

ambitia

Zavod za razvoj mladinskega dela



YOUTH PROGRESS
CZECH REPUBLIC



XERACIÓ
VALENCIA



OCEAN ZNANJA

YOUTH EXCHANGE

UPDATE YOUR STATUS: NATURE-CONNECTED

BERGOLO, ITALY 2018



Anatta
FOUNDATION



Erasmus+

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROJECT

CRAZY WORLD STUD

The **AIM** of the youth exchange '**UPDATE YOUR STATUS: NATURE-CONNECTED**' was to provide young people an opportunity to have a rich intercultural learning experience that would also significantly enhance their environmental and nature awareness and knowledge to act upon. The youth exchange gathered **42** young people from the **NETHERLANDS, ITALY, SPAIN, SLOVENIA, CROATIA, POLAND** and **CZECH REPUBLIC**.

The project aimed to reach the following **OBJECTIVES**:

- a) **provide** participants an **intercultural learning experience** where they can learn about, with and from other cultures;
- b) **deepen** participants' **environmental awareness** by exploring numerous ways nature contributes to human lives and well-being, by reviewing current environmental challenges and solutions, and by **expanding** participants' **notions of environmentally sustainable attitudes, behaviours and lifestyles**;
- c) **enhance** participants' **communication in a foreign language**;
- d) **strengthen collaboration between partnering organisations and between participants** by developing new friendships, obtaining new contacts and sharing the diverse knowledge in the field of environment;
- e) **enhance** participants' **knowledge about Erasmus+ Programme, its Key Actions, and the opportunities for young people it entails**.

"SIAMO UN PICCOLO
GRANELLO DI UN
MAGICO INCREDIBILE
MONDO..."
[GINEVRA]

ORGANISATIONS that took part in the project:

SALVAJ (Italy)

XERACION VALENCIA (Spain)

ZAVOD AMBITIA (Slovenia)

FRATERNITAS (Poland)

OCEAN ZNANJA (Croatia)

YOUTH PROGRESS (Czech Republic)

ORGANIZED BY:



Erasmus+

This project has been funded with support from the **European Commission**. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Anatta
FOUNDATION
(The Netherlands)

CONTENTS

LEARNING IN, ABOUT AND FROM NATURE...	4
ZERO WASTE... <i>by Paula Palacios</i>	8
HOW CAN YOU START REDUCING YOUR TRASH? <i>by Paula Palacios</i>	9
DO IT YOURSELF AT HOME... <i>by Alexandra Šebestová</i>	11
COMBINING ZERO WASTE AND DIY KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION...	12
ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGES WE CREATED...	13

PHOTO CREDITS

in this publication:

Raul Piles @PilesRec
Harjeet Singh @Crazy_World_Studio
Marta Podniece
Participants' Archives

A SPECIAL THANKS for
preparing, delivering and contributing to **WORKSHOPS/**
ACTIVITIES:

