



Wood Pastures in Slovakia

www.af4eu.eu



Remains of a wood pasture in *Gavurky*

Wood pastures in Slovakia represent a unique natural and cultural heritage, which was created as a result of long-term coexistence of man and nature. These ecosystems, combining elements of pastures and woodland, have their historical origin in traditional management, when livestock grazing was combined with the sustainable use of forest resources.

Historically, wood pastures have played a key role in the life of rural communities. They have provided timber, fodder for animals, as well as space for harvesting berries and herbs. At the same time, they were important for biodiversity, as their mosaic structure created suitable conditions for a variety of plant and animal species. In the context of climate change, these ecosystems can play an important role in mitigating its effects, for example by retaining water in the landscape and reducing the risk of soil erosion. However, their importance goes beyond purely ecological and economic aspects. Wood pastures are also culturally important, reflecting traditional ways of life and contributing to the preservation of local customs and knowledge. Today, however, wood pastures face several challenges. Modern agricultural practices, abandonment of traditional farming and urbanisation are leading to their decline or degradation. Nowadays, most of Slovakia's wood pastures are overgrown or converted to other land use form. However, despite this, we can still find remnants of these valuable ecosystems preserved in the landscape.



Michal Pástor, Veronika Paulíková

National Forest Centre, Slovakia



**Funded by
the European Union**

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No GA 101086563. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.