



Sustainability transition & resilience



• SUSTRARES •

Sustainability, Transition & Resilience

A European network of individuals and associations for the promotion of self-sufficiency, socio-ecological transformation and sustainability transition.



FOUNDING PARTNERS:

- ILIOSPOROI NETWORK (Greece),
- TRANSITION TOWN WITZENHAUSEN (Germany),
- GAIA (Portugal),
- LA BARACCA (Spain),
- FABBRICA DEL SOLE (Italy),
- ZMAG (Croatia).



LA FABBRICA DEL SOLE



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Sustainability, Transition and Resilience (SUSTRARES)
<https://degrowth.community/sustrares>



SUSRARES TRAINING REPORT

SUSTAINABILITY, TRANSITION AND RESILIENCE (SUSRARES)

a Youth Worker Mobility (K1) funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union
(project duration: 1/9/2016 - 30/11/2016)

Main activity: 10-19 September 2016
SUSRARES Training Course in Vlachia, Evia, Greece.

Hosted by ILIOSPOROI NETWORK (Greece)

Partners: GAIA (Portugal), LA FABBRICA DEL SOLE (Italy), LA BARRACA (Spain), TRANSITION TOWN WITZENHAUSEN (Germany), ZMAG (Croatia).

Report produced by Michalis Theodoropoulos, ILIOSPOROI NETWORK, on January 2017.

SUMMARY

The SUSTRARES project aimed at providing concrete competencies, skills and expertise to youth workers in order to act as multipliers and sustainability agents for their localities. Since mainstream and formal education are not structured to provide the skills and competencies needed to tackle modern challenges in a crisis context, SUSTRARES aimed to create and strengthen training paths and resources based on real-life applications for resilience, sustainability and self-sufficiency. The partnership had the concrete objective of providing open knowledge and training for positive change in the personal lives of participants (regarding coverage of basic needs, entrepreneurship and employment), as a response to the multi-dimensional crises Europe is facing.

SUSTRARES main activity was a 10-day training course, which was developed with the concrete intent to encourage the active engagement of youth workers in sustainability transition initiatives, to exchange experiences concerning the promotion of local sustainability in European countries and to provide competencies and skills to youth workers to actively engage in their local context and the employment market

SUSTRARES gave the opportunity to 36 youth workers and trainers from 6 different countries to become familiar with concepts such as sustainability, self-sufficiency, transition and resilience, at both theoretical and practical levels. In the course of 10 days, participants jointly carried out a programme of mixed activities (participatory seminars, practical workshops, exercises, debates, role plays, simulations, outdoor activities, etc) that enhanced their skills and competencies and allowed them to experience a multicultural simulation of living in an ecological community.

The youth worker mobility focused on non-formal experiential training (learning by doing), co-creation of DIY convivial/ frugal technologies and networking, while it provided useful skills for employability enhancement and community engagement. Topics addressed during the training course included energy autonomy using renewable sources, natural housing, waste management, food self-sufficiency, agro-ecology, health self-management, participatory decision making, and cooperative entrepreneurship.

The main activity was hosted in the premises of the STAGONES Sustainability Academy (www.stagones.org) in Vlachia Evia, which is comprised of three 1.5 acre plots and a variety of hosting and training infrastructure constructed solely with natural material. The training course hosted very experienced trainers from few of the most active sustainability transition/ self-resilience collectives in Greece, namely Stagones, Nea Guinea, iliosporoi network, and UfiT, trainers from professional associations like Place Identity, We deliver taste and Perivoli Korinthou, from the international network SEYN (Sustainable Energy Youth Network), as well as trainers from the other project partners.



IMPACT

SUSTRARES had a significant impact on all participants and trainers, and that was obvious from the reflection- evaluation sessions, as well as, the farewell moments. Friendships and bonds were created, networks were strengthened, follow up projects were arranged.

The youth worker mobility gave project partners the opportunity to engage participants in an intensive and participatory learning process that provided them with useful (soft and hard) skills and enabled them to get actively involved in a non-formal educational process for training sustainability trainers and multipliers at local/ national levels. Through a combination of info sessions and presentations, debates, role plays, simulations, energizers, team building exercises, seminars and participatory workshops, outdoor and social engagement activities, youth workers were able to develop skills and competencies on intercultural training for sustainability, including but not limited to: group dynamics management, team work, deliberation, leadership, self-awareness, analytical and creative thinking, visioning and participatory planning, project management and conflict resolution, monitoring and evaluation. That will contribute to their personal and socio-educational development and will potentially improve their employment prospects.

Project partners are confident that after SUSTRARES realization, youth workers are able to undertake sustainability transition initiatives, develop sustainable lifestyles and create their own employment opportunities. In the long term, project partners foresee a behavioral shift on behalf of the participants towards more sustainable and resilient patterns, an enhanced ability to communicate in different environments, increased confidence and feeling/showing empathy.

For the participating organizations, SUSTRARES was an important opportunity to share knowledge, expertise and experiences by optimizing learning processes of Sustainability Transition Initiatives, making them visible to and capable of reaching a broad spectrum of stakeholders, youth workers, associations and the general public. The project assisted them in becoming more economically sustainable and developing the necessary co-management tools to provide a well-functioning and open learning process. Learning from each others' experiences and conducting innovative non-formal education/ experiential training activities together has developed organizational capacity and common understanding among partners.

By promoting collaborative training activities, project partners enlarged the learning systems within which they operate, thereby fostering product and process-related innovations.

SUSTRARES has impacted participating organizations in the following ways:

1) a continued expansion and strengthening of their capacity to form and operate a cooperation network among institutions and associations across sectors (NGOs, educational institutions, municipalities, research entities, cooperatives, SMEs, unions) sharing a core interest in low-impact solutions to environmental challenges and encouraging resilience to environmental/climate stresses at both the practical and theoretical levels;

2) build capacity and skill enhancement within partner organisations, in terms of:

a) familiarity with the above-mentioned sustainability issues;

b) knowledge of innovative methods and processes of teaching, developing and exchanging training methodologies and tools with peers;
c) developing training of trainers methods, tools and processes for sustainability transition and active citizenship.

3) development of a broad pool of resources and trainers to support and/or advise on multiple local challenges which often combine environmental, social and economic aspects, and to trigger the further development of sustainability transition initiatives by providing low impact solutions at local/regional level;

4) shared experiences of adult learning processes in different EU countries and within multiple social and cultural contexts.

As already stated, most of the youth workers for this proposed mobility were already active in partner organisation activities related to sustainability issues and many of them were planning to continue their involvement in such topics as professionals or volunteers in the future. This means that the know-how acquired by participants and diffused among their contemporaries will help constitute a group of skilled local people who will be able to support future initiatives and projects related to sustainability transition in their localities, enhancing in such a way their professional and social development. As such, SUSTRARES provided participants with capacity building, competence and skill enhancement so that they can become a local 'motor' for triggering and promoting sustainability programmes at their local/regional level. This will have a positive impact in their overall behavior and employability over the long term.

The main target groups of the learning outcomes include youth workers, young multipliers, young entrepreneurs, cooperatives, associations, practitioners, trainers, practitioners and researchers. They include youth workers from marginalized and deprived areas, those unemployed or underemployed, with fewer or poorer opportunities, and women. All these will indirectly receive the learning outcomes of SUSTRARES and will benefit from the interaction with other youth workers that will act as local motors. Positive impacts on collective awareness, inspiration and competence enhancement is also expected. Widespread dissemination of project results and outcomes through partners' websites and affiliated networks will also contribute to that end.

In that sense, the Greek youth and society as a whole will also be impacted as indirect beneficiaries of SUSTRARES, since international participants of this project had the chance to exchange experiences with associations, locals, youth and youth workers who attended the activities. Finally, the international indirect beneficiaries will be the European society and the countries of project partners, where participants are going to be active in diffusing and implementing, on the basis of their acquired knowledge, local and national initiatives for the promotion of sustainability transitions, self-sufficiency and resilience.



RESULTS

SUSTRARES has produced a series of results that can inspire for replication and elaboration by youth workers in similar contexts across Europe. From the programme of activities and the non-formal methods used, till the material produced and disseminated. The results as depicted in the following section is merely a depiction of the experience and the emotions felt by the participants.

1. Video of activities

The coordinator ILIOSPOROI NETWORK produced with the collaboration of Cinergies Cooperative (www.cinergies.coop) a short video (7m18s) of the SUSTRARES training course that can be publicly accessible here: <https://youtu.be/-oVE5pQd7iQ>

2. Short interviews on video

Cinergies.coop and ILIOSPOROI NETWORK produced small interviews with participant reflections from the training course that can be publicly accessed in the following links:

- ✓ <https://youtu.be/53jypnWnG1s>
- ✓ https://youtu.be/9gy6v6E_je0
- ✓ https://youtu.be/wjNGy_Bp6fl
- ✓ https://youtu.be/tz17lXuju_8
- ✓ <https://youtu.be/lcB86nwgPel>
- ✓ <https://youtu.be/wpR8gaUiP4A>

3. Website

A website that has already been constructed as a result of two Lifelong Learning partnerships (<https://co-munity.net>) was utilized by project partners as it provides tools for group organisation, project management (calendar and case tracker), document management and collaborative writing (notebook and etherpad), discussion (blog), reference management (bibliography), embedding media (sound, images, video) and even creating web forms that can be built into on-line surveys. The Co-munity website contributed not only towards the better communication and coordination among partners, but it proved to be a useful tool for public dissemination and communication with various stakeholders, as well as planning of follow up projects.

As such, project partners created <https://co-munity.net/sustrares> that offers a public website with project resources as well as an intranet for partner communication and collaboration. The SUSTRARES web-page is under constant upgrade and construction.

4. Poster, follow up flyer and project logo

The Coordinator, ILIOSPOROI NETWORK, created with the support of Phoenix Productions a dedicated project logo, as well as a Poster and Follow-up Flyer that can be accessed in the following link: <https://degrowth.community/node/2007150>

The Poster and Follow-up Flyer will be used for expanding the informal network of cooperation that was initiated in SUSTRARES training course, and will serve towards finding partners for follow-up projects and networking.

5. Photo slide show

A 200 photo slide show was created to further visualize the whole experience of the SUSTRARES training course and it is accessible here: <https://youtu.be/dxu0scGUs44>

6. Social Media

Partners utilized their own social media (facebook profiles and pages) to publicize the project and created two facebook groups, one closed and one public, to assist with internal communication and dissemination accordingly.