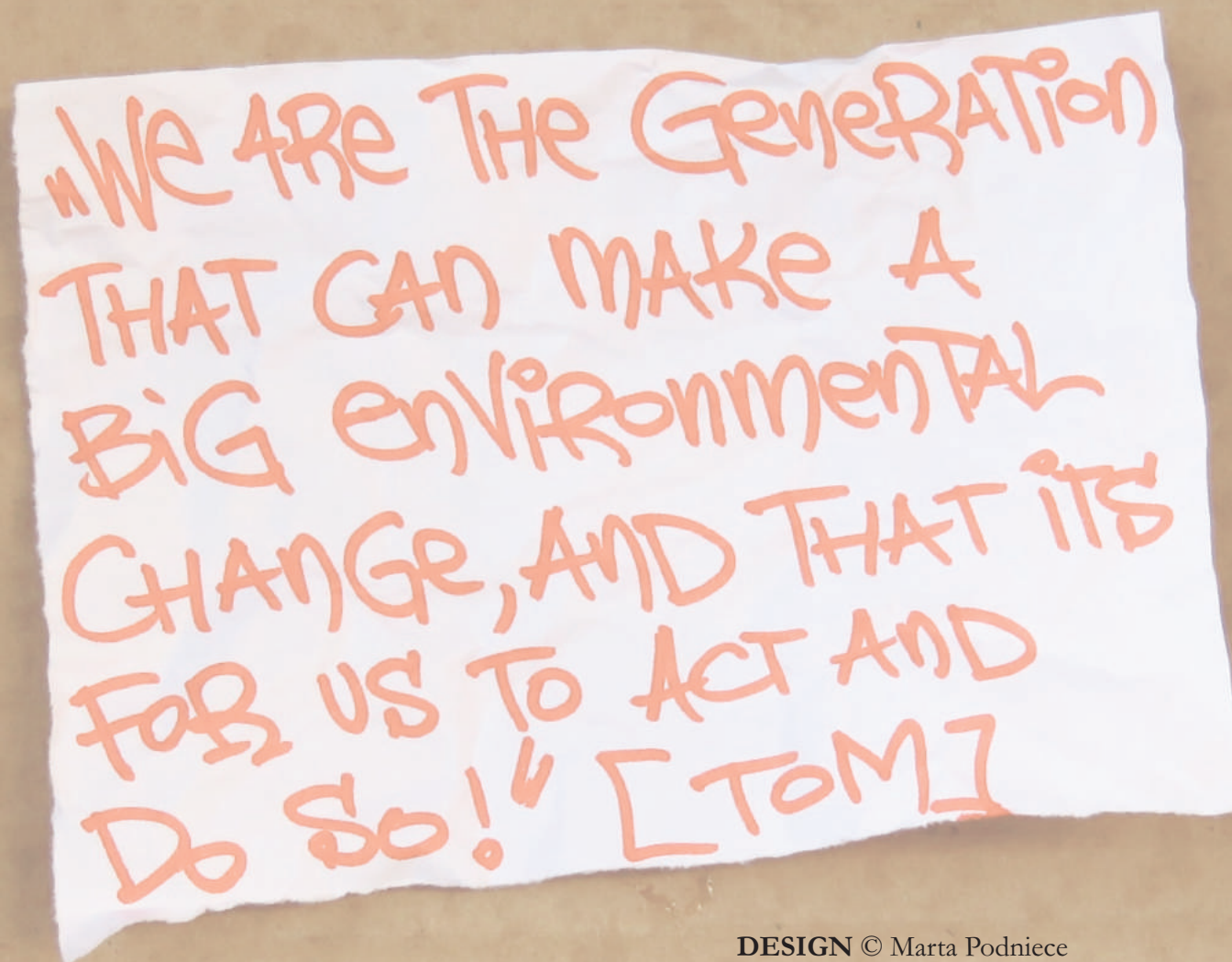
Thomas Albers
Laura Loritz
Paula Palacios
Alexandra Šebestová
Marta Podniece
Łukasz Radecki
Iris Vermaning
Markéta Nikendeyová
Yuriy Velyev
Tom van Schijndel
David Roldan Tercero
Aleksandar Branković
Matthew De Luca

Also, a **HUGE THANK YOU**
to **GROUP LEADERS** and
PARTICIPANTS for creating
this great learning experience!

Instagrammers during the
youth exchange:

Markéta Nikendeyová
Paula Palacios

#natureconnected2018



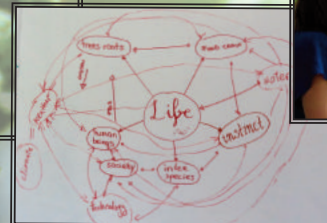
INTERCULTURAL LEARNING *IN, ABOUT AND FROM* NATURE...

DURING THESE 7 DAYS WE...

Defined WHAT NATURE MEANS to us PERSONALLY and the things that inspire us in NATURE...



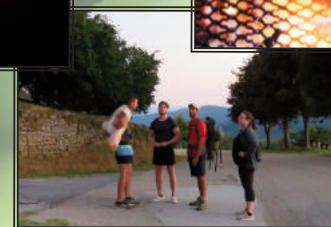
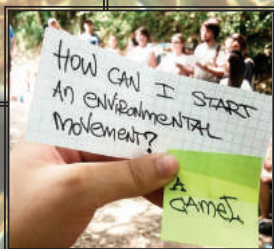
Defined NATURE, its CONNECTIONS, PROCESSES and CYCLES



Explored the wondrous natural surroundings of the area and challenged ourselves on numerous occasions creatively and physically, i.e. by taking part in the "NATURE RALLY" and a long hike!

