



Latinovac on the map



3. Arrival to Latinovac

Usually volunteers arrive by airplane to Zagreb airport. Once arrived at Zagreb airport please take the bus connection to 'Zagreb central bus station'. Buses leave every full and half hour outside of the airport on the right side. Inside the airport there is also tourist information to obtain further information if needed. The bus ride from Zagreb airport to Zagreb central bus station takes approximately 30 minutes. From Zagreb central bus station you have to take the bus or train to Slavonski Brod. Under the following link you can check the bus availability and the bus timing: <http://voznired.akz.hr/VozniRed.aspx?lang=en>

The connections by bus are better and more regular. Train and bus station are 15 to 20 minutes walk away from each other (or 5 minutes by tram nr. 2 or 6).

You can also travel by bus or train from some countries if you prefer to not use a plane. In these cases also please come to Zagreb central bus station and chose a direct connection

Zagreb Bus Station



to Slavonski Brod. Finally arrived in Slavonski Brod the organization will arrange someone to come and pick you up by car and drive you to Latinovac. Travel expenses are covered by the country specific amount that is determined by the ESC Program.

Please note that we will organize an introduction meeting for you once you have arrived.

4. Currency

Since the beginning of the 2023. the national currency in Croatia is the Euro. If you are coming outside of

Eurozone, it is best to change your currency to Euro in your own country, as the rates are more friendly.

5. Accommodation

To begin with, please be aware that Croatia is among the poorer countries than that of the European Union. You may have different expectations and standards in your home country. If you agree to come and to do your ESC here you should be open minded towards your hosting country and culture. Things are not better, worse, right or wrong – things are just done differently.

Volunteers are going to live in the village Latinovac. Eko centar Latinovac is part of this village. Volunteers will be hosted in the village, and live together with villagers in their houses. These are valuable experiences. The accommodation is simple and not

exclusive. This means you should be willing to share room, toilet and bathroom with other volunteers.

Simple accommodation means that you will be provided with a bed, pillow, sheets, duvets and blankets, something to put your clothes, heating and warm water. Our villagers will take good care of you. Upon your arrival we will arrange your sleeping place and provide you with the points mentioned above.

If you wish, you can bring your sleeping bag or your favourite pillow.

6. Food

Food is organized by us. We buy ingredients and prepare the meals (in agreement with you). Volunteers will help in food preparation. We are happy to have opportunity to exchange recipes and ideas with you :)

When volunteers spend free days out of Latinovac and don't eat in Eko centar Latinovac, they will receive money for food (6 Euros per day). Food is vegetarian. During help in the local community, people mostly prepare meat based meals so volunteers have opportunity to eat with them in their house. For us, it is very important to buy local and organic products as much as possible. We will go sometimes to visit some food producers. Some food will be produced by us on our property.



Usually, when they arrive, some volunteers are sceptical towards vegetarian diet, but are very satisfied after few days.

We plan to organize international evenings and volunteers can present food from their countries (we invite you to think about vegetarian recipes). You can bring some special spices if you need it for that.

7. Working time

Volunteers are supposed to work five days per week, six hours per day according to the ESC Charter. Two days per week are free.



Wednesday to Sunday we typically meet at 7:30 am to have breakfast and the working time starts at 8:00. Around 13:00 we will have a lunch break and finish up in the afternoon if there is a need to. Mostly physical activities are scheduled in the morning and theoretical and creative activities will take place in the afternoon. Part of the work also includes hikes, language exchanges and much more. It can happen that on some days we will work a little bit more while on others less – depending on the weather and the job. Please be flexible as we are.

8. Pocket money

Every volunteer will receive a pocket money of 5€ per day. Pocket money will be handed out to the volunteers at the beginning of the month or in the first week upon arrival.

The pocket money will be received in cash or in the bank account.

Ekološki Centar Latinovac

9. Useful data about the project

Project will gather 15 participants from European and partner countries, local people from Croatia.

Overall objective of the project is to create sustainable community with all its diversity, to develop rural area and to improve quality of life of local people.

Project will include following activities:

- * Preparation of one day public event and community focused one day festivities, supporting other organizations/institutions on regional level
 - Preparation and serving of food, drinks, snacks and cleaning
 - Planning and participating in educational, intercultural and entertainment activities
 - Creating invitational promotional materials -short video, posters, printed invitations
 - Practical and demonstrational workshops on topics of health and sustainability
 - Hosting and participating in the evening entertainment programme e.g. pub quiz, recitals, dance, song, talent show
 - Recording, photography and editing of the materials
- * Renovation and maintenance of Eko Centar Latinovac property and assistance in developing showcase properties
 - establishing new gardens and maintaining of existing ones
 - repairing old buildings and renovating the interior
 - clearing the overgrown areas
 - assistance in the kitchen
 - maintenance in general (cleaning, repairs etc.)
- * Help in the community
 - help in maintaining the public areas in the village
 - assisting elderly and local villagers with seasonal work

Please note that you are coming to a developing NGO and that sometimes interesting opportunities could come up during the project. While they are not a project priority, they can be fun and inspiring. It could be we are invited as guests, asked to host an event or have a presentation somewhere. Maybe a reporter wants to write a story, or you could be interviewed on a local radio.

10. What can/should you bring?

- in March and May weather in Croatia can change from cold and rainy to hot and sunny (bring with you something warmer and spring/summer clothes)
- bring clothes and shoes that are old, working and comfortable (for working part)
- house sleepers
- European blue card (for health insurance) (it is obligatory, and you should bring it when you come)
- towels
- music instruments if you play some
- music that you like to listen
- laptop (if you want and have one; Wi-Fi connection is slower with more devices connected)
- flashlight (for walking outside in the evening as there are no street lights in the village, only moonlight and star lights)



- some materials from/about your country
- vegetarian recipes and spices for traditional cooking
- gumboots (optional)
- smiles and good will :)

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO MEET YOU HERE AND WORK WITH YOU :)

Eko Centar Latinovac