SUSTRARES public group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1175402785848951/>

SUSTRARES closed group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1691542664505982/>

7. YOUTHPASS Certificates, recognition of skills and competencies

Youth workers had the chance to get informed about YOUTHPASS Certification and in a dedicated session they had a brainstorming and mapping session on the skills and competencies they obtained or improved during the training course.

Based on the participant mapping of skills and competencies the YOUTHPASS Certificates were issued and endorsed by the participants. The main skills and competencies identified by participants include:

Learning to learn

Was able to organize, manage, monitor and evaluate my learning process; to develop further on already gained experiences and competencies; to learn how to apply achieved competencies and experiences in my own personal, professional and social life; to increase motivation and self-awareness.

Social and civic competence

Was able to deal with people coming from different social and cultural backgrounds; acquired

skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to be active as a citizen.

Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

Was able to turn ideas into actions, to be creative and innovative, to plan and manage projects and time, to be aware of different working contexts, and to be aware of ethical values.

Increased my ability to be adaptable, flexible, cooperative, be pro-active and capable of critical thinking. Worked in groups, dealt with diversity and collaborated with many different professional and education backgrounds.

Cultural awareness and expression

Was creative in expressing ideas through music, arts, performance and collective expression. Became more aware of my own cultural context and of that of others.

Specific competences highlighted in the project

Group dynamics management, team work, deliberation, leadership, self-awareness, analytical and creative thinking, visioning and participatory planning, project management and conflict resolution, monitoring and evaluation. Provided valuable knowledge and practical everyday skills for my professional development regarding energy autonomy from renewable sources, natural housing, waste management, food self-sufficiency, agro-ecology, health self-management, participatory decision making, and cooperative entrepreneurship issues.

8. Training Report

The detailed Training Report (in PDF format) that you read will be used to disseminate project results and training methodologies across Europe and support similar sustainability transition initiatives. Project partners will disseminate to their affiliated networks and will upload it in their websites and the SUSTRARES webpage.



ACTIVITIES

There were no deviations from the originally planned activities apart from the public event that had to be scaled down due to weather conditions (heavy rain). All mobilities were realized as planned and all the expected trainers realized their sessions on site.

During the Training Course, a daily Reporting Team was responsible for training documentation (workshop minutes, photos) consisting of at least one person from each participating group. The trainers supported the participants with documentation and resources for further research.

Youth workers kept an online Activity Diary that is hosted in the multifunctional website: <https://degrowth.community/sustrares>.

The daily programme and working methods were adapted to the participants' needs and expectations, as these had been expressed during preparation and were finalized from consultations at the planning stage. The activities were tailored in such a way to respond to cultural particularities and achieve the utmost involvement and contribution from all youth workers. In order to facilitate an evolution and quality assurance of the learning process, all project partners had been asked to draw experiences on working methods from their pool of expertise from previous youth worker training seminars/ courses and contribute significantly to discussions about the working and training methods to be used during the mobility.

Project partners used a wide range of methods and tools on non-formal learning and experiential training for sustainability transition in order to provide youth workers with novel experiences, skills and competencies that will allow them to be active citizens in their localities and create (self) employment opportunities. The methods used include working in multinational groups, round-table discussions, world cafe, debates and brain-storming sessions, participatory seminars, practical workshops, audio-visual and oral presentations, role-playing and ice-breaking games, energizers, experiential learning exercises, field visits and inter-cultural activities, evaluation sessions, info and plenary sessions on various sustainability transition and self-sufficiency issues (energy, housing, food, health, waste management, decision making, cooperative entrepreneurship).

It was very important for the youth workers to engage in field visits and outdoor activities in areas which have an impact on the day-to-day activities of the local population. As such, young participants visited the natural spring that provides clean water to the off-grid community of Stagones in order to comprehend the difficulties of watershed management and sustainable water use; the nearby testing site of Stagones (www.stagones.org) on natural housing; the old water-mill and the adjacent Vlachia village; and finally they had the chance to visit and clean up a very beautiful beach (Gionati) that is used by locals and tourists during the summer. Field visits and outdoor activities contributed also towards the social engagement of participants and improved their communication and team-building skills.

Every evening, there was a publicly accessible intercultural activity in which partner youth worker groups presented to each other cultural elements (gastronomy, music, customs etc)

from their countries, in order for the rest of the participants to become more familiar with their cultural identity. This helped them to see the differences or similarities they may have with each other and even respect more their own cultural identity. These activities improved the intercultural understanding of participants and their social engagement skills, while they increased their cultural awareness and respect for diversity.

The participants and the training seminars/ workshops were hosted in the Stagones sustainability Academy in Vlachia, Evia island. The training venues were spread in three distinct farm plots, part of the Stagones group, where all the necessary training and audio-visual facilities were set in place and available for all participants. Moreover, wi-fi access was offered to participants to assist them with documentation and research.

The partnership was organized like a network with different scales of communication: among partners and between stakeholders at local, national and international levels. Cooperation between partner organizations and local stakeholders occurred at different levels. Partner organizations had been asked to disseminate resources and information about the project and its learning objectives through their websites and networks, and to utilize their contacts with local stakeholders and decision makers for the utmost dissemination of project results. Moreover, the project coordinator and the Stagones team undertook two meetings with local stakeholders prior to the realization of the training to explain to them the scope of the activity and the extend it could benefit the local society through international promotion.

The final programme of activities is shown in the following table:



Activity Programme		
Timetable	Activities	Non-formal and informal learning methods used
<i>DAY 1 – 10.9</i>		
AM	Introductions, presentation of the activity (objectives, programme)	ice breakers, energizers, building trust and group building exercises, name game
	Presentation of learning outcomes, round of expectations	Brainstorming, mind mapping, world cafe (Pavlos Georgiadis and Stefania Xydia)
PM	From sustainability to eco-social transformation: the case of transition initiatives	Presentation by iliosporoi and Stagones ; exchange of best practices (all partners)
	welcome party	intercultural social event
<i>DAY 2 – 11.9</i>		
AM	DIY and appropriate/ convivial technologies	info session by UFIT and exchange of best practices (all partners), energizers
	how to make a solar cooker	participatory workshop by Yorgos Theodorakis (UfiT)
PM	how to make a solar dehydrator	participatory workshop by Yorgos Theodorakis (UfiT)
	Greek culture night	intercultural event
<i>DAY 3 – 12.9</i>		
AM	Shelter: Natural housing	Stagones info session, energizers, exchange of best practices (all partners)
	Shelter: how to make cob and straw-bale houses	participatory workshop by Stagones , group building exercise (to be continued...)
PM	Shelter: how to make cob and straw-bale houses	participatory workshop by Stagones , group building exercise (to be continued...)
	Spanish culture night	intercultural event
<i>DAY 4 – 13.9</i>		
AM	Shelter: how to make cob and straw-bale houses	participatory workshop by Stagones , group building exercise
	Shelter: how to make cob and straw-bale houses	participatory workshop by Stagones , group building exercise
PM	Visit to nearby Plateau (mountain trekking)	outdoor activity, energizer and group building exercise
	Italian culture night	intercultural event
<i>DAY 5 – 14.9</i>		
AM	Energy autonomy from renewables: from theory to practice	info session by Nea Guinea , energizers, exchange of best practices (all partners)
	Energy autonomy from renewables: self-resilient local/home systems	participatory workshop by Kostas Latoufis (Nea Guinea)
PM	Visit to Gionati beach & voluntary clean-up	outdoor activity, energizer and group building exercise, social engagement
	Portuguese culture night	intercultural event
<i>DAY 6 – 15.9</i>		
AM	Self-management of health: natural remedies, herbs	info session by Nea Guinea , energizers, and exchange of best practices (all partners)
	Self-management of health: natural remedies, herbs	participatory workshop by Nea Guinea and Stagones
PM	Decision making (community visioning)	simulation exercise with Michalis Theodoropoulos (iliosporoi network), role playing
	Mid evaluation / reflection session	evaluation and feedback, evaluation scoreboard, questionnaire
<i>DAY 7 – 16.9</i>		
AM	Waste: how to manage organic waste	info session by Nea Guinea , energizers, and exchange of best practices (all partners)
	Waste: how to make compost	participatory workshop by Fotini Gergousi (Nea Guinea)
PM	Free time/ preparations of farewell party/ public event	free time and preparations of public event
	Croatian culture night	intercultural event
<i>DAY 8 – 17.9</i>		
AM	Collective Painting of Vlachia elementary school	outdoor activity, social engagement, energizer and group building exercise
	Collective Painting of Vlachia elementary school	outdoor activity, social engagement
PM	Collective Painting of Vlachia elementary school	outdoor activity, social engagement
	German culture night	intercultural event
<i>DAY 9 - 18.9</i>		
AM	Food cultivation (Community Supported Agriculture and seed banks)	info session by Antonis Diamantidis (Perivoli Korinthou)
	Food cultivation (Community Supported Agriculture and seed banks)	Presentation by Yorgos Psychas (iliosporoi) & exchange of best practices (all partners)
PM	Training the trainers (participatory training and experiential learning)	simulation exercise with Michalis Theodoropoulos (iliosporoi network)
	Preparation of public event	group work, artistic expression
<i>DAY 10 – 19.9</i>		
AM	Social engagement and cooperative entrepreneurship	info session with SEYN , and exchange of best practices (all partners)
	Networking, Follow up projects, steps ahead	group work, brainstorming, mind-mapping, deliberation, participatory planning
PM	Info session on Erasmus+ and YouthPass, Final Evaluation	info session National Agency, evaluation and feedback, evaluation scoreboard, questionnaire
	Farewell cross-cultural party – public event in Vlachia cultural center	intercultural public event

Workshop reports

DAY 1

The morning session of the first day was dedicated to welcoming and getting to know each other. First all the participants played some **ice-breaking** and **name games**, realized **team building exercises** and **energizers for building trust**. Then the project was briefly presented by the coordinator and the participants had the chance to realize a **world cafe** and **brainstorming session** to present and **mind-map** their expectations and training needs. The morning session was led by two very experienced trainers, **Stephania Xydia** from Place Identity and **Pavlos Georgiadis** from We deliver taste.