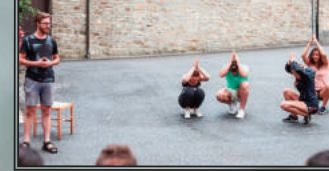


Tried out CREATIVE problem-solving METHODS inspired by nature, e.g. BIO-MIMICRY



INTERCULTURAL LEARNING IN, ABOUT AND FROM NATURE...

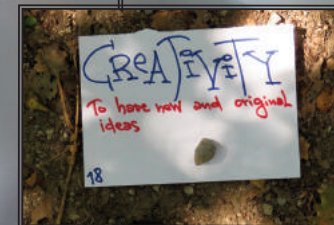
○ Reviewed and presented NATURE PHENOMENON in OUR CULTURAL HERITAGES....e.g. through fairytales, local superstitions, songs and poems, special rituals, traditions and nature 'guardians'



○ Reviewed and shared VALUES that are IMPORTANT to us



○ Adopted, presented and tried to NEGOTIATE our NEEDS as representatives of specific made-up 'CULTURES', realizing it is not that easy to find a common ground...



INTERCULTURAL LEARNING IN, ABOUT AND FROM NATURE...

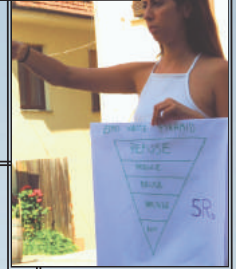
○ Discussed GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL challenges and our role as a society and as individuals in addressing them



○ Presented environmental CHALLENGES in OUR COUNTRIES as well as SOLUTIONS and good developments currently in place...



○ Learned new things about ZERO WASTE and some practical hacks for DIY at home. *See pages 8-11*



○ Made COOL STUFF from USED MATERIALS, i.e. old T-shirts, fabric, tin cans, plastic cups, glass bottles and more... *See page 12*



○ Cooked and ate interesting dishes from other countries during NATIONAL DINNERS

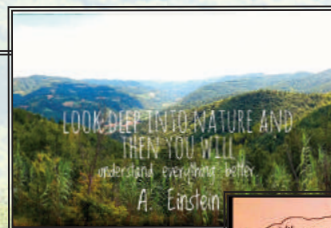


○ Learned interesting things about other CULTURES from presentations, games, quizzes, tongue twisters, dance moves, musical performances etc. presented during NATIONAL EVENINGS



INTERCULTURAL LEARNING IN, ABOUT AND FROM NATURE...

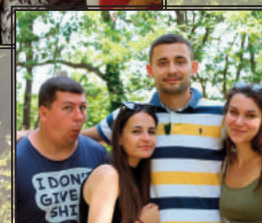
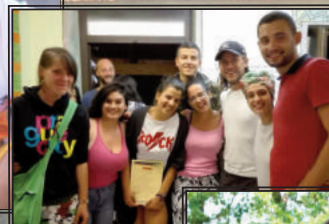
Created powerful 'MESSAGES' we further shared with the world (through social media) after the project! See pages 13-17



Learned about ERASMUS+ Programme and its opportunities for YOUNG PEOPLE and presented new PROJECT IDEAS



Created NEW FRIENDSHIPS... and NETWORKS for FUTURE collaborations!



ZERO WASTE

Prepared and presented during the youth exchange by **Paula Palacios** (Spain)

WHAT IS ZERO WASTE?

Zero Waste is a **philosophy and lifestyle based on a set of practices aimed at avoiding as much waste as possible**. It also promotes the idea of **responsible consumption** and **awareness about the products we consume** (i.e. food, clothes, hygienic products, etc.).

WHY IS ZERO WASTE SO IMPORTANT?

Waste 'ends up in our landfills, spoiling our precious environment, leaching toxic compounds into our air and soil, wasting the resources used to create the discarded goods, and costing us billions of dollars each year in processing' (Johnson 2013, *Zero Waste Home*). Also, the waste that doesn't end up in landfills ends up in the environment or sea damaging animal species and the environment itself.

BENEFITS OF ZERO WASTE

Zero Waste is obviously beneficial for the environment (reduces pollution and encourages conservation), but the **BENEFITS GO BEYOND these ECOLOGICAL ASPECTS**.

