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ENVIRONMENTAL STORIES BY OUR ANCESTORS



CHILDREN OF A GREEN WORLD

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Introduction / about us

Children of a Green World is a multilateral Erasmus+ project conducted by four primary schools and one educational institute that cooperate for two years to meet the needs of 10-14 year-old participants, mostly with fewer opportunities; to

- Raise awareness, develop knowledge, and specific competences on environment, climate change, geography, history and culture, ICT, ecological health and sustainability;
- Develop key competences;
- Cater for a more tolerant society to eliminate social barriers;

Activities will include not only standard school formal education methods but also non-formal education. So, most of the activities are designed to team participants to identify and tackle environmental challenges in their own communities, and beyond such as workshops, presentations, role-plays, seminars, interviews, surveys, competitions, research, communicating on eTwinning, excursions, preparing promotional materials, Newsletters, Book of Environmental Stories by our Ancestors etc.



We expect these project results and outcomes to have:

1. Green skills (ways, values, attitudes needed to support a sustainable and resource-efficient society);
2. Raising awareness of some specific environmental realities and protecting nature;
3. Better acquisition of EU values;
4. Integrating environmental issues into curricula.

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The sharing of project methods, outcomes, and cooperation with organizations working on environment at local, regional, national, and European level as potential longer-term beneficiaries



The project is nothing
without its partners:

1. CZECH REPUBLIC – Ostrava
2. LATVIA – Adazi
3. GREECE – Nafpaktos
4. TÜRKIYE – Antalya
5. SPAIN – Granada

You can find more about each
one by clicking on them.





Children of a Green World: ENVIRONMENTAL STORIES BY OUR ANCESTORS



As part of the Erasmus+ project Children of a Green World, students from the project partner countries embarked on an educational and cultural journey to explore the relationship between generations and the environment. This ebook is the result of that effort, compiling interviews conducted by the students with elders from Greece, the Czech Republic, Türkiye, and Latvia.

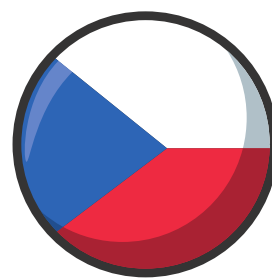
Through in-depth and moving interviews, we explore the lives of people who have lived through times of change, seen social and technological transformations, and preserved the customs and values of their cultures. Each elder offers a unique perspective on their country, history, and personal life, enriching our understanding of the past and its lessons for the present and future.



The aim of this ebook is twofold: to preserve the stories of our elders for future generations and to foster a greater appreciation and respect for Europe's diverse cultures. By sharing these interviews, we hope to connect readers to the common humanity we share and the diversity that enriches us.

Ostrava, Czech Republic

First interview



Student A: Good morning, friends. Greetings to all of you.

Student B: Our school is involved in the international Project children of a Green World in which several European countries participate.

A: This is the part of the entire ecological program.

B: We welcome Vlasta Krmaskova, our primary school teacher, and Jana Jerabkova, the former principal of the primary school, but not ours.

A: We welcome you and thank you for coming to us.

Teachers: Thank you for having us, we are delighted.

B: And what will we talk about with our guests?

A: About how Ostrava looked before.

B: About how life used to be in our city.



A: But also about the ecological situation, from a time when most of us sitting here had not even been born yet.

B: With your permission, we will sit down and and get straight to the questions. Teacher, from your point of view, what was the biggest difference in Ostrava compared to how it is today?

Jana: Well, the changes are certainly big, and if you lived at the time when I was roughly your age, you would not definitely recognize Ostrava. In particular, if you were interested in the surroundings of your school, there were no houses. There was only an airport, and it ended with

a hangar, which remained the only one and today it is a shop. There were only areas which we were used for various children's games. When we flew kites, ran, built all kinds of shelter, hid, crawled, played hide and seek and everything possible.

Vlasta: I would just add something. I have brought you a few interesting photos, the photos are from a part of Ostrava but it is an example of how children used to play and had fun. I can show them to you then so that

you can see the
normal everyday
life of those
Young people.



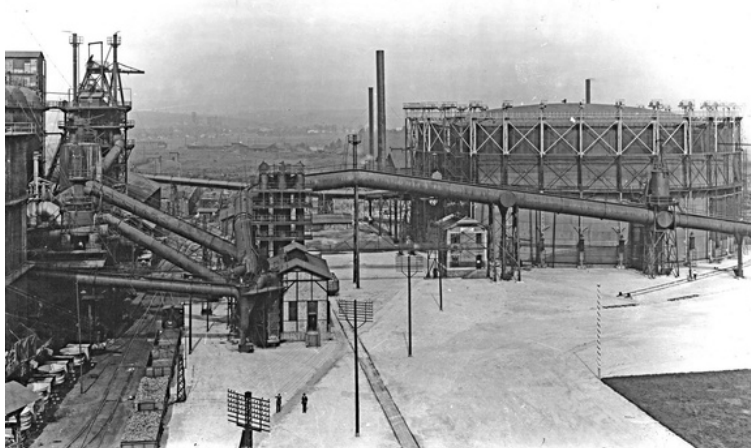


B: Well, what were your feelings when you found out that a large housing estate was going to be built here?

