

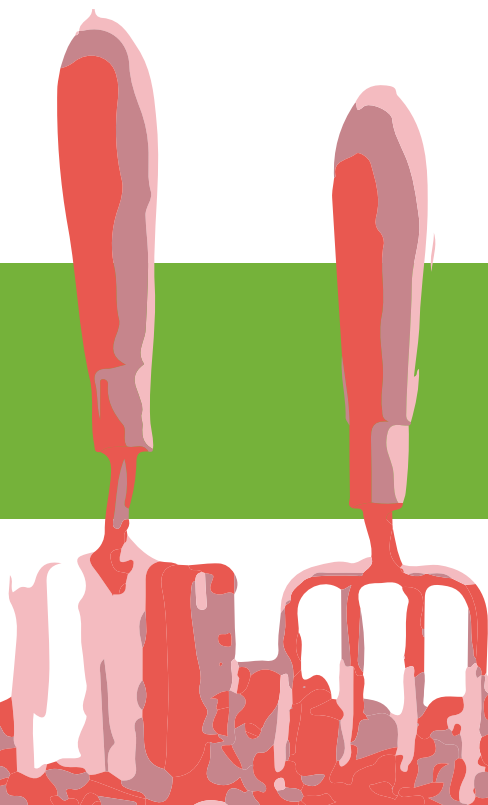


# UGAIN

Urban **G**Ardens for the social  
**I**Ntegration of migrants

Activity:

Cooking with wild herbs





## Gathering and sharing knowledge about wild plants and their use.



*"Use the participants' curiosity. People may not believe that wild herbs can be tasty."*

## Activity file

### 1. Name of the activity

**Cooking with wild herbs**

### 2. Type of activity

**Training**

### 3. Description of the activity

The gardening group gathers commodities in their garden or any suitable location where weeds are available. The person that leads the activity introduces the participants to edible wild herbs that are common in the area. In the best case, the leader brings selected herbs and participants can get in contact with these plants through their senses. The initial leader invites all participants to share their knowledge and experience, so that the classical teacher/student situation is not used. The group is invited to pair up in teams and pick herbs in the area. The collected herbs are prepared in combination, e. g., with rice or as salad. The preparation and cooking activity take place outdoors where an open fire is permitted. Alternatively, the herbs are stored in containers and the food activity takes place at another time in a kitchen.

## 4. Competences and training needed

The Garden managers further explain that any activity should include time for conversation, reflection and communal meal, as the intentions of these activities are community building. As necessary competences, they point out an open mind, patience, crafting and certain horticultural skills. They agree that these competences do not need to be embodied in one person, as skills are distributed in the group. People learn from each other and develop over time.

## 5. Steps for the implementation of the activity

- The leader provides a short lecture of wild edible herbs, how to recognise them and what they can be used for. This serves to homogenise the knowledge of the participants.
- The leader invites participants to share their experiences with and knowledge about wild edible herbs. This is done to break the classical teacher/ student situation and to have a more inclusive group situation. This is particularly important for refugees and migrants coming as they often have knowledge about herbs and horticulture. This may serve as an opportunity to feel valued, to be a contributor and to gather self-esteem.
- The group pairs-up in teams in order to create a safe learning situation for every participant.
- Teams pick herbs that are needed for the common food preparation and the common meal.
- Once herbs are collected, the teams form again a big group. As big group a rice dish with herbs is prepared. Each person receives a task in terms of food preparation or setting the table. The task allows participants to share their experience. In addition, they learn to be a contributor to a common task.

## 6. Materials and methods

The activity is suitable for a group of ten to thirty people.

- **Infrastructure:** For this activity not much infrastructure is needed, as the activity takes place outside. The activity requires an open fireplace or kitchen, pots, plates, cutlery, cups to have the meal. It needs an area where wild edible herbs can be found.
- **Materials and human resources:** The activity requires books about wild edible herbs, samples of herbs which are shown to the participants, as well as bags or boxes to collect the herbs.
- **Time/Workload:** For this activity the following workload can be expected: lecture about wild edible plants: 0,5 h- 1 h, picking herbs: 0,5 h – 1h, cooking and eating 0.5 h – open end.
- **Costs:** The food preparation costs are relatively low. Rice, oil and spices need to be purchased. The cost is under 5 Euro. For the lesson, books or copies depicting the herbs are potentially needed. These can be replaced by plant samples.

## 7. Learning outcomes for the participants

The participants undertake a learner and a teacher position at the same time. They exchange knowledge, prepare and share a common meal. Further participants gather horticultural knowledge about wild edible herbs. This knowledge is not very common in Germany. The activity can be particularly empowering for refugees or migrants who possess this knowledge. The activity helps to build community and to experience individual and group responsibility.

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## Project Website

[www.ugain.online](http://www.ugain.online)



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