- The **FINANCIAL** advantage of Zero Waste is that it **reduces consumption of products and due to that, storage, maintenance and repair costs decrease too**. It encourages buying in bulk stores, which is generally cheaper and it favours **buying quality over quantity**, which in turn gives value for money spent.
- The **HEALTH** benefit is that Zero Waste lifestyle is mainly associated with reducing our exposure to synthetics and other toxics for our health like plastics and unknown and harmful chemicals. Indeed, it promotes shopping in health food stores (like local markets) and buying whole foods, reducing the consumption of processed foods.
- By **LIVING A LOW-WASTE LIFESTYLE**, we save **TIME**. 'By refusing the accumulation of freebies, renouncing time-consumption habits (e.g. junk mail handling). and reducing home belongings, efficiency and time are reclaimed. Handling, storing, maintaining, cleaning, and organizing is simplified. Home management and Zero Waste are made easy. And reusing saves time otherwise spent shopping, transporting, or discarding disposables'.

'When we throw something away, there's not really an 'away'. It just disappears from our sight, but it doesn't vanish.'

○ SUGGESTED READING

Bea Johnson '*Zero Waste Home*' (2013)
Annie Leonard '*The Story of Stuff*' (2010)

○ SUGGESTED DOCUMENTARIES

The True Cost (2015) (about Fast Fashion)
A Plastic Ocean (2013) (about plastic pollution)
Before the Flood (2016) (about global warming)
Waste Land (2010)
Minimalism (2015) (about a simpler lifestyle)
Earth (2007)
Home (2009)
No Impact Man (2009)
Wasted. The Story of Food Waste (2017)
Chasing Coral (2017)

HOW CAN YOU START REDUCING YOUR TRASH?

5 Rs

PYRAMID

Based on Bea Johnson's
'Zero Waste Home' (2013)

1 REFUSE [what you do not need]

Society gives us lots of items (wrapping, packaging, etc.) that are not going to be used. Say **NO** to stuff like single-use plastics (disposable plastic bags, plastic bottles, straws, disposable cutlery, etc.). Refuse also freebies (hotel room toiletries, food samples in packaging, etc.) that are made out of cheap plastic which means that they break quickly. Refuse junk mail (that bothers us anyway) and unsustainable practices like taking receipts or business cards that we are never going to consult.

This first step is probably the hardest one to achieve socially but 'refusing is not aimed at making us feel inadequate in social situations but to reflect on our everyday decisions, the indirect consumption in which we partake'. **'While the individual act of refusing does not actually make the waste disappear, it creates a demand for alternatives. Refusing is a concept based on the power of collectivity'**.

2 REDUCE [you do not need and cannot refuse]

'Reducing is an immediate aid to our environmental crisis. It addresses the core issues of our waste problem and takes into consideration the imminent environmental consequences of population growth, associated consumption, and the finite planetary resources that cannot support the world's needs. Reducing also results in a simplified lifestyle that allows you to focus on quality versus quantity and experiences versus stuff. **It encourages questioning the need and use of past, present and future purchases. The things you own, you own because you need them.'**

3 REUSE [what you consume and cannot refuse or reduce]

'Reusing means utilizing the product in its original manufactured state from several times to maximize its usage and increase its useful life, therefore saving the resources.'

Many ways in which we can reuse are: **buying used or second hand, participating in collaborative consumption** (by sharing or borrowing items) or **extending the useful life of necessities** (through repairing, finding a new use to an object, etc.).

4 RECYCLE

Zero Waste is not about recycling more, but less. 'Waste management starts outside the home by curbing consumption. (..)The broad system of recycling not only requires energy to process but also lacks regulations to guide and coordinate the efforts of manufacturers, municipalities, consumers and recyclers. **Recycling currently depends on too many variables to make it a dependable solution to our waste problems.'**

'The entire life of a product should be evaluated, including recyclability. Plastics are not only toxic to produce, consume and recycle, but those that do get recycled are made into non-recyclable products (downcycled), and are therefore destined to end up in the landfill.' You really need to understand how the recycling system works your country in order to recycle efficiently. Because of that, consider recycling as little as possible and just when necessary (as a plan C), but look to the other Rs first.