The afternoon session was dedicated to an extensive **presentation** by the hosts (Iliosporoi network and Stagones) regarding the project's wider training objectives, about the philosophy that underpins sustainability transition and about the sustainability transition initiatives already realized in the area, and the Stagones Sustainability Academy as a case study. The project partners briefly presented their organizations and a very **constructive discussion** followed.

The day closed with a welcoming party from the hosts, with Greek cuisine and live folklore music (rembetika) by the Stagones crew and friends.

Training Report #1

STEPHANIA XYDIA (Place Identity) & PAVLOS GEORGIADIS (We deliver taste)

The morning at Stagones venue started with **constellation** ice-breakers. Participants were invited to position themselves on a mental map of Europe described on the ground, firstly according to their place of birth and then according to their city of residence. They then formed a line according to their age and split into five groups according to their field of work: civil society, academia, private sector, public sector or "in between" which turned out to be the largest group! These exercises gave a first impression of who we are as a group and allowed participants to identify people with common references and interests.

Then we enjoyed a **speed-dating** session based on random questions. Participants formed two concentric circles facing each other. They were given one minute to ask random questions to the person facing them, until a bell rang and the circles rotated to the next person. This exercise put to the test the speed and creativity of participants to come up with interesting questions, while creating a joyful, dynamic atmosphere at the start of the day. Participants were then invited to sit in a circle and take five minutes in silence to think about three questions: "What inspires you in life? What are you good at? Why are you here?" A twine was used to "unwind" insights as one participant passed it to the next speaker, creating a web inside the circle as everyone was given the opportunity to talk about their life motivations, personal skills and expectations of the programme. At the end of the **circle**

exercise, all participants were holding part of the web, creating a visual metaphor of the connections and common inspirations to be explored throughout the project meeting.

After a short break, we used the **world-cafe method** to address the question “How is the community we want to create?”. In small groups of five, that rotated every fifteen minutes, participants discussed about the values and the processes that define the communities they want to create. Each group selected three key ideas which were harvested, clustered and pinned on the wooden pillars of the kiosk, symbolising the core values of the community hosted by SUSTRARES.



Mind-mapping Exercise: What elements make up SUSTRARES?

1. Energy
2. Shelter
3. Clothing
4. Food
5. Education
6. Economy
7. Systemic intervention
8. Interdependence, power of agency, resilience
9. Ethics



Pictures:

1. "How do I imagine the community I want to create?" Some key values identified by the participants hang on the tree.
2. "How do I act?" Ideas for action hang on the wall.



SHARE

EXCHANGE
- knowledge
- food
- resources

EXCHANGE
education, help,
goods, experience,
discussion

Sustainable life
- economic
- ecological
- social

EQUITY
(fairness)
Needs development
to provide for
everyone in a world

Environment
Community

BALANCE BETWEEN
PRIVATE
AND
COMMON
SPACE

OPEN LOCALISM
SELF SUSTAINABLE
BY
WIDENING BORDERS

GROWTH
sustainable, healthy
personal, balanced

Healthy &
HAPPY

RESPECT
of privacy,
common space,
nature

Climate impact

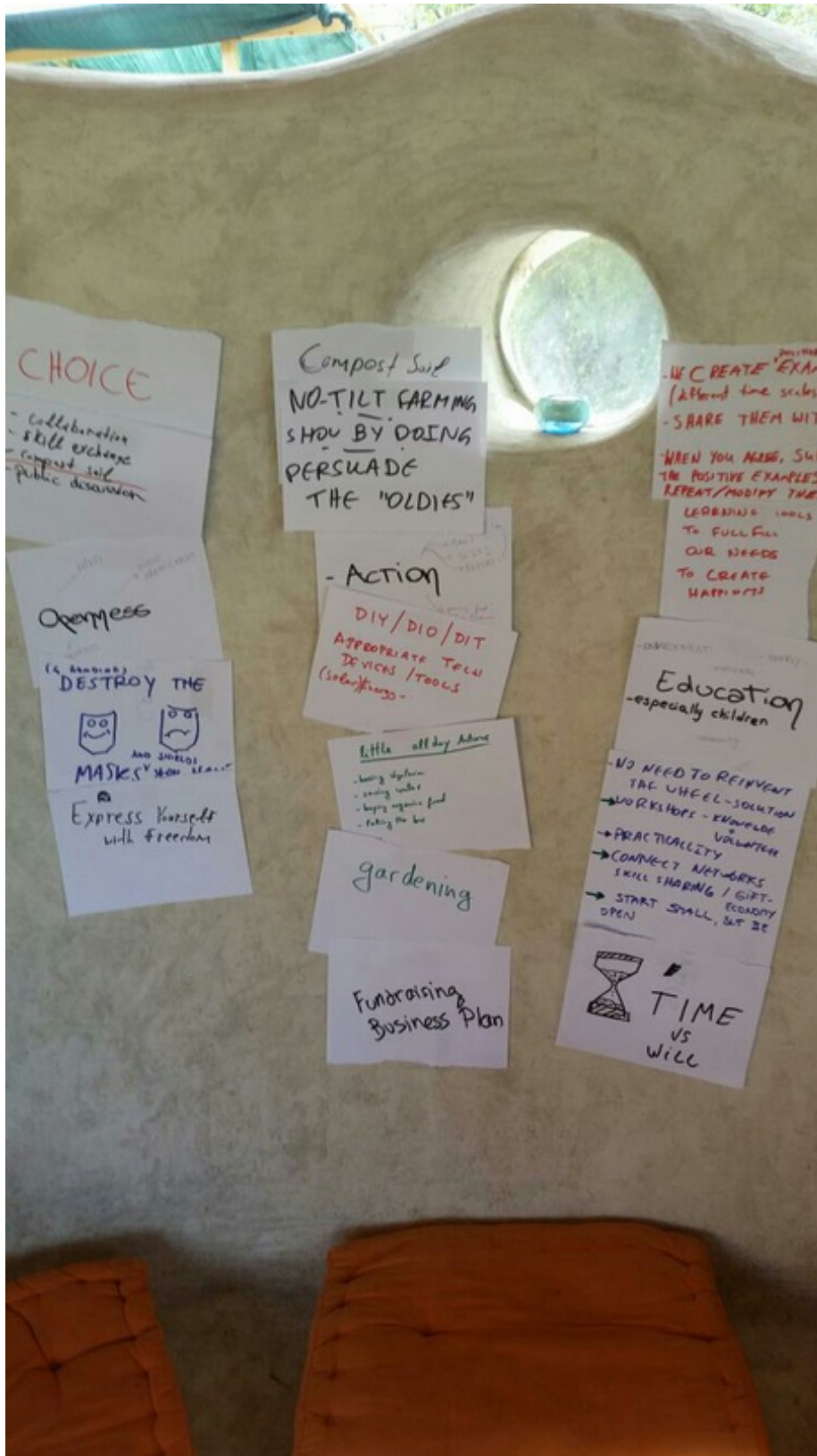
SUSTAINABLE
LIFE

practise
Love
(as a choice)

RESPECT
UNITED
IN
DIVERSITY

Community
decision
making
Basic structure of society
but special words





DAY 2

The day started with **energizers** and **ice-breaking games**. The whole day was dedicated to **DIY and convivial/ appropriate technologies** and their applications regarding self-sufficiency.

During the morning session, the trainer **Yorgos Theodorakis** from Urban Flat in Transition (UfiT), lead an **informational presentation** on the various DIY home applications that can be build with few and basic means and can be operational without using electrical energy and fossil fuels. Their main purpose is to provide heating for the house, as well as to dehydrate and cook food. An **exchange of best practices** with participants followed and then all of the youth workers participated in the first **practical workshop** of the training course that was dedicated to building small solar cookers out of carbon, cooking foil and tape.

During the afternoon session, a **participatory construction workshop** was realized on how to build a small wooden solar dehydrator for drying food and fruits. Participants really enjoyed the construction process and their attention was so high that nobody was out of tool or something to do. The session ended with a visioning exercise that used the **open space method** on how to build a sustainable community with the use of appropriate technologies.





Training Report #2

DIY and Convivial Technologies, YORGOS THEODORAKIS (Urban Flat in Transition – <http://permaculture.top/>)

The second day had two parts. The morning session started with **self-organized physical activities** and **energizers** that participants proposed on the spot. Then a connection circle was formed with all participants (holding hands), to share feelings and build a community bond.

Following an **info presentation** with slides and photos was realized on how to use solar energy for preserving and cooking food. The different kinds of solar and hybrid cookers and dehydrators were presented, along with their functions and operational needs, through a selected slideshow of different models for educational, home and industrial applications.

The different methods for preparing food and fruits for dehydration were presented in detail with emphasis on food safety issues. Furthermore, the basic principles on how to cook with the use of the solar energy were analyzed along with the different types of solar cookers.

Then the participants were split into 4 groups, 3 construction teams and one for documentation (on rotation), with one experienced on wood constructions as a leader in each one of the groups. The **participatory construction workshop** commenced and the participants started crafting small solar cookers from recycled carton boxes and a direct-light wooden solar dehydrator, while the documentation team recorded the whole process with notes, photographs and videos.

The constructions were finished by the end of the day and were successfully tested during the days that followed. The session ended with the trainers proposal to observe their surroundings for resources available in the wider area that could be useful to anyone that would want to create an eco-community from scratch.

The second half of the afternoon session started with a slide presentation on the concept of Fundamental Human Needs and Human Scale Development, as expressed by Manfred MaxNeef, Antonio Elizalde and Martin Hopenhayn. Then the 3 moral principles of Permaculture were presented: care for the earth, care for the human, fair share; as well as the permaculture design principles that derive from them according to Bill Mollison and David Holmgren.

Following, the participants were asked to break into groups, visualize and plan in a participatory way, by using the **Open Space** method, the creation of an ecological community in the area. The topic of the Open Space was “Our eco-community in 2031 and the steps towards there”. For about 50 minutes the participants discussed into groups and at the end each group presented their results. The groups proposed 12 topics, out of which 5 gathered the greatest attention. Each working group was taking down notes on the sustainability transition topics proposed, the ideas, the key-words and the interconnections that were all fed into a collective mind-map.





Workshop Notes Day 2 (Robin):

Dehydrator:

Purpose: to dehydrate food in order to preserve it. Through heating, the pathogens are killed and the water goes out.

Methods: We built a wooden box which we painted black on the inside. Additionally, we installed 3 inox screen shelves inside to put the food on.

Then we constructed the door with some transparent layers like baking foil in the front to keep the air inside.

The legs of the box were made out of wooden poles angled to position the box at about a 45 degree angle, pointed to the sun.

It heats up to 80 degrees inside, but the food should not be heated to more than 65 degrees. So there are holes below and above to regulate the temperature inside. A thermal system is created, where the cold air streams from below, heats up inside and transports the moisture of the food out of the box.

Solar-Cooker/Oven:

We constructed a solar cooker out of cardboard and reflective lifeguard blankets. We cut the cardboard in similar rectangular pieces and glued the blankets to it. They were folded at special angles to form a collector-structure which can be pointed into the sun directly, and reflect the rays to a single point inside the cooker.

In this central part of the cooker, we can place a black cooking-pot covered or wrapped with a special plastic foil to keep the sun radiation inside of the plastic. The air-gas inside heats up and cooks the food.

Inside the possible temperature is up to 130 degrees. Depending on the angle of the sunlight, the solar cooker can be moved, so it can collect the sunlight in the most effective way.



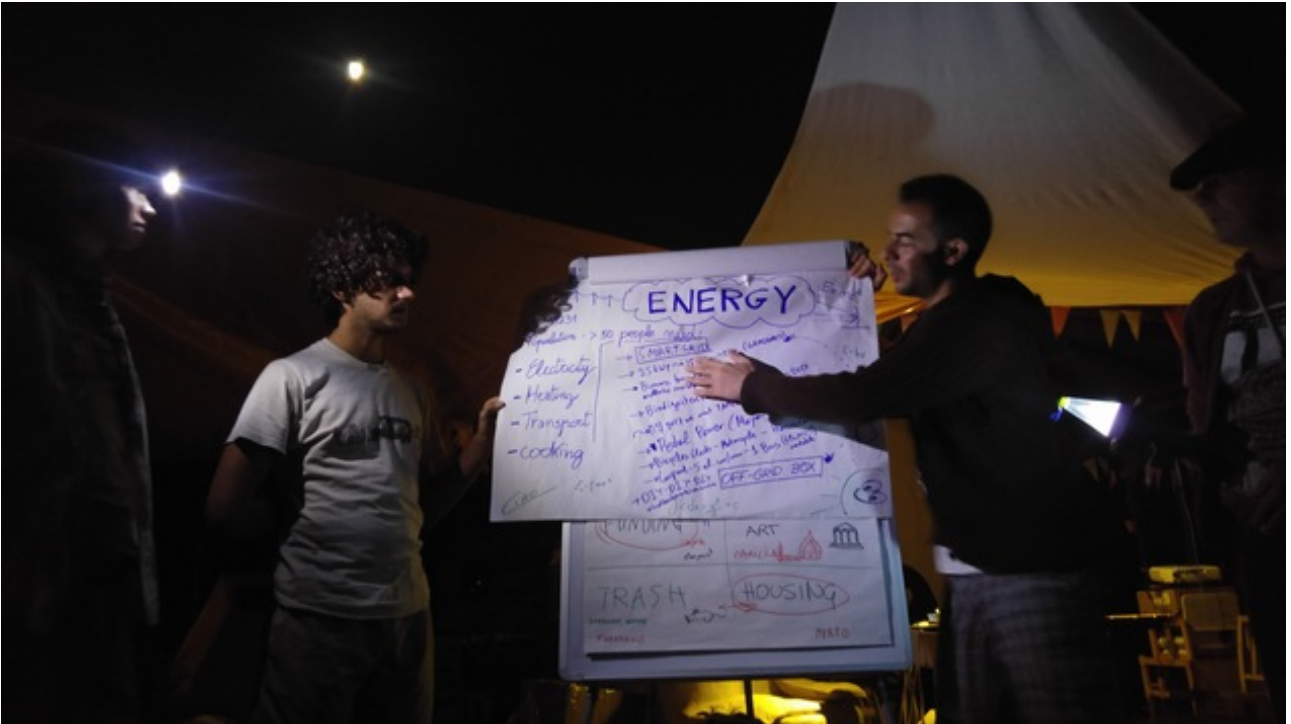
Open space method:

4 rules:

1. The people who are here, are the right people.
2. Anytime we start is the right time.
3. Anytime we stop is the right time.
4. Anything that happens is the only thing that could happen.

The law of two feet: If you are in a situation where you don't learn or contribute, choose a different one.





DAY 3 & 4

Days 3 & 4 were devoted to **natural building** techniques. The **Stagones** team of trainers/builders decided to work in parallel in two projects, in different plots, so they decided to split the group of participants in half (both working groups had participants from all partners).

During the first day, working group 1 helped **Yannis Papatheodorou** and **Nikos Kontonikas** in the upper Stagones plot to continue the building of a COB semi-outdoor kitchen, while working group 2 helped **Andreas Papachristou** in the lower Stagones plot to build a Straw & Clay utility space. The next day the working groups switched places. Both days the participants had the chance to have a theoretical lecture on the basic principles of natural building and the techniques that were used, followed by a playful and practical, hands-on experience. Learning by doing at its best.







Training Report #3

Natural Building: YANNIS and NIKOS (Stagones – www.stagones.org)

Under the Erasmus + SUSTRARES program, STAGONES team implemented a two days experiential learning workshop on Natural Building. During this, the trainers theoretically covered the basic principles of Natural building and then followed a practical training in two different techniques (COB and Straw&Clay). The participants in the program were involved in the construction of a COB wall of a semi-outdoor kitchen as well as the construction of a food warehouse with the Straw&Clay technique.

The experiential nature of training provided an opportunity for students to learn:

- to recognize which materials are suitable for building
- to make appropriate mixes
- to use the mixes, and to build these

In addition to the above, the program focused on the eco character of Natural Building. We analyzed the ecological advantages of these techniques and showed that such a mode of construction can dramatically reduce the ecological footprint and provide a meaningful alternative for the constructions of the future.





Training Report #4

Natural Building with Straw/Clay technique by Andreas Papachristou (www.stagones.org)

The workshop began with a brief introduction into Natural Building and Bio-Climatic principles: starting with the best possible building-orientation, using natural materials (stone, wood, clay, straw) we build spaces in harmony with the environment that ensure ideal living conditions and exude an organic sense of easyness.

Afterwards, the participants came into practical contact with the Straw/Clay technique. Unlike cob and strawbales, a wooden frame is essential in order to support the roof and walls. In the casestudy of the workshop, a 2,60 m to 4,30 m warehouse, the thickness of the wall was fixed on 30 cm. The filling material consists of loose straw steeped in a dense water/clay mix. After straining, it is put into building forms that are attached to the buildings posts, and pushed firmly so it settles. This is a layer by layer procedure, starting from the stone foundation. The participants built the forms and went through all the stages of preparation and building. As the walls went higher, they realized that Natural Building is a procedure and a right that extend from the practical obvious into the realms of self-awareness (what do I need, what do I want?) and collectiveness.





The two hard working days finished as they should, with fiestas, music and cultural nights. On Day 3 our Spanish partner presented the history and culture of Canary islands through the projection of a video and then traditional dishes were served along with folklore music from Spain. At the end of Day 4 the Italians had the chance to present their gastronomic culture by preparing delicious traditional food for the very hungry participants after a very tiring but rewarding day. Apart for a hard days work, a group of braves decided to realize a very rewarding hike in the nearby mountain top. More details in the dairy notes that follow:

Workshop- Diary Notes Day 3 (Margaret O.):

Eco building and Spanish Culture night

Eco building is matter of priorities. Living in the countryside allows you to be in contact with the materials that surround you, materials that you can transform into a structure. What's the perfect house? The one in which you like everything you look at, where there is no need to hide any material because you love it all, like your own skin. Choosing materials is more than just rationalizing which physical properties you desire, like insulation or strength; it is a choice of what inspires you, of what sustains or feeds you. Personal sustenance is part of sustainability. This is the eco building philosophy of the Stagones builders.

Today we worked with cob – a natural construction material of clay, sand, and straw. We mixed the clay with our feet in a tub of water, feeling the soft clay squeeze between our toes, noticing how much water it absorbed, how it dried to our skin. This is part of what it means to understand the building materials: to be sensually connected with them and thus better understand their characteristics. We mixed this clay with sand and water, by stomping our bare feet, and rolling the mixture over a tarp. Then, we stomped in the straw. By exploring the material with our fingers, hands, and feet – by shaping it, throwing it, dropping it – we learned what was the perfect consistency, texture, and moisture level.

This building method is low cost but labor intensive, and is best done by a small team of people. Together we worked to continue building the wall of an outdoor community kitchen that will serve future workshops and gatherings at Iliosporoi and Stagones. We added the cob to the wall with our hands, with simple hand-crafted tools, and “strumenti di fortuna”. While many of us had no building experience, working closely together with the supportive and very encouraging trainers, we were able to quickly learn the technique and build up the wall. One day was not enough to finish the construction, but we will all remember that part of this community kitchen was built by our hands (and feet!). We hope to come back next year and share a meal in the final result.

That night, the cultural night hosted by the Spanish group started with the projection of a short film from the Canary Islands. This short was about the conquest of the Islands by the Spanish kingdom and how the aboriginals struggled to fight against them until they were defeated. After this cultural introduction, dinner was ready, and we had the opportunity to taste a few dishes with different flavors and textures, giving us a picture of their mixed culture. We tasted an arid place with sweet people who like to cook with palm honey, bananas and guava, and, on the other hand, they shared spicy sauces, strong goat cheese and sugar cane rum to lighten up the event.

Beyond that, the night brought us not just a little piece of Canary Island gastronomy but also an artisanal clay pin that will travel back home with each one of us.





Workshop- Diary Notes Day 4 (Miguel):

Eco building and Italian night

In the morning of day 4 we had a theoretical seminar about eco-building and we concluded that we need to answer 3 questions to successfully eco-build:

- What do we really need?
- What do we really want?
- What do we have around us?

Natural building is not about the right way. There are many options and you can even combine natural materials with some cement.

It's more about being in contact with the materials and the whole process, like a spiritual connection. The feeling of being productive is what counts.

Humans should work as long as they feel good, and not just a matter of hours.

The materials we used were straw and clay mixed with water. The process of building needed 3 groups, one to soak the straw in the mixture, other to fit the straw in the walls, and the other to move up the wood forms that held the walls, because straw needs to be structured as it is not as strong and moldable as cob. This property gives less freedom to the workers but on the positive side, it's less hard on your hands.