Jana: Well, I have been living here for almost 60 years, and as I said, our street was lined with beautiful, now old, mature trees and family houses. Well, then simply the free space suddenly began to be urbanized. The first houses began to be built and if I had to express my feeling when suddenly came and saw those high houses, they had a yard. On the one hand, I thought they had thought it out very well. On the other hand they used the little space for garages and made a playground on their roofs. But then I said, is it really a good idea? Do children have a place to play? When those cars drove into the garages, smoke went into the space where children played.

Jana: That was created by the fact that a large number of people came to Ostrava. Ostrava is known as a mining town, it has mining companies. It has metallurgical enterprises. It has the Vítkovice Steel Works which were created in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result a larger number of people came, I would like to mention a few numbers.

Vlasta: In the 19th century 14,000 inhabitants lived in Ostrava.



The Vítkovice Steel Works started in the 19th century as well, which caused the rise of population.

In 1970s, population reached 279 thousand people. In the 1980s and 1990s, blocks of flats were growing because of the rising of the population.



Jana: I had been to that school for 20 years and then I retired. The school was built in 1966 in a very economical way because when you look around you can see wetlands everywhere. So they built a school on the wetlands, that's one thing, and another was that children need to see properly during the lesson so they made giant windows everywhere. Nevertheless, it was a different winter back then than it is now. Nowadays, it is around -5 to -6 degrees Celsius and it seems cold to you. It was -20 degrees in the past and the children had to stay home for a week or 14 days and not go to school because it was impossible to heat those schools up.

Vlasta: She talked about the fact that the school is situated in the swamps. I don't know who among you knows about Belsky Les is built over an underground lake. That is why there are water supply zones and the area belongs to the source protection zone. It means that you cannot use chemicals for soil treatment.





Well today the forest is a little bit changed and it is really intended for recreational facilities. I would say that really a lot of things had improved. Certainly you know that when you go there and it is after rain some of the paths are flooded, water is not absorbed and is everywhere. It is because the groundwater is really saturated and it comes up and when we were young we used it for ice-skating in winter time. The forest looked really different back then. It was almost a coniferous forest, mainly as a spruce forest. Also when my children were little, almost 30 years ago, I opened the gate of our garden, we went into the forest and picked mushrooms. You can still find mushrooms in the forest today but it was amazing those days. When we went there the mushrooms were everywhere. Unfortunately, when my children grew up, we saw drug addicts' injections instead of mushrooms. The forest has changed since then, the municipality tried to improve it and made a jogging circuit there. They mainly cut down the spruce trees

because it was attacked by bark beetles.

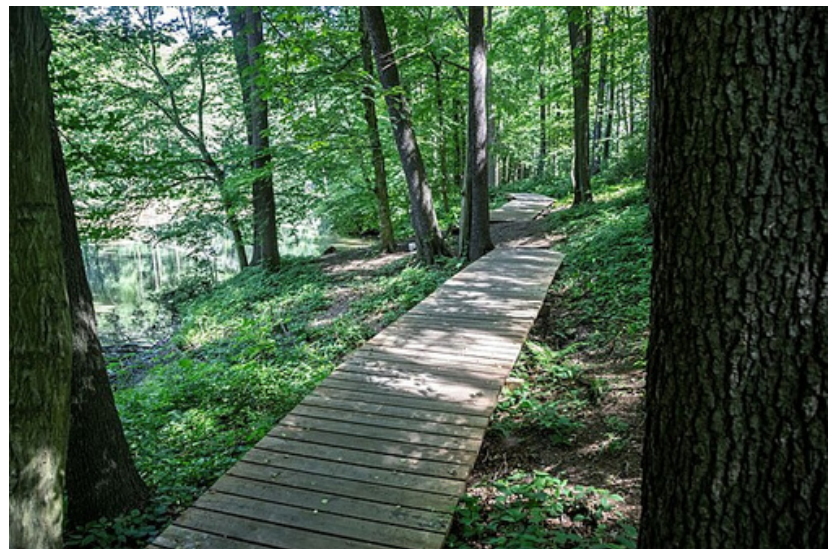
Nonetheless,

everything

has pros and cons.

When the forest is coniferous it looks a little bit different

then when it is a deciduous forest. In summer, after a storm or rain, the coniferous trees smelled wonderful.





When it was snowing, the forest looked absolutely amazing, like in a fairy tale. Moreover, the forest near our house and, Jana probably knows too because she lives there too, is situated next to a busy road. In the past, the road was not used so often, but today, it is really busy, the coniferous trees are cut down. There are some maples, oaks, and similar trees, the leaves fall off in winter. So again, from the ecological point of view, we would say that all the exhaust fumes from today's heavily used road go to us. It was not before, the coniferous trees made such a border. It kept us safe. But, as I said, everything has its pros and cons. Everyone likes different things, I would especially appreciate what they created behind the road. There used to be military quarters in the past. They were demolished, only some of them have been turned in garages. And then they built a school forest there, where pupils and student can actually go.

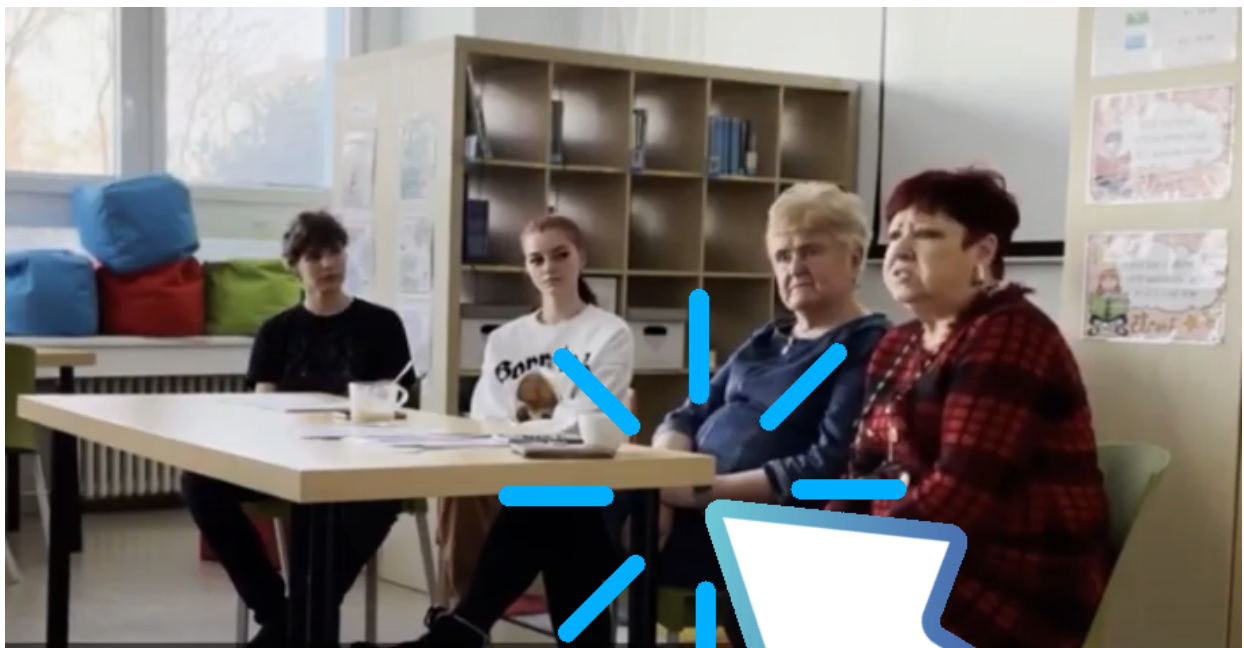


There are some benches, climbing frames, different interesting options for children to play and be educated. When you go further, to so called "saint water", the place where there was a natural spring, people used to go there on family trips,



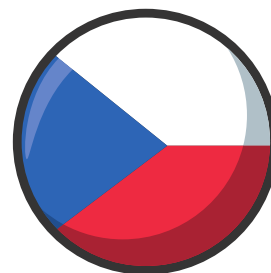
mainly at the weekends. A little further on, there was a rehabilitation centre. Maybe Jana can remember it too. Long time ago, in the 19th century, when the Vitkovice Steel Works were built ,they also built their own hospital, including a rehabilitation facility where people went to rest and recover after serious illnesses or operations, so it was called reconvalescence. It's completely reconstructed, I had no idea what it is but it looked nice, it is probably no longer used for the original purposes.

For the full video click here:



Ostrava, Czech Republic

Second interview



Student A: As part of this program, we wanted to present this speech to you. We would like to welcome our two teachers here. Mrs. teacher Vlasta Krmaskova and Mrs. teacher Maria Kavkova, who works at a secondary school. Thank you for coming.

Student B: Today we will talk about Ostrava, above all, about its history, especially from an ecological point of view. I would start straight away with the first question, and I would like to ask you how waste sorting actually worked in Ostrava in the past? If there were more dustbins, like there are today or was there only one?

Maria: So if you take from the very beginning, because this OZO organization, which was originally TAZSMO, was founded in 1949. And as for waste sorting, there was none. I live in a village in Hrabová, and there, when my parents built a house, we were assigned a dustbin, which was always collected. It was like that, about this tall, round, small basically, not a big container. And once every two weeks it was collected.

B: Basically, why wasn't the waste sorted?

Vlasta: I would say that there wasn't that many stuff that we throw away nowadays. That means, for example, plastic bags, they are everywhere and plastic did not exist at all.





Everything was carried in the net bags. Glass bottles were collected and selected, which were taken for processing and again for recycling. So even some bottles, I still remember, it wasn't that long time ago. We were returning them back to the stores. As for the rest, a lot of paper was taken to the collection, for which you could have been paid decently at that time. Scrap irons and non-ferrous metals, but this is still paid quite well even today. But unfortunately, a lot of things were left over.

Maria: Like milk for example, the way the milk is sold now, is either in cartons or bottles, it used to be that you came into the store, there was no self-service. I lived in that Hrabová and there was no self-service. So the way the milk was sold was that you came to the shop with your own bottle and the saleswoman, who only served the milk, would give you as much milk as you needed, a liter or two. She scooped it up for you with a ladle and you went home with the same bottle. So simply put, there was less waste. There really was much less waste.



A: And was the importance of waste sorting talked about at all? At home, at school or within a school subject?

Vlasta: People did not talk about waste sorting a lot, at school we were talking usually about how to treat nature but not specifically about waste sorting, it simply somehow resulted from the fact that



there was not so much to recycle, naturally, and people were careful, for example, about throwing away some litter, because they knew that there would be rubbish collections events, part-time jobs, for example Belsky, and would collect a lot of kind of litter there, but there was not so much of it. The only thing that bothered me was that, sometimes, there were some illegal dumping, because today we have more civic amenity sites. Nowadays, people don't even know where the civic amenity sites are. It's easy to find on the internet and the closest one is here, in Stara Bela, but the amenity sites are all over Ostrava. What I appreciate

is that our municipality Ostrava-Jih actually has a QR code on the rubbish bin that we can scan by a phone's camera and, when the



bin is full, we can actually inform the OZO. So that they simply clean it in time, because I understand that some people, who are used to just throwing everything to the rubbish bin, feel angry when they want to throw something away and the bin is already overflowing even around.

A: Do you think that people in the past were more or less kind to nature, regarding throwing litter in the street?

Maria: Well, maybe yes, but it depended on the overall approach, on parenting and instruction received from the family.

B: How often if you compare it with the past, how often were the bins collected, both in the city and in the villages?



Maria: Well, in the village, as I said at the beginning, they collected the bins once every two weeks, they had small rubbish bins. But people used to heat homes with coal, coke briquettes, the problem was the ash throwing away to bins. So it wasn't enough to collect bins once every two weeks and it wasn't possible to do it more often.

A: How much do you think the whole society was aware of the dangers of heating homes with rubbish and creating illegal dumping?

Maria: Well it is not that the all society was aware of it to any great extent, because it wasn't just about burning the rubbish, which was really happening, because there was absolutely nowhere to put it, but it was also about heating homes, because when the family houses were heated with coal and coke, the environment was getting very polluted, because the some that went to the air had a lot of poisonous exhaust gasses in it.



B: Do you think that your place of residence has changed from an endowment point of view? Regarding the rubbish and such...

Maria: What has changed...? I would say it has changed for the better, because now it is really perceived as more important to sort the waste and to prevent illegal dumping and simply there is a greater focus on air quality and on the protection of the environment in general.

It's better... I've also experienced...that, in other cities of the Czech republic, they even sort waste a little more than we do, as far as glass is concerned. Here, we have a green colored bin where we put



all the bottles, and they have more bins, for example for brown glass or transparent glass. This was specifically in Luhacovice, maybe in some other cities, but this is not the case here, in our city. It is also good that electronic waste is sorted.



TAZMO

now

OZO.

A: If we could move a little bit to the education, were some awareness-raising activities supported at schools? Such as discussions, for example as the one we are having now, or anything else regarding the environment in general, and, if yes, how was it done?

Maria: When I was in elementary school, there were no events or discussions like that, nothing similar to what we are doing here today. It is not the first time you have this at your school, but we haven't really had anything like this.

A: Did your school cooperate with, for example OZO, or did you have any field trips, so that you could become familiar with the way how does it work there? Like what garbage collectors' work is, what they do, and also, for example, how, where and what to sort when you throw something away.

Maria: I didn't experience any of it when I was at school because the waste wasn't actually when I was 15 years old and I finished elementary school, so the waste there wasn't sorted, to TAZSMO, but it was later to 1990, now it is called OZO, and I have only been there with my students for a guided tour and a lecture, definitely not before..

Vlasta: The institution TAZSMO, which means Technical and Garden services of the City of Ostrava - the maximum we could do was to collaborate with them somehow, so that we could help them only with the planting of some flowers, with flower beds and so on.

B: And how was organic waste from the households handled? That's what we have already said basically, there was only one bin for everything. Was the waste also used in any other way, or was it simply thrown into those bins?

Maria: Well, back then, a long time ago, bins for organic waste didn't exist. So, it was just burned and sometimes, sometimes, people dug a hole and buried it in the land, like a landfill. Also in some houses with gardens, people were composting. Just like composting today. But not everything can be composted.

Vlasta: Where we lived and where the family houses were, there wasn't such a huge amount of people, which means there wasn't as much waste. Today, it's connected not with the amount of people, but with the amount of different products and packaging of all kind of paper, bags, and so on. These products didn't exist back then.

B: Why was the heap created, and what impact did it have on the residents living in the surrounding area?





Maria: The heap in Hrabuvka and Hrabova was created from slag, waste from smelters that was brought there. The tracks led there, and all the waste, it was increasing and increasing until it became so huge. You have to take into account that the heaps were formed from the time when the Vitkovice Steelworks and Mines were established here, it means from the beginning of the 19th century, so it kept getting bigger and bigger. The heaps looked terrible, person could get chills on the way to Karvina. It was a lunar landscape, barren, terribly ugly. But today, it is changing, remodeling, trees are being planted, our heaps have turned green. It's very nice now. The surroundings have really changed by planting trees on the heaps, by us helping the environment.

Vlasta: Ostrava, which was always said to be black, has really turned green, and if you look down from some towers, like the Ostrava Town Hall or the Ema heap, where people go on excursions, you can see that Ostrava is completely different now. And it's pretty.

A: Ok, so I would like to thank Mrs. Teacher Krmaskova and Mrs. Teacher Kafkova for coming to visit us and acquaint us with the history of Ostrava, how it worked with waste. And I would like to wish all of you, and especially you, a nice rest of the day and good luck.

For the full video click here:





Nafpaktos, Greece

First interview



Student A: When you were in our age, did you know the meaning of the word, “recycling”?

Grandmother: No, not really! No.

Student B: And when did you first hear about it?

Grandmother: I’m an English language teacher, you know? And when I first started teaching it was in 1978. There were some books that were written in England and these books had, in one of them; there was a whole chapter that was talking about recycling. The people abroad started worrying about the situation before us.

A: Now that you know, can you remember recycling without even knowing it when you were our age?

Grandmother: Sure! So many times. And we’ve almost everything.

A: What about clothes?

Grandmother: Well, clothes... First of all, we didn’t have such a variety of clothes that you are having nowadays. And we used to wear them for a long time. So, there were holes and we mended them right away. Then, we gave them away to other people. Even in the end, we used to cut the clothes into stripes.





We made so many things with stripes. We didn't have all these toy shops that we have nowadays. We used to make our own toys. We made dolls, balls, with clothes stripes. And our grandmothers used to use these stripes to make rugs, carpets for the house.

A: What about shoes?

Grandmother: We used to repair shoes as well. And I remember something else. It was cutlery, like forks, spoons, pans and so on. There was somebody that polished them almost every year and renewed them.

A: What about papers?

Grandmother: The paper is another thing that we recycled. We used a lot of newspapers those times, because there were no TVs or computers so we heard the news through the newspapers. Every day, my father used to buy newspapers and I remember my mother cleaning the glass of the windows with the newspapers.

B: What did you do with all the leftovers?

Grandmother: We always recycled food leftovers in two ways. We gave most of them to the animals that we kept in our house. My mother had chickens in the house yard and she fed them with food leftovers. My grandmother had a pig in the village. Pigs eat everything, you know? And, I remember something else. My mother used to dig a hole in a corner of the yard, where we put all the food and vegetables leftovers, even those reused newspapers went in there and she mixed them up with soil. It was an excellent compost and we used it for the trees and the plants.



A: What about papers?

Grandmother: The paper is another thing that we recycled. We used a lot of newspapers those times, because there were no TVs or computers

A: What were the jobs that actually had to do with recycling?

Grandmother: Sure, sure! Cobbler! Cobbler is the shoemaker. And the dressmaker, who mended our clothes and the tinsmith, that polished the forks, spoons, pots and so on. The weaver that made the rugs and the carpets with the stripes of the clothes.

B: What did you do with plastic or glass?

Grandmother: Those times, we didn't have those huge supermarkets we have nowadays. So we did not find all these products on the supermarket shelves put in plastic bags and in plastic bottles. There were little shops like the groceries, the green groceries, the baker and those people kept things like flour, or pulses, or rice, sugar in big containers and when we needed something, they put it in small paper bags. We always carried the clothe bags with us to take them home. Liquids like milk, orange juice, beer, they were all in glass bottles. We took them, used the liquid, and then we return the bottles to the shop and he even gave us money for that and he sent them to the providers after that.



A: Which are the reasons for recycling nowadays?

Grandmother: Nowadays, recycling is necessary cause unfortunately,



we have consumed all the natural resources and we have destroyed the environment. We should respect nature and try to minimize the energy that we use for our survival. Nature has already started taking revenge. We observe changes in the world climate and the overheating of our planet and the extinction of special live spaces.

Links of interest

“

- Recycling: it all began when the Greeks discovered landfills
- The Meaning of Recycle

B: In modern times, have you adopted (unintelligible) ways to lifestyle? Which way?

Grandmother: I think I have, but I am sure there is much more to do. I drop plastic, paper, and glass in those special garbage bins for recycling. I make compost with fruit and vegetable wastes. I try to consume less electricity, water, if it is not necessary. I reuse clothes and I don't buy many things if I don't need them, or a lot of food, or when it is not necessary. I try not to use much plastic for example plastic bags, or plastic straws. I reuse paper, I reuse rough paper, or I try to travel light etc. There are so many things to do.





A: What advice would you give to the future generations about recycling, and what lifestyle they should follow?

Grandmother: I would advise them to respect nature and its resources. Start from simple things and even protest for the serious ones. Starting from themselves, they should follow the three:

Reduce,

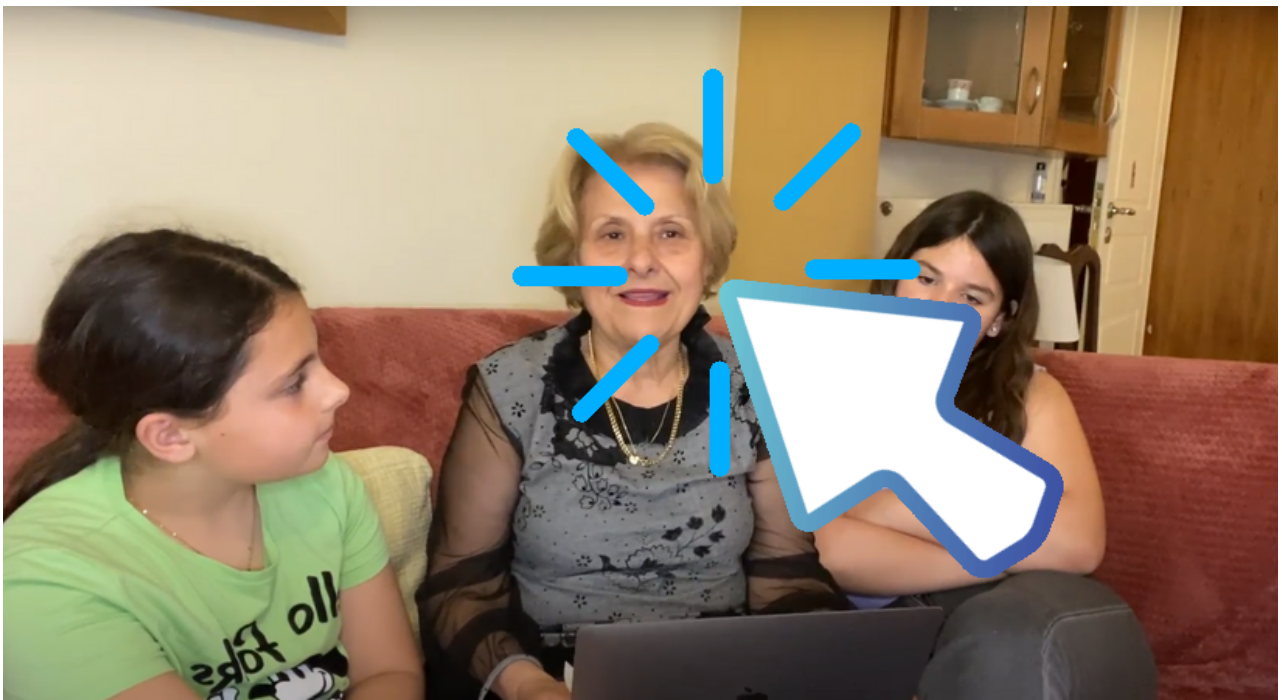
Reuse,

Recycle

and make their voice heard by the leaders of the world.

Thank you!

For the full video click here:





Nafpaktos, Greece

Second interview



Student A: Mrs. Virginia, did you know the word “recycling” when you were our age? If not, when did you first hear about it?

Teacher: The concept of recycling did not exist. I first heard about recycling when I was a university student in 1979 where I encountered a related problem.

Student B: How did you use any object in your house (unintelligible). If it was worn out or completely destroyed. Did you use to find ways to reuse it or you just threw it away?

Teacher: There were small shops that repaired our clocks, cobblers for shoes, seamstresses for clothes etc. The side of this lifestyle was that there were very few things that would be recycled. We tried to use everything that was completely



worn out in another way, for example we cut old clothes into strips and made balls or canvas dolls, since the variety of toys, in our days, was not available when I was a kid.

B: Which ways did you use to recycle the food leftovers?

Teacher: We used the food leftovers as pet food. I grew up in a suburb of Athens in a house with orange trees, lemon trees, fig trees etc. In quads, my father used the kind of compost instead of fertilizer. Compost was the fertilizer these days. He had dug a big hole in the garden where we put all the food leftover and mix it with soil.



After some time, natural compost was created for our trees and flower pots. It was a kind of compost.

“

OLD
RECYCLING
COSTUMES

B: Which objects did you use to recycle practically? Where did you put them?

Teacher: You know, there were no plastic cups, bags and other things. Liquids, such as milk, soft drinks, beers, were bottled in glass containers, which were reused.

There were no supermarkets and large chains of food stores, but small shops, such as groceries, green groceries, bakeries etc. and we used to take the glass containers to them. Also, these shops sold bulk food, pulses, rice, flour, sugar, nuts, breads, toast etc. Which were put in a paper bag and all together in canvas bags. The same applied for the grocery items.



A: Which types of recycling did you know that were used back in your times?

A: Which, in your opinion, are the reasons why recycling is necessary nowadays?

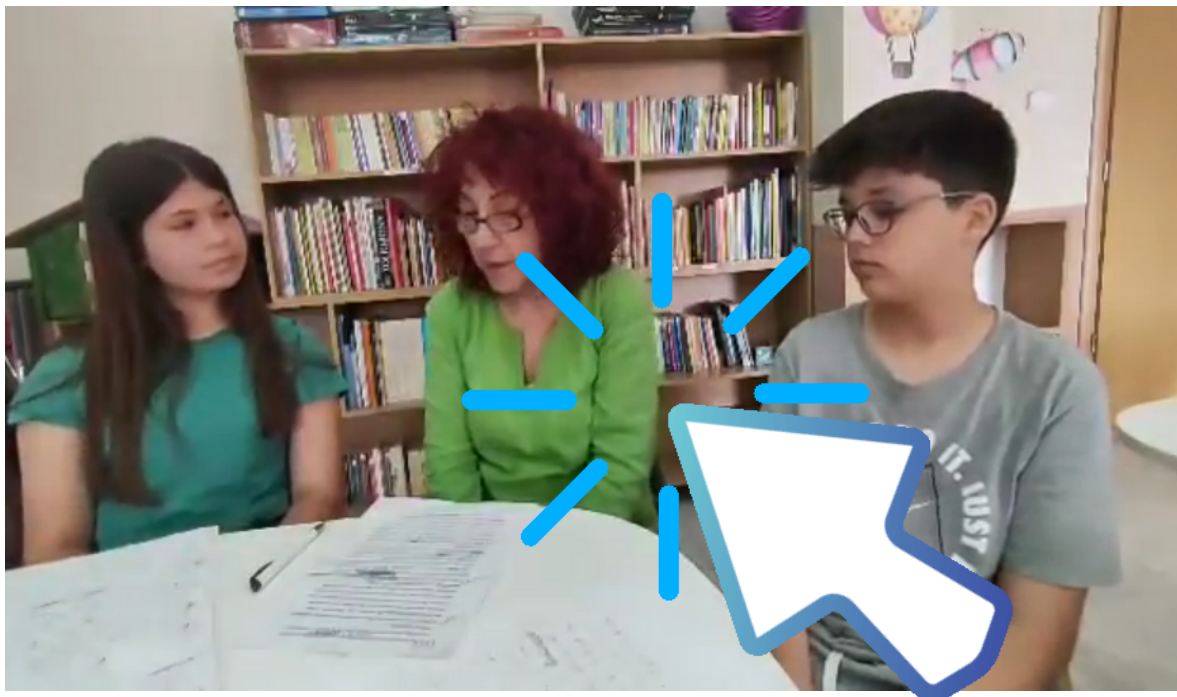
B: In modern times, have you adopted a zero waste type lifestyle? If yes, in which way?



A: What is your advice to younger generations about recycling and what stand do you suggest that we should follow?

Teacher: I believe that everything we have said unlocks another way of life that respects nature and does not consider everything disposable. We must all understand that we have almost exhausted what earth can offer us. We must now show respect because the earth has started to take revenge on us.

For the full video click here:





Antalya, Türkiye

First interview

Many people now want to leave the villages, they are moving to the cities because they want more of everything breaking away from their village and nature. Unplanned urbanities and rapid concretization are increasing due to people moving to the city. Natural disasters occur as a result of this settlement. Rapid population growth causes damage, such as artificial environmental air pollution and desertification due to urbanization. Health problems are increasing due to these reasons. Apart from these factors, unhealthy nutrition also effects other's people health badly. Inactivity also effects human health.



For the full video click here:





Antalya, Türkiye

Second interview

Hi, I'm Turan Konca, I was born and grew up in Istanbul. When I was a child, we used to go swimming, fishing and play games in



the streets with my family, and there was less urbanization in the environment. There used to be more forests, now we can't swim because the seas are polluted, if the streets were simply like they used to be, I mean, if less cars were used, we

could spend time outside. There are still things we can do, we can make our world beautiful if we keep nature and our cities clean, if we care about planting saplings and protecting nature.

For the full video click here:





Antalya, Türkiye

Third interview

The forest fire, which started on July 28, 2021, affected the town of Manavgar Gundogan in Antalya Province. Many living things, trees and houses in the forest were burned to ashes, but later on, tree saplings were planted in the burned areas and houses were rebuilt. We are now happy to have regained our 60.000 hectares of forest. The height of the newly planted seedlings exceeded 10 cm. We think that every sapling is hope and future for our future.



For the full video click here:





Links of interest

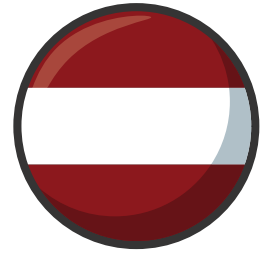


- “Exploring the impacts of urban expansion on green spaces availability and delivery of ecosystem services in the Accra metropolis”
 - “Istanbul main source of pollution in Marmara Sea: Official”
 - “Pollution In Turkish Seas”
 - “Turkey forest fires situation report: Manavgat (03 August 2021)”
 - “Turkish town Manavgat recovers from 2021’s deadly fire”
 - ‘The animals are on fire,’ say devastated farmers as wildfires sweep Turkey”
-



Adazi, Latvia

Interviews



IEVA RAMBDA: One of the surroundings environmental problems is the flooding areas being not far away from Adze secondary school. There are fields which are under the water during spring, when the ice melts, and I know that there are some houses, which are built in quite low places and because of that, there is water in the yards and sometimes in the basements.