5 ROT

'Rotting describes the process of composting, which is simply the recycling of organic materials. Composting in nature's way of recycling, allowing for organic discards to decompose over time and return their nutrients to the soil. At home, composting creates ideal conditions and speeds up the process for kitchen where its natural decomposition would otherwise be inhibited and contribute to air and soil contamination. And considering that a third of household waste is organic, composting makes complete sense in terms of waste reduction.' There are many ways of composting, from composting at home and getting soil as a result to also collecting your compost in a big bowl in your freezer and giving it to farmers who need it.

HOW CAN YOU START REDUCING YOUR TRASH?

Prepared and presented during the youth exchange by Paula Palacios (Spain)

Becoming Zero Waste is definitely not an overnight process. It takes time, patience, change of habits and courage, but it's definitely worth it.

We sometimes feel powerless and hopeless when we hear about problems like global warming, climate change, plastic pollution... and we think that as individuals we do not have enough power to change anything, which IS NOT TRUE. We, as consumers have a (either positive or negative) impact on the environment with every single action we do in our daily lives. And the amount of those actions make a big impact on the planet.

WHICH SPECIFIC ACTIONS ARE GOING TO HELP YOU IN YOUR JOURNEY TO ZERO WASTE?

- Following the 5 Rs rule

- Substituting:

- Plastic water bottles with stainless steel reusable bottle
- Disposable coffee cups with a reusable coffee cup
- Regular plastic toothbrush with a bamboo toothbrush
- Regular soap and shampoo that comes in plastic packaging with soap and shampoo bars
- Regular razor with a stainless steel razor
- Plastic grocery bags with reusable fabric bags
- Regular tampons and pads with a menstrual cup
- Regular tissues or napkins with fabric scraps
- Plastic wrap with bee wax wraps or food containers

- Buying from the bulk section and from local markets, meanwhile using your own reusable fabric bags or reusable jars/containers

- Growing your own food: some veggies like green onion grow back if you place them in water

"I THINK THAT WE
CAN ALL HELP A LOT
THE ENVIRONMENT BY
JUST CHANGING HABITS
THAT WE EMPLOY EVERY
DAY" [PAULA]

- Being more aware of the items we purchase

- Buying second-hand

- Refusing disposable plastic: straws, plastic bags, plastic cutlery etc.

- Avoiding purchases of over-packaged food

- Avoiding food waste: freeze or juice anything that is about to get in a bad condition

DO IT YOURSELF (DIY) AT HOME

Prepared and presented during the youth exchange by **Alexandra Šebestová** (Czech Republic)

WHY WOULD YOU DIY?

- Save money
- Help to protect the environment
- Reduce the trash you produce
- Live more self-sustainably
- Be creative
- Know what it consists of
- It's tasty/ better quality!



DIY RECIPES

WASHING GEL

For 5L you will need (25 washings):

- 125 g of washing soap
- 150 g of sodium carbonate (NaCO_3)
- 0,5 ml of lavender extract

COSTS*:

DIY: 0,8 EUR

In the store: 6 - 27 EUR



DISHWASHING LIQUID

For 500 ml you will need:

- 30-50 g of olive oil soap
- 375 ml of hot water
- 1 spoon of vinegar
- 1 tea spoon of sodium carbonate
- drops of essential oil
- (cocoglucoside)

COSTS*:

DIY: 0,3 EUR

In the store: from 1 EUR



TOOTHPASTE

For 1 packaging you will need:

- 80-100 g of baking soda
- 1-3 spoons of salt
- 10 drops of essential oil

COSTS*:

DIY: 0,3 EUR

In the store: 2 - 7 EUR



FACE CREAM

For 120 ml you will need:

- 2 spoons of cocoa butter
- 90 ml of coconut oil (almond)
- 4 spoons of green tea
- 3-6 drops of argan oil

COSTS*:

DIY: 2 EUR

In the store: from 10 EUR



BUTTER

For 300 g you will need:

- 1000 ml of whipping cream (butterfat & buttermilk)

COSTS*:

DIY: 5 EUR

In the store: 3 EUR



*Price Comparison refers to prices of products/ingredients in Czech Republic

COMBINING ZERO WASTE AND DIY KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION

ENJOYING THE CREATIVE PROCESS...



...AND RESULTS

MATERIALS USED:

- Old T-Shirts
- Used Cans
- Used Glass Bottles
- Fabric
- Used Glass Jars
- Used Plastic Cups
- Needle, Thread, Scissors, Glue, Paints...



ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGES WE CREATED...

During the youth exchange we also teamed up to make powerful 'environmental messages' that we wanted to share with the world (and social media)! As a result of this creative process, **WE CAME UP WITH...**

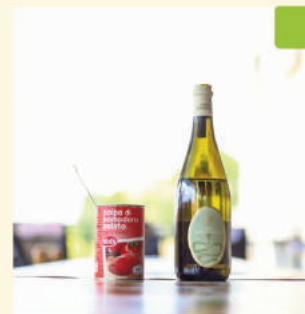


o Inspirational Nature Quotes!

o Practical tips for re-using waste!

UPDATE YOUR STATUS: NATURE-CONNECTED! MAKE A DIFFERENCE

MOST OF US PRODUCE WASTE DAILY.
HOW WE DEAL WITH IT MATTERS.
RE-USING IS ALWAYS A BETTER SOLUTION.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

BERGOLO, ITALY
7.-13.08.2018

ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGES WE CREATED...



It is better to have your own reusable cutlery rather than taking new plastic cutlery every time you eat outside or order take-away food.

Link to the bamboo cutlery:
<https://goo.gl/fjupRu>



Plastic straws are extremely damaging for the environment and they are too present in our daily life. Substituting them for stainless steel or bamboo straws is a great solution.

Link to the stainless steel straw:
<https://goo.gl/6YnPdS>



Plastic bags can cost up to 30 euros per year and they also take 500 years to degrade in the environment. Changing them for a fabric bag that costs around 5 euros is a great solution to take care of the nature.

Link to the fabric bag:
<https://goo.gl/77ZvC7>



Tampons and pads are expensive, not the best idea for the environment and they are not that healthy for your body. A menstrual cup, on the other hand, is around 20 euros, it lasts for several years, it's healthier and more sanitary.

Link to the menstrual cup:
<https://goo.gl/Wg9QHe>

9 TIPS TO SAVE MONEY WHILE HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGES WE CREATED...



Buying in bulk with your own fabric bags is cheaper than buying in the supermarket. You reduce plastic use and you have fun creating your own shopping bags. Link to the bag DIY: <https://goo.gl/bpA56x>



Buying only one plastic water bottle a week can cost approximately 30 euros per year. A reusable water bottle costs 15 euros and it lasts for several years and at the same time you reduce plastic. *Link for the bottle:* <https://goo.gl/2hmDER>



Regular toothpastes cost approximately 3 euros. Making your own toothpaste at home cost, on the other hand, 30 cents! *DIY toothpaste:* mix baking soda, salt, coconut oil and a few drops of essential oil of your taste.



Plastic toothbrushes are between 2 and 5 euros, while bamboo toothbrushes are 2 euros. Substituting plastic for bamboo is always a good idea :) *Link to the toothbrush:* <https://goo.gl/Pm2sUp>



Plastic razors cost between 4 and 6 euros, while stainless steel safety razors cost 9 euros and they last a life time. *Link for the safety razor:* <http://tiny.cc/rnmeyy>



Inspirational video about the project!
<https://vimeo.com/287250565>
 Produced by Roosmarijn Everts (NL)

ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGES WE CREATED...

- A modern fairytale about **RECYCLING** in form of a comic...



THE PLASTICKINGDOM

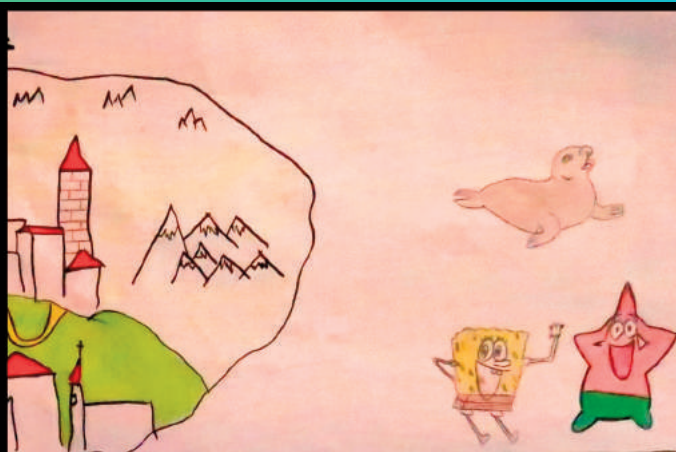
A modern fairytale

Created by the participants of the Erasmus+ youth exchange
'Update Your Status: Nature-Connected' in Bergamo, Italy 2018



Once upon a time far far away
There was a beautiful kingdom behind the sea, they say
There sat a King and a Queen on their throne
In an ancient palace made of stone...
Built on an island in the middle of the sea
Because that was exactly how they wanted it to be...

1



The sea was mesmerising and full of life
So were the King and his stunning wife
Turtles, seals, whales, Spongebob and Patrick the Star
Made the kingdom the prettiest by far...

2



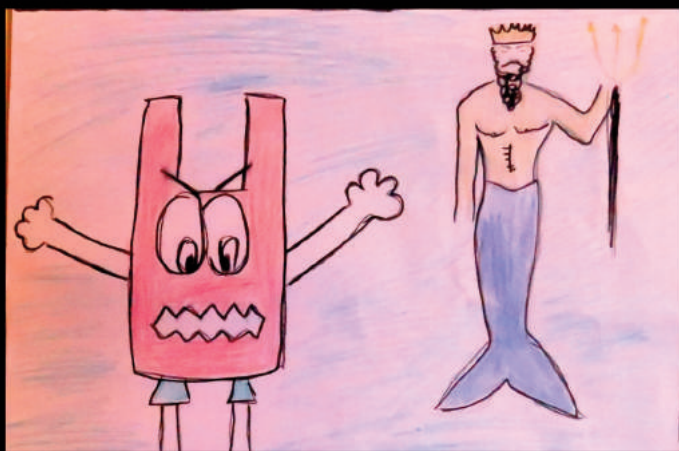
In a hidden cottage dwelled an Alchemist, who was a bit crazy
and who decided to take an advantage of the Kingdom being lazy...
He convinced them that their laziness could be fixed
With all the chemicals that he had mixed...

3



He then made them believe:
'Life in plastic, it's fantastic!'
The Plastic has gotten widely spread
And it turned into a hideous dread...

4



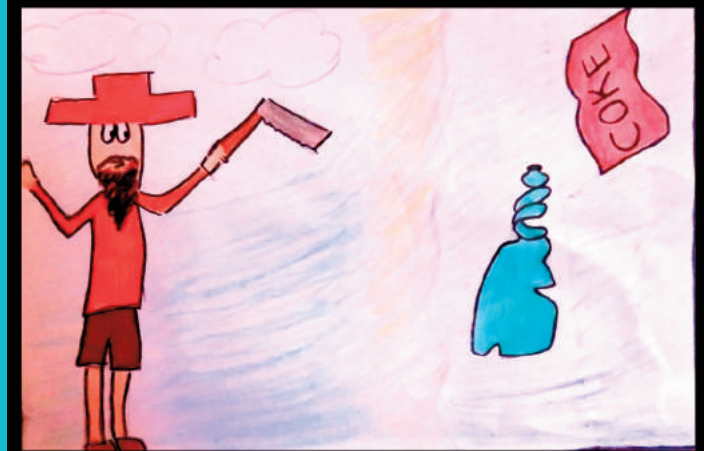
All that triggered Neptune's wrath...
So he decided to wipe the people off with a cloth.
One magic spell made the plastic alive
And to revenge all of them strive...

5



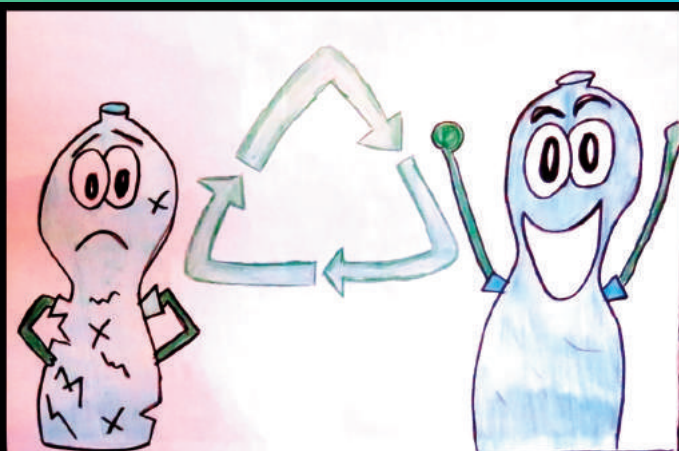
Their wish to take the Crown from the King's head...
Almost led to a terrifying bloodshed.
Plastic continued to fight its way
So the poor Kingdom had to obey...

6



In the middle of Forest lived a lonely Lumberjack
Who hated his job and thought it was a piece of crap.
Little did he know he was to save his Land
By finding an injured plastic bottle lying in the sand...
The plastic was crying out in pain
Fearing that his screaming was in vain...

7



After fixing its broken neck
The Bottle wanted to give the man something back
The Bottle made the well-kept secret leak
So the Lumberjack knew how to make the Plastic weak...
To **RECYCLE** was the KEY
To bring back the peace in the sea...

8



The Forest turned green, the flowers started to blossom
Life in the Kingdom again became awesome...
They managed to restore the Kingdom's beauty
But it still couldn't match the Queen's booty.
They lived happily ever after
And the Kingdom was echoing with eternal Laughter...

9



'I started to buy a lot of things in one little store called BEŽ OBALU which means straight-out or without cover. I started to be very strict about sorting waste in the place I work. We're planning to have compost in our apartment.'

Marketa (22), Czech Republic

'I completely stopped using plastics bags, buying them and taking them from shops'

Peter (23), Czech Republic

'[I enjoyed] stuff like mythology of other countries, a way of understanding life and nature in other countries.'

Aleksandar (24), Slovenia

'I learned interesting things about Italians.'

Martin (28), Spain

'I think creativity was something that I had a chance to train the most during the exchange.'

Alexandra (29), Czech Republic

'I have gotten new experience and inspiration for daily hacks.'

Jana (22), Czech Republic

'The ideas about making stuff out of trash were the best. I also have shared the idea about making bags out of T-shirts with my sister who is a teacher. She passed the idea to her class and they enjoyed it very much.'

Ines (21), Croatia

'I have limited the use of my car, seeing that going to work by train is actually more environment-friendly.'

Rik (25), The Netherlands

'I try to reduce the plastic I use and try to buy more eco-friendly and sustainable products.'

Iris (25), The Netherlands

'I am thinking more and more about plastic waste and how I can reduce my footprint even more because of the project. I also try to give information about this and spread knowledge to my friends/family.'

Roosmarijn (25), The Netherlands

'I recycle more than I did before this project, but the biggest change I've made in my diet, because I have been a vegetarian for 4 months due to this youth exchange.'

Karla (20), Croatia

'Immersing yourself in an environment far away from your comfort zone truly broadens your horizons. You learn not to judge people by their appearance. There's always more to it than meets the eye.'

Nicole (22), Spain

'Boarders are only on the map.'

Iga (26), Poland

'Creativity is not my strength but thanks to some workshops, I feel that I improve this attribute.'

Sara (19), Spain

'The most useful was Do It Yourself workshop, from which I've learnt to sew shopping bags and make my own health-care products.'

Simone (22), Italy

'I found it inspiring to be connected with a group of young people from around Europe (and the world) who were passionate about environmental issues, concerned with its preservation, and in many cases they were people who were actively working to defend the natural environment.'

Matthew (32), Italy

'I take cotton bag with me whenever I go to a market and I told my family and friends to do the same.'

Stela (21), Croatia

'I started paying more attention to what I buy, I avoid buying products that contain disposable plastic, I try not to buy more objects if they are not strictly useful and necessary and re-use what I already have at home, I try to use the car as little as possible and move on foot or by public transport.'

Ginevra (21), Italy

'I have shared some ideas with my family and half of the family started to use the fabric bags for shopping and to go to the zero waste shops.'

Anna (20), Czech Republic

'I use less plastic'

Lukasz (33), Poland



Anatta
FOUNDATION

'We have way more in common than we initially believed we do. We might have different surroundings, opportunities, ways in which our main institutions operate... but the similarities in the ways we think, eat or dress...were impossible to neglect.'

Tatjana (25), Slovenia



Erasmus+