The groups were working as a big organism and everyone changed their position so they could experience and learn as much as possible.

The sensations working with our hands is fantastic because you can feel all the materials of your building and everything passes through your hands. When you mix everything and finish your building you can feel in your walls what you did.

During the afternoon we went for a hike in the mountains. The goal was to reach the spring where they take the water to drink and to water the plants. It took us about one hour and a half, but it was worth the effort because the place was really beautiful and wild. After a while we returned home through a different path, this time we followed the dry river, where we had to jump from boulder to boulder until we reached a path that took us up.

When we returned there was some delicious Italian pasta waiting for us, as well as a zucchini and cheese salad. For desert we ate a fruit salad and after dinner we relaxed after a long day listening to some cultural music.



DAY 5

The day's topic was **Energy autonomy from renewable sources** and the morning session was full of practical and theoretical knowledge on how to set up off-grid solar energy systems for home applications. The day started with some physical exercise to wake up and energize the body fluids and the brain activity. The main trainer **Kostas Latoufis** from Nea Guinea collective was supported by **Alex Filippidis** from SEYN and **Yorgos Theodorakis** from UFiT in providing a participatory workshop that included theoretical knowledge on the different off-grid energy systems (solar, wind, hydro, hybrid), a seminar on how to calculate your off-grid energy needs in order to set up the most appropriate system, and a hands-on installation workshop on how to set up a small scale home solar power system with Photovoltaics.

After lunch, participants were involved in a social engagement activity as they visited the nearby Gionati beach and organized a voluntary clean up. The participants gathered about 30 large garbage bags and a great intrinsic reward for doing something very useful for the local society. For dinner, the Portuguese team had prepared a gastronomic fiesta and a small presentation of their activities and customs. The night closed with some wonderful live traditional music from Portugal, Lithuania and Greece.



Training Report #5

Energy Autonomy from renewable sources: KOSTAS LATOUFIS (Nea Guinea – www.neaguinea.org)

'Nea Guinea' has been organizing small scale off grid renewable energy workshops since 2009 and has empowered many people with the knowledge of harnessing power from the wind, flowing water and the sun. During the SUSTRARES project, aspects of off-grid renewable energy systems were covered in an introductory presentation emphasizing on different applications such as solar panels, solar pumps, wind and hydro turbines. The participants had a chance to become acquainted with the basic concepts behind electricity and renewable energy system components such as inverters, charge controllers, batteries etc.

Locally manufactured small wind and hydro turbines were discussed as these machines can be constructed with the use of common materials, simple manufacturing techniques and basic tools, providing a low cost small wind or hydro turbine that anyone can build. Hundreds of homemade small wind turbines have been constructed worldwide using these designs, and have proven to be robust, efficient, easy to maintain and quick to repair. Typical applications of locally manufactured small wind and hydro turbines are development projects such as electrification of village communities in the global south, educational projects in universities and schools and sustainability projects such as renewable energy electrification of eco-villages.

Finally, the operational principles of solar panels were presented, which lead up to a typical system design and the practical workshop of the project. This included the complete setup and installation of a small off-grid solar system using solar panel frames, solar panels, a charge controller, batteries, and inverter, cable and fuses.





Workshop- Diary Notes Day 5 (Alex)

Energy, beach clean-up and Portuguese night

Day 5. has been very sunny, hence perfect for a day all about energy. Kostas from Nea Guinea, Alex from SEYN – Sustainable Energy Youth Network and Yorgos from UfiT (Urban Flat in Transition) presented various aspects regarding energy combining theory and practice. An overview of various systems set ups was initially presented based on DIY wind turbines, solar, hydro, hybrid systems and solar pumps installed by Nea Guinea in various locations in Greece and abroad. In order all participants understand how they can use an off grid system, each different component of a typical off grid energy system was described such as solar panels or wind turbine, chargers, batteries, inverters, dumb loads and more.

Following the basic theory, Yorgos presented a different solar dehydrator in the location and then participants were invited to design a typical off grid system, by estimating their consumption, sizing the needed battery banks and choosing the equipment needed. In parallel, a group of participants collectively built the frame to support the solar panels, installed the solar panels and prepared all the equipment for assembly. In the end of the design session, all participants were trained into actually connecting all different parts together and got a hands on experience from design to installation of this 800W off grid system.

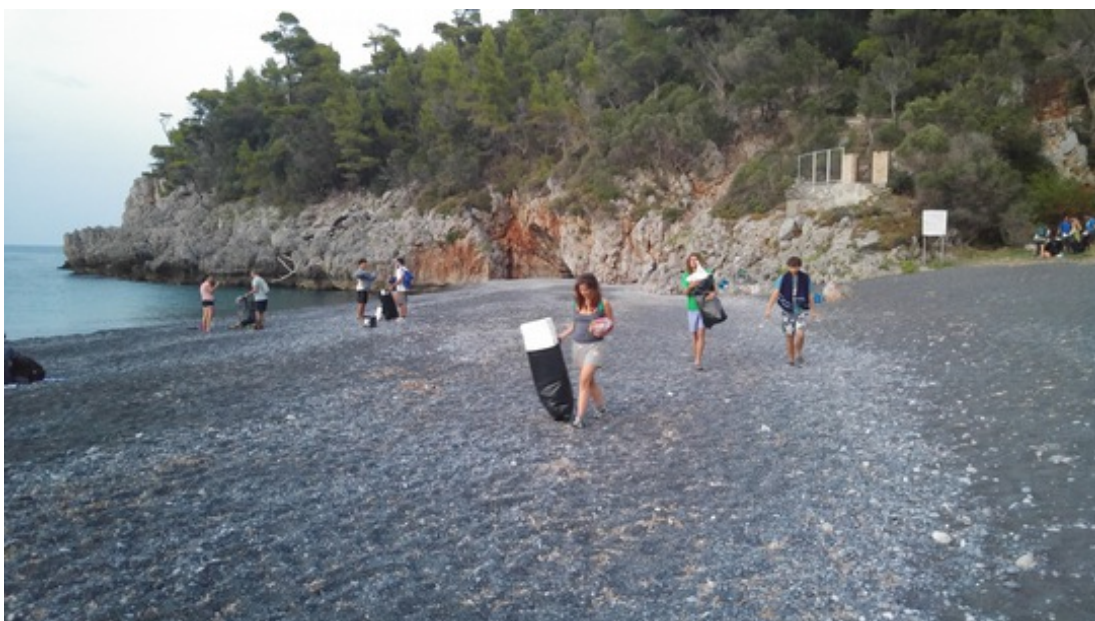
The education methods used were a combination of traditional approach through presentations and explaining the theory behind an off grid energy system and innovative ones through designing and installing a real system on location where everyone could see all stages of installation and operation through a highly interactive session with all trainers. In the afternoon, all teams moved to the nearby beach called Gionati, to both get some fun time swimming and enjoying the natural beauties of the area but also collectively clean the beach with great energy and smile. In this way, they supported the local community and environment in a practical way. 15 bags of trash were collected and transport for few kilometres through the beautiful paths to be properly disposed.

This long day full of knowledge, practice and fun was completed by a great Portuguese themed night where apart from having the chance to taste delicious Portuguese flavours. We tasted “tremocos” (lupin), vegetables “a bras” with tomatoes and onion salad, “migas” with vegetarian choricos and “arroz doce” (sweet rice) for dessert. Our Portuguese comrades presented also the current struggles against fracking plans on Portuguese coasts and also discussions were held about the various social movements and crisis.

The night closed with our incredible singer from Lithuania, Ugne, sharing with all a great traditional “farmer’s” song, which we all sung in a circle under the moonlight, strengthening the community feeling and energy for the next beautiful day.









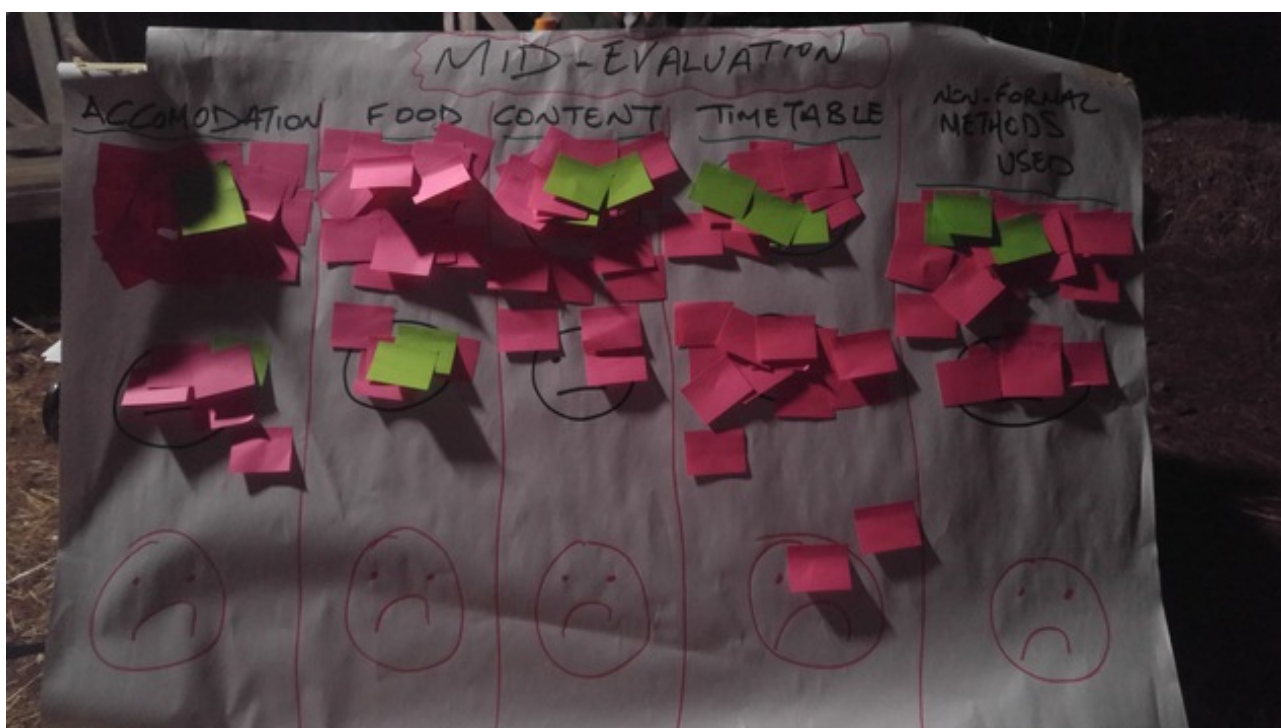


DAY 6

The day started with some stretching exercises and ice-breakers. The topic for the morning session was **self-management of health with herbs and natural remedies** with **Fotini Georgousi** from **Nea Guinea** collective. The trainer first realized an info session followed by an exchange of best practices with participants. The second half of the morning session included a participatory workshop for natural remedy preparation and storage, with the support of **Stella Vourneli** from Stagones crew.

The afternoon session was dedicated to **participatory decision-making** and **community visioning**, where **Michalis Theodoropoulos** from **iliosporoi network** presented a simulation exercise based on the Future Search Conference method. Prior to the simulation participants under the guidance of the trainer, realized a group synchronization exercise based on meditation and visualization techniques that enabled them to get centered, aligned with the group and in harmony with their surrounding environment.

The day finished with a **mid-evaluation session** where participants had the chance to reflect and express their feelings regarding certain aspects of project implementation (programme, accommodation/ food, timetable, non-formal methods used etc). An evaluation board was set up, where youth workers were able to post stickers indicating their reflection on various organizational and thematic issues. Next to the issues three faces were drawn (happy, moderate, unhappy) where participants indicated their preferences on the various topics by posting their stickers.





Training Report #6

Self management of health: FOTINI GEORGOUSI (Nea Guinea - www.neaguinea.org)

There was a brief introduction about practices of health self management and natural medicine throughout human history. We are interested in the herbs, especially the ones which contains particular active principles that interact beneficially with our organism (detoxifying properties, calming, nervous tonics, etc..)

Regarding the herbs, we can use them either *fresh*, keeping the full healing potential, or *dry* with increased concentration of the active substances. (Tip: we should pay attention to the lifestage of the plant that we are harvesting (flowering, vegetative growth), as well as the time of the day we harvest (before the sunrise for more active effects))

Herbs should be dried in the shortest timeframe possible, in order to preserve the most principles, in a dark, well ventilated room. (Tip: when buying dried plant, we should look for material that looks as similar as the fresh plant).

Three different extraction methods were presented:

Water: the universal solvent. You can either make **infusions** (like a regular cup of tea) or **decoction** (let the solution boil for 10 to 30 minutes). Water extractions have a short lifespan and should be consumed within 24h after preparation. When working with fresh plant material, we should use an average ratio of 1:10 (plant/water weight), whereas with dry we should use a 1:25 ratio.

Alcohol: great to extract volatiles, pigments and alkaloids. We should always use high volume ethyl alcohol (96*), either pure or diluted in water, when preparing the **tinctures**. For different plant species and extracted substances we should consider different alcohol volume solutions. The tinctures are very concentrated and can last for more than 1 year after preparation. Considering the ratios for extraction, we should work with a 1:2 weight ratio for fresh material and a 1:4 for dry herbs. The tinctures should be prepared in closed glass jars, with constant mixing and they will be ready in 2 – 3 weeks time.

Oil: in this case we should always consider the properties of the oil solvent we are using (there are “heavier” oils, like olive or coconut oil, and “lighter”, more sensitive oils like sunflower or sesame oil). The oils are organic solvents and they are subject to their own degradation processes, through metal, air and sunlight oxidation. There are three main oil extraction methods: **cold extractions** – they take a longer extraction time but they also retain most of the oil natural properties and are able to last longer; **sun extractions** – we prepare the oil in a closed, air tight container and leave it sitting for a month in the sun, but avoiding the light to enter the jar, in order to slowly heat the oil and accelerate the extraction; **hot water bath (Bain Marie)** - the most aggressive extraction but also the fastest. We place the jars with the oil covered herbs in a pot with boiling water and leave it for around 30min to 2 hours extracting. The result will be a concentrated preparation that can be immediately used.

After we talked about the theory of extractions, we took a tour around the gardens to see

some examples of the kind of medicinal plants growing in the property and what are their main uses (Rosemary, Calendula, Clary Sage, Passiflora, Jasmin, ...). After this small walk we had time to actually prepare some of these extractions using different methods: chilli pepper oil, calendula oil and arnica tincture.

For more information on plant uses and cultivation: www.pfaf.org



Training Report #7

MEDICINAL HERBS AND NATURAL REMEDIES, with Stella Vourneli (www.stagones.org)

1st Part:

The workshop began with a tour around the herbal gardens. There, the participants took notes on the information given on each herb's medicinal properties, safe use and basic cultivation advice. After that, the participants had the opportunity to touch leaves and feel their texture and to smell flowers and sense their scent. In conclusion, some of the herbs in their dry condition were shown and advice was given about their proper storage.

2nd Part:

At first, information was given about the preparation of ointments, using hand-made oils made with herbs from an organic garden. Then, the necessary utensils and material needed were gathered and described. Advice was given about what to watch out for or what to avoid when purchasing the material and where to get it from. After that, the participants formed four groups and each group, under step-by-step instructions, prepared an ointment for every person in the group. The participants took turns until each one of them helped in the procedure. Then, they put the finished ointment in small jars. They continued by putting labels on the finished remedy. Finally, each participant picked a jar with the ointment made by its group to take back home. The workshop ended with the participants helping clean the utensils used and put everything back at its place.

HEALING OINTMENT RECIPE

Antimicrobial. Beneficial for rashes, cuts, open wounds.

Proportions:

1 part beeswax
5 part St. John's wort oil
Propolis tincture

How to make:

Step 1

Heat the beeswax and oil together over low heat until the beeswax is completely melted.

Step 2

Remove the mixture from heat and pour into small jars.

Step 3

Let it cool and add the propolis tincture.

Step 4

Store in a cool place. It can last for months.



Training Report #8

Community Visioning – MICHALIS THEODOROPOULOS (iliosporoi network, www.iliosporoi.net)

After a short group synchronization exercise in circle, a lecture on participatory decision making and community visioning was realized that ended up with a two-hour simulation exercise based on the Future Search Conference method. Participants split into groups, discussed, brainstormed, planned collaboratively and presented their vision of an ideal community through a role-playing game.



What kind of community do we want?

A simulation of the Future Search Method

This Visioning Exercise is inspired by the Future Search method (<http://www.futuresearch.net/>) of participatory planning.

What is Future Search

The Future Search (FS) method consists of organising participatory visioning and planning meetings that help people to build up a mutual understanding, to agree upon a common ground and to transform their capability for action very quickly¹

A Future Search Workshop (FSW) typically involves 40 to 80 people who share a common purpose and set of questions about a topic. They convene in a meeting and their activity is

¹ The Future Search Workshop (FSW) derived from two models: the German Zukunftswerkstatt (“Workshop of the Future”) which was designed to allow ordinary citizens to participate in urban planning and the North-American Future Search Conference which aimed at accompanying organisations in the search of a common ground on which building a better future (Weisbord M., Janoff S., 2010)

framed into five activities of two to four hours each, 16 to 20 hours in total: to review the past, explore the present, create desired future scenarios, discover common ground, and make action plans.

People adopt FS for three main purposes:

- To create a shared vision and action plan for an organization, network or community
- To enable all stakeholders to act on common ground and take responsibility for their own plans
- To help people implement an existing vision that they have not acted on together

Full attendance, healthy meeting conditions, working across three days (and “two nights”) instead of doing it all in two, and public commitments for follow-up are all details required to organize a successful FS experience. In a nutshell, participants from diverse backgrounds (different stakeholders) work in mixed groups – each a cross-section of the whole – on the past and the future.

Stakeholder groups whose members have a shared perspective work together on the present. Everybody validates the common ground. Action planning employs both stakeholders and self-selected groups. Every task concludes with a whole-group dialogue.

The requirements for FS success are:

1. Get the “whole system in the room”, inviting a significant cross-section of all parties with a stake in the outcome. Interdependent stakeholders should meet who among them have: **Authority** to act on their own; **Resources** of time, money, access and influence; **Expertise** – social, economic, technical – in the topic; **Information** that others need; **Need**, that is to say that they are people who will be affected by the outcome (these words form the acronym **ARE IN**).

2. Explore the “whole elephant” (global context) before seeking to fix any part (local action): There is another way to say this, i.e. get everybody talking about the same world. That means a world that includes every participant’s perceptions. The “whole elephant” refers to an old Sufi tale of six blind men who went to meet an elephant. Each felt a different part. Indeed, in any conversation we are blind to others’ perceptions unless we pool experiences to create a shared reality. Each person thinks alone that the whole is only a larger version of their part. Before learning to see the whole together, you need to “unlearn” your partial vision of the world.

3. Focus on common grounds and future action, not problems and conflicts: in a Future Search, participants are told that their task is finding common ground and planning future action. Problems and conflicts are treated as information, not action items, and people are suggested not try to change each others minds. They are encouraged to express their differences so that everybody knows where they stand, but energy is put into staking out the widest common ground that all can stand on.

4. Have people self-manage their own groups and be responsible for action: A Future Search meeting avoids long speeches, exercises, instruments, or games based on external diagnoses of what the group needs. Self-managing small groups are instead extensively used, where

everybody shares information, interprets it, and decides on action steps. Small group work is implemented to divide up the tasks – using a discussion leader, a recorder, a reporter, and a timekeeper – and to rotate people roles during the meeting. Under these conditions most people will take responsibility for what they learn and what they do from the new learning.



Workshop process sample

STEP 1 – *Introduction*

Facilitator introduces the principle tasks and goals of the workshop.

STEP 2 - *Review the past*

Participants explore key events in the histories of themselves, their community and the world, and present them on three time-lines.

STEP 3 - *Explore the present.*

Trends affecting the community are explored and illustrated by creating a mind map. Groups share what they are proud of and sorry about.

STEP 4 - *Create ideal futures.*

Visions developed in small groups and acted out to everyone. Barriers to the visions identified.

STEP 5 - *Identify common vision*

Shared vision identified, first by small groups and then by everyone. Projects to achieve are defined.

STEP 6 - *Make action plans.*

Projects planned by self-selected action groups. Public commitments to actions are identified and drafted.



EVOIA COMMUNITY VISIONING EXERCISE

What kind of community do we want?

STEP 1

Introduction (5 minutes)

STEP 2 – review the past (Q: what events from the past have shaped you and the world around you? Where do we come from? Highlights and milestones)

Depict landmark dates and events from the past that have affected you as a person and the world around you. Discuss in pairs (interviews), take notes and write titles onto post-it stickers (each person takes note of the other's input). Present the person you interviewed to the plenary. Draw timeline and put stickers on it. (25 minutes)

STEP 3 – explore the present (Q: How past practices have shaped present trends? Which external trends do we have to face? What are we doing about? What you are proud of and sorry about?)

Split into groups of two. Discuss and write on posters (in titles) convivial/ degrowth/ traditional technologies and practices, that societies have followed until the impact of capitalism and how these have affected present trends. Also to write, on a second column on the posters, capitalist practices that have great impact on present trends. Participants share what they are proud of and sorry about. Groups do 2 minute presentations and stick posters on wall. Match common practices. (30 minutes – 20 minutes in groups, 10 minutes presentations)

STEP 4 – create desired future (Q: Where do we want to go? How is the ideal future you envision? What kind of community do we want?)

Ask people to imagine themselves in 2030 in an ideal community. Then to write a letter (1 page) to a friend to describe this ideal future by providing details on society, economy, environment, culture, education, institutions, research and technology. (20 minutes)

STEP 5 – discover common vision (Q: Where do we have common ground and consensus?

What is your common vision for the future of a degrowth society?)

Split into 4 groups and each group develops a narrative based on key concepts involved in the individual letters. Each group takes notes in a concise manner (bullet points and titles), focused on solutions, policies, tools and strategies, trying to establish a common vision for the future. Presentations from groups (5 minutes each group). Draw mindmap. Collection of personal letters. (40 minutes, 20 minutes group work and 20 minutes presentations)

STEP 6 – make action plan (Q: What are the projects, measures and next steps? What tools, strategies and actions will you pursue for community development?)

Plenary discussion to identify strategies and action plans for community development at local, national and international levels. Grouping of common tools and strategies, voting on most favorite action plans.

Needs:

1 facilitator – time keeper

1 assistant

1 rapporteur

1 recorder

Post-it papers

A4 and A3 papers

Markers, pens

1 camera to record

duck-tape





DAY 7

The morning session was devoted to organic waste management. Fotini Gergousi from Nea Guinea realized a semi-theoretical, semi-practical workshop on the principles of organic waste management (food, human) and an easy guide on how to make compost from food leftovers and green material from your garden. A skill necessary for off-grid communities, where organic waste is valuable resource for green manure, farming and even heating. The trainer with the help of the participants gathered all necessary green and brown material from the Stagones plot and created an 1 cubic meter compost pile.

The afternoon was a free-time session where participants were free to relax and wonder in the area. Some of them decided to walk to the nearby beach and the rest decided to walk to the nearby Vlachia village, visited the local kafeneio and engaged socially with locals. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to explain the training objectives and activities to the villagers and exchange with them cultural elements and knowledge. During the dinner it was the turn of the Croatian team to cook and present to the rest their customs and culture.





Training Report #9

How to make compost – an easy guide

Compost is the single most important supplement you can give your garden soil.

Composting is a simple way to add nutrient-rich humus which fuels plant growth and restores vitality to depleted soil. It's also free, easy to make and good for the environment.

Composting Benefits

Soil conditioner: With compost, you are creating rich humus for lawn and garden. This adds nutrients to your plants and helps retain moisture in the soil.

Recycles kitchen and yard waste: Composting can divert as much as 30% of household waste away from the garbage can.

Introduces beneficial organisms to the soil: Microscopic organisms in compost help aerate the soil, break down organic material for plant use and ward off plant disease.

Good for the environment: Composting offers a natural alternative to chemical fertilizers.

Reduces landfill waste: Most landfills in Greece are quickly filling up; many have already closed down. One-third of landfill waste is made up of compostable materials.



Hot compost is a quick and easy way to get through your waste.

A hot compost pile can reach temperatures of 49-77 degrees Celsius (120-170 degrees Fahrenheit) in just a few days, and if you get it right, you can compost your organic matter in around four weeks. You can even use these high temperatures to heat your water, home or greenhouse. The temperature of the pile must be monitored because remaining at a temperature of 65 degrees Celsius or higher for even just a few hours, will kill beneficial

microorganisms that add to your compost.

What you will need

Equal parts green and brown materials, all shredded to a small size. Fresh grass clippings and dried shredded leaves work great for your first effort because they're already in small pieces, and the grass clippings are full of moisture.

What to Compost

Generally, composting ingredients can be divided into two categories: Brown Materials such as leaves, hay, straw and paper and Green materials such as grass clippings, fresh manure, vegetable trimmings and most green plant cuttings.

Browns

- leaves
- hay & straw
- paper & cardboard
- woody prunings
- eggshells
- tea bags
- sawdust

Greens

- vegetable peelings
- fruit peelings
- grass clippings
- coffee grounds
- fresh green manure
- green plant cuttings
- annual weeds
- young hedge trimmings

There are a number of materials that you should keep out of your compost pile.

Adding some items, like vegetable fats and dairy products will simply slow down the composting process by excluding the oxygen that helpful organisms need to do their job. If you add these materials you will still have usable compost, it will just take much longer.

Adding other materials to your pile is simply dangerous because of the chance of poisoning or disease. Human and pet feces, chemically or pressure treated wood or sawdust, and meat and animal fats fall into this category and should never be added to your compost pile.

Don't Add

- meat & bones
- poultry & fish
- fatty food waste
- whole eggs
- dairy products

- human & pet feces
- pernicious weeds
- treated wood



Quick How-to Guide

Make sure all organic matter is chopped into small pieces and mix together the green and brown materials well. Add in around a shovelful of already made compost or soil, which will be full of microorganisms to jump-start the process.

As you build the pile, sprinkle with some water to keep the organic matter moist. It needs to be the consistency of a wrung-out sponge.

Your compost pile needs to be around one cubic meter in size. Any larger than one and a half cubic meters, will mean moisture and heat levels are wrong for speedy decomposition. At this stage you could cover the pile with a breathable tarp to maintain moisture, but this isn't necessary.

Over the next month you will need to monitor and record the daily temperature of the pile with a compost thermometer. Between one and five days, the temperature should rise, between 49 and 77 degrees Celsius. The temperature will depend on moisture levels, the size of your organic matter and the size of your pile.

Once the temperature cools to below 43 degrees Celsius, which is usually between four and seven days, you will need to turn over the organic matter to introduce oxygen. This will then heat the pile back up.

Every-time you turn the compost, make sure you bring the pile's exterior material into the interior. This enables all material to be evenly broken down. Water can be added to maintain

the correct moisture levels, but be liberal, as the pile will cool if it is too moist.

Continue monitoring and recording temperatures everyday, and the turn the compost every four to five days, when the temperature drops below 43 degrees Celsius. Continue moistening if needed. After around 14 days, the compost will no longer be recognisable. After one month, you should have turned the pile four times.

By this point, most of the pile will be a dark, crumbly compost and the temperature will decrease below 29 degrees Celsius.

Now you must let the compost 'cure' for a couple of weeks before you can use it.



Workshop- Diary Notes Day 7 (Margaret O.)

Waste Management and Croatian Culture

Modern life produces unbelievable amounts of waste. We all know about recycling, but another valuable way to reduce waste is to compost organic material, and turn it into valuable rich soil. Fruit and vegetable scraps, lawn clippings, tree prunings, dried leaves, animal manure, coffee grounds, egg shells, and much more can be seen not as waste, but as valuable resources. Especially in areas with soil erosion, compost is a great way to kickstart regenerating soils and building more complex ecosystems. Today, we learned the theory and practice of composting.

Composting is a simple skill that anyone can do. Depending where you live – whether it's in an urban apartment or on a farm – there are different techniques you can use to compost plant materials and animal waste. We learned how to make a cubic meter hot compost pile that, with some maintenance, will decompose into soil in only 4 weeks. In untended nature, the same processes of decomposition take 6 months to a year. Our compost pile was built over a shallow hole lined with branches to let the pile drain and so it won't rot. We then layered carbon rich brown material like straw and dried leaves with nitrogen rich green material like kitchen scraps and weeds pulled from the garden. It's important not to put fatty or fried foods, dairy or meat, since the oils will block the air flow, and rodents are attracted to these foods. With the proper ratio between carbon and nitrogen, the proper moisture level and oxygen flow, microbial life will work quickly and efficiently to break down all the organic material, heating the pile to over 65 degrees Celsius in the process!

We learned how to build the most effective pile, how to maintain it, and how to troubleshoot problems. The 30 of us worked together, pulling weeds, wetting straw, and layering the pile. We saw how composting is an easy way for individuals, families, and farmers to help the land recover from exploitative chemical-based industrial agriculture, which destroys soils and kills the life in them. Building compost is a simple and manageable way to regenerate soils and create healthier, organic food. Even cement urban areas can grow food in pots, on rooftops, in gardens, etc, using compost as the soil. Fertilizers are made in destructive ways, contain only several elements, and are devoid of life. Compost provides more benefits to plants and insects, creates stronger and more complex biological communities, and is a living community in which diverse life continues to grow and reproduce itself. All we have to do is give it a good start, by changing the way we think about waste.

After a productive morning of composting and a healthy lunch, about 20 of us embarked on an afternoon walk to the nearby town of Vlachia for some beer on a patio overlooking the beautiful Aegean Sea. From there, we walked 3km down the winding paved road to a beach. Only one car passed us. A few locals were resting at the small food stand or on the black stone beach. We camped out on the far side and swam out to some rocks protruding from the water. It was a silly afternoon of diving, international swim competition, campfire, and exploring the coast. It was dark by the time we left the beach stand and walked home under the light of the full moon.

A delicious Croatian dinner awaited us at our camp: root vegetable stew, “popetchki” (vegetable fritters) and salad, with “buchnica” and “shtrukli” (pumpkin and cheese pasteries) for dessert. After all the bellies were filled, the musically inclined played into the night while others laughed and played clapping games and other circle games.





DAY 8

The whole day was originally dedicated in a social engagement activity, where participants would collectively paint the internal walls of the old Vlachia elementary school. The school has been closed for about 10 years but iliosporoi network and Stagones have proposed its reopening with children from the sustainability transition initiatives of the area. The organizers thought that engaging the participants in painting the local school would support visibility and acceptability, and would make a positive impact for the local village. Unfortunately, due to internal issues of the City Council that is responsible for the building of the school, we were not given permission to enter and paint.

As such, the participants had a construction session back at the Stagones plot, tested and improved the DIY appliances they had created the previous days. They also found some time for relaxing and playing music. During the afternoon participants organized an official partner presentation session that paved the way for the networking session of the next day.

At night the German delegation prepared some traditional dishes, imposed to all participants to sign a waiver of responsibility in case they fall sick from the food served :) and live music followed with songs from many countries.







DAY 9

The morning session was devoted to food cultivation and self-sufficiency, from seed banks and community supported agriculture, to agroecology and urban orchards. **Antonis Diamantidis** from **Perivoli Korinthou**, an experienced farmer and trainer, presented the wider framework of food security and self-sufficiency (from saving seed to distributing without intermediaries), the ways people can feed themselves through organic farming and how they have set up a fair trade scheme to sell their products abroad directly to consumers. Specific attention was given to practical challenges, limitations and opportunities facing the younger generation of organic farmers in Greece, concerning alternative farming practices (permaculture, natural farming and biodynamic agriculture) and trust-based direct relationships (community supported agriculture) with consumers.

Following **Yorgos Psychas** (iliosporoi network) presented two initiatives of collective organic orchards, an urban one in Athens where park (Navarinou) was created by reclaiming a public parking lot, and one in the outskirts of Thessaloniki (PERKA). Finally, **Yorgos Theodorakis** (UFiT) presented their urban food self-sufficiency project at a flat level. An exchange of best practices followed with all participants sharing experiences from their countries.

During the afternoon “training of trainers” session, an experiential learning simulation exercise was realized by **Michalis Theodoropoulos** (iliosporoi network) that evoked senses, feelings and a strong bond among the participants. It was a very strong experience that made all participants feel in content. At night, it was time for the Greek fiesta. The hosts prepared a big variety of traditional, vegetarian dishes and the live band of Stagones and friends kept the fire burning with Greek traditional and folklore songs.



Training Report #10

Agroecology: an antidote to the Greek financial crisis, ANTONIS DIAMANTIDIS, member of Corinthian Orchard (Perivoli Korinthou).

Greek farming has failed to provide healthy and diverse sustenance for the country's population while at the same time protecting soils, water and biodiversity for future generations. Causes of this failure are many – lack of political will, European farming subsidies, increased mechanisation, the systematic eradication of traditional seed varieties, export oriented production, complete lack of educational support for farmers and a large urban population (over 60%) largely oblivious to the quality and origin of its food are but a few.

Five years of financial colonisation make farming in Greece ever more difficult creating the biggest threat to the resilience of our food system. Over the last two years we have gone through 48 amendments to the tax system! Taxes on land, water, electricity, transport and communication have all increased. Land grabbing by foreign multinationals, for example Eldorado Gold from Canada, cheap imported food and decimated incomes all undermine the work of farmers.

Corinthian Orchard is an informal network of young and old agroecological farmers around Corinth, working through food and farming to address this crisis. We collectively grow and market grapes, oranges, lemons, mandarins, apricots, figs, pomegranates, wheat, vegetables and herbs. We also produce lemonade, grape syrup, resins, sundried tomatoes, tomato sauce, herb tinctures and more. By cultivating and healing the land we cultivate and heal ourselves. Respect for the people, respect for the earth and fair distribution of the surplus and abundance the Earth provides are the ethical principles that brought us together.

We are united in action, action based on reflecting on our reality and wanting to transform it. We work the land and experiment together, we believe that every plant and animal under our care deserves to be given the conditions to fulfill its intrinsic characteristics and complete its life circle. We keep, use and exchange traditional varieties of seeds, an action considered illegal in most of Europe. We try to meet with the people that eat our produce to build connections, trust and to exchange knowledge. To achieve this we created a community supported agriculture scheme that provides 30 families in Athens with fresh, local vegetables and fruit all year round. We also participate in organic farmers markets, the no-intermediary food movement and many other initiatives supporting agroecology.

We would like to make an open call to all readers: *meet the people that grow your food!* Save from growing your own, this is the best way to start reconnecting with yourself, your food, the land, its people and nature.... And when in doubt, smile.



Training Report #11

Experiential Learning Simulation Exercise, by MICHALIS THEODOROPOULOS (iliosporoi network)

In the beginning the participants formed a circle and started massaging the front person on the shoulders. Then the circle and the participants changed direction (by having a 180 degree turn) so that they rub the shoulders of the other person sitting next to them.

Then participants were split into two groups, in lines facing each other. Group A closes their eyes and keep their hands on their sides, elbows at 90 degrees and palms facing up. Group B then mingles and each participant takes a different position, forming again a line facing Group A. Group B participants then put their palms facing down, on top of the palms of their partner in Group A.

The facilitator then asks participants of Group A (that have their eyes closed) to feel and explore the hands of participants from Group B.

The facilitator asks then Group B to mingle again and participants to take different positions. One the line is formed, the facilitator asks Group A to open their eyes, and people from Group B to express in one word the feeling- experience they received from the exploration of their hands from Group A participants.

When each participant from Group B speaks, then group A again closes their eyes. Participants of Group B mingle again and choose the same partner from Group A from the previous part of the exercise. Group B also closes their eyes.

Now the palms of Group A participants face down, elbows at 90 degrees, and the palms of Group B face up and feel- explore the palms of their Group A partners. Participants are asked, if they feel comfortable, to let the exploration extend to arms and shoulders.

The facilitator then asks participants from Group A to express in one word the feeling they received and then everybody opens their eyes to celebrate and share thoughts.





DAY 10

The last day of the seminar was packed. Full of emotions, full of useful information for follow projects, and some real-time planning of the steps ahead. The morning session was dedicated to **social engagement** and **cooperative entrepreneurship**. **Alex Filippidis**, from **Sustainable Energy Youth Network (SEYN)** presented the aims of the European network and its activities so far, along with concrete examples of energy cooperatives throughout Europe that thrive. An exchange of best practices followed with participants sharing experiences from their own countries.

The following session was devoted to **networking, follow up projects and steps ahead**. **Gualter Baptista** from **Transition Town Witzenhausen**, organized a tutorial of the integrated co-munity.net platform that will be used for communication and collaboration among participants, but also for dissemination and networking purposes. Project partners created <https://co-munity.net/sustrares> for documenting and disseminating project results but also for co-planning and co-writing proposals for future projects. During the break, the project documentation team gathered in plenary to organize and present the documented material in the website.

During the afternoon session, Ms **Anastasia Filini**, Coordinator of the Hellenic National Agency of Erasmus+: Youth in Action, presented an **info session** on the **Erasmus+ Programme** and **YouthPass** to the participants. Following, **Michalis Theodoropoulos** from iliosporoi network organized a **brainstorming session** on the **skills** and **competencies** that participants identified as enhanced by this training course. Participants elaborated on two separate lists of skills and competencies that were included in the **YouthPass Certificates** that were issued to them.

The closing session of the SUSTRARES Training Course was the **final evaluation**. After a short reflection and expression of gratitude on behalf of the hosts, the participants were given a detailed two-page evaluation questionnaire to fill in. They were asked to provide sincere and unbiased evaluation of all project aspects (organization, programme, themes, methods, accommodation, food, timetable, trainers) and enough time to fill it in. Then in plenary, each and everyone of the participants expressed their feelings and feedback for this training. The emotions were very strong and considering from the positive feedback this training proved to be an once in a lifetime experience for many participants, and for the absolute majority of them a training experience that exceeded their expectations.





LEARNING METHODS/ TRAINING OUTCOMES

Many of the youth workers that participated in the training course were already active in sustainability issues. Many of them are planning to continue future involvement in such topics on professional or voluntary capacities. This means that the know-how acquired by youth workers and diffused among their contemporaries, as a follow up to this mobility, will help constitute a group of skilled local people who will be able to create or support future initiatives and projects related to sustainability transition in their localities.

In fact, youth workers are aware of the necessities of their respective localities, but they sometimes lack the basic skills for the implementation of active projects, mainly because they cannot get appropriate training. As such, SUSTRARES provided capacity building to youth workers so that they can become a local 'motor' for triggering and promoting sustainability transition and active citizenship initiatives at their local/regional/ national level.

To actively participate in today's changing world, youth workers need many skills, including the ability to be adaptable, flexible, cooperative, and capable of critical thinking. These competencies, often called 'soft' skills, can be acquired through non-formal learning, as well as through active participation in Sustainability Transition Initiatives. The project partners strongly believe and stressed out with the realization of this training course that non-formal/informal education and experiential training are key tools for NGOs and associations to empower youth workers, encourage active citizenship and intercultural understanding in the context of sustainability transition and social justice.

Active participation in sustainability transition is not only about understanding your status in society, but also about acting out or molding a new role in society by developing a new narrative and a paradigm shift on sustainability beyond growth. Within youth work, experiential training as a form of non-formal/informal education is a key means to ensuring sustainability transition and is crucial for effective participation in society and the employment market.

In order to act, youth workers must learn how to access and collect information, how to understand and judge it, how to form an opinion and how to have the communication skills to make their message understood. As such, SUSTRARES enhanced their competencies, such as the ability to organize their own learning (learning to learn), to effectively manage time and information, to be pro-active, to have a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, be creative and innovative, work in groups and collaborate, deal with diversity, and turn ideas into actions.

The youth worker mobility gave project partners the opportunity to engage participants in an intensive and participatory learning process that provided them with useful (soft and hard) skills and enabled them to get actively involved in a non-formal educational process for training sustainability trainers and multipliers at local/ national levels. Through a combination of info sessions and presentations, debates, role plays, simulations, energizers, team building exercises, seminars and participatory workshops, outdoor and social engagement activities, youth workers were able to develop skills and competencies on

intercultural training for sustainability, including but not limited to: group dynamics management, team work, deliberation, leadership, self-awareness, analytical and creative thinking, visioning and participatory planning, project management and conflict resolution, monitoring and evaluation. That will contribute to their personal and socio-educational development and will potentially improve their employment prospects.

Project partners foresee that after SUSTRARES realization, youth workers will be able to undertake sustainability transition initiatives, develop sustainