**Competition "Plant your project's plant"**

**as part of the European Cooperation Day celebrations**

**Applicant:**

Communal Culture, Sport and Tourism Center in Korycin

Knyszyńska str. 2A, 16-140 Korycin

**Planted plant – strawberry**

Korycin commune has been associated with strawberries for many years and has been called the Strawberry Land for many years.

In the market square in Korycin there is a Strawberry Princess with a legend written around her.

"*Once upon a time, the grayness prevailed in the world and people had sad hearts. However, there was a place where everyone was cheerful and happy. It was the Kingdom of Strawberries.*

*One day the King of Strawberries took pity on the sad people and sent his daughter to give people the fruit of joy.*

*The princess stood on the market square in Korycin and gave everyone this wonderful fruit who approached her. Anyone who tasted it became happy and his life recovered its colors. When people noticed that this fruit brought them joy, they began to cultivate it and pass it on and on ... "*

And so the fame of strawberries spread from Korycin to the world, and anyone who wanted could come to the market square and eat this fruit straight from the hand of the Strawberry Princess.

**This is one of the reasons for choosing strawberry as the plant we planted in the competition.**

Strawberry seedlings were planted in lawns that decorate the boulevards and infrastructure by the Korycin Lagoon. This activity is part of the continuation of the project under the INTERREG Lithuania – Poland V-A Program entitled "Culture and Nature – development of cross-border tourism based on common heritage and cooperation".

The project was implemented in 2017 and 2018 by 3 local municipality's units: Communal Culture, Sports and Tourism Center in Korycin (Project Leader) with a Lithuanian partner: Administration of the Vilnius District Municipality and a Polish partner: Korycin commune. The total value was EUR 910 964.48, including a subsidy from the European Regional Development Fund of EUR 774 319.80 (85%). The aim of the project was to strengthen the sustainable use of Lithuanian-Polish heritage for the development of tourism in the cross-border area.

On the Polish side, a beautiful beach was built on the Korycin Lagoon along with the accompanying infrastructure, i.e. two playgrounds – for younger and older children, a beach soccer field, mini golf and walking paths, which are now decorated with various varieties of strawberries.

**The cultivation of strawberries** in the Korycin commune makes this area a sort of strawberry land. For 17 years, at the end of the strawberry season, an event has been held on the last Saturday and Sunday in June – the National Strawberry Days, which is one of the largest events in the region. In 2020, the event was canceled for the first time due to the prevailing pandemic. The event is accompanied by numerous sports games, competitions and artistic performances.

During the festival, you can show off the biggest strawberry, take part in the world championship in eating strawberries on time, or take part in a culinary competition for the most delicious strawberry cake. It is impossible not to mention the strawberry fashion show or the competition for the most beautiful and original folk handicrafts with strawberry in the subject.

It would be difficult to choose another plant that should decorate the walking paths and enjoy the visitors.