As well in pure school, many Years ago, our school also experienced water in the basement during the spring.



Fortunately, the problem has been solved, at least in our school, because a dam was built – I don't really know, you have to ask to a specialist – a dam was built and reconstructed so that the river water doesn't come to the basement.

The second environmental problem is trash, and what I think, everyone used to throw stuff in municipal waste, and from that there are big mountains of trash. That's the part that can BE RECOMPOSTED, and therefore the part that goes into the total waste shrinks.

Second Interviewee: What I remember, when we had the final exams at school, we could see through the window that something was happening like five kilometers away, we saw like a balloon of ash. It was a big explosion of one of the factories which produces the stuff for agriculture.



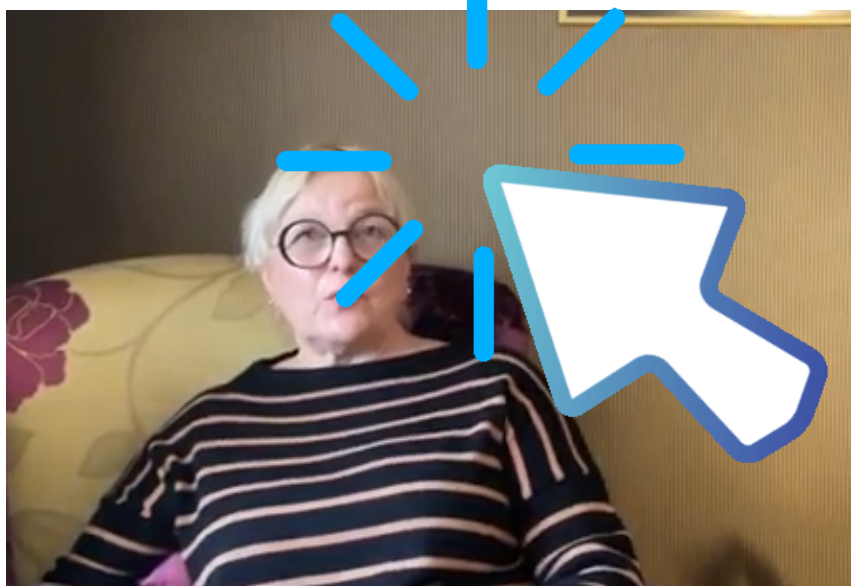
I remember that it took about two weeks until we could see the blue sky. My family lived just in front of that factory so... I can't remember any other problems because I was living in the country side. We had a big garden and we always knew how to use garbage and how to recycle what we have used. And at that time, there wasn't as much plastic around as there is today.

Third Interviewee: We have problems with increasing of the emigration that is caused by people looking for better salaries in other countries and that causes a lot of problems in working and also contributes to a population crisis. We need better condition.

Link of interest

“• [“Coastal flood risk Latvia”](#)”

For the full video click here:





Reflections on the Lessons Learned from the Interviews

Through the interviews, it was highlighted how fundamental values such as respect for nature, the importance of family and community, and the preservation of cultural traditions are shared among the countries, although each has its unique approach. The elders shared their experiences on how social and environmental changes have affected their lives and communities. From industrialization and urbanization to the present day, these changes have had a profound impact on traditional practices and the environment. The stories revealed a remarkable resilience and ability to adapt among the older generations. Despite the challenges, many elders have found ways to integrate new technologies and modern practices without losing sight of their ancestral values and traditions.



Importance of Ancestral Wisdom for Current Environmental Education

Ancestral wisdom provides a solid foundation for contemporary environmental education. The practices and knowledge passed down through generations offer valuable lessons on sustainability and resource management.



Incorporating traditional values into modern environmental education can enrich educational programs and foster a greater emotional and cultural connection with the environment. The stories of the elders serve as practical and real examples of how to live sustainably. These narratives can inspire younger generations to adopt more environmentally friendly practices and to value the wisdom of their elders.

Expression of Gratitude to the Elders Who Shared Their Stories

We deeply thank the elders from Greece, the Czech Republic, Turkey, and Latvia for opening their hearts and sharing their experiences and knowledge. Their stories not only enrich this project but also provide a valuable perspective for future generations. The wisdom and lessons imparted by these elders are invaluable. We recognize the importance of preserving and honoring their contributions to our communities and cultures.





Recognition of the Students for Their Dedication and the Communities and Families That Supported This Project

We thank the students for their enthusiasm, dedication, and hard work in conducting the interviews and compiling these stories. Their commitment has been fundamental to the success of this project. We recognize the continuous support of the families and communities that facilitated this project. Their collaboration and backing have been essential in conducting the interviews and gathering this valuable collection of stories.

Closing

This ebook is not only a celebration of the voices and experiences of our elders but also a call to action for younger generations to continue learning from them and working together for a greener world. We hope these stories inspire others to value and preserve both our natural environment and the rich cultural heritage that defines Europe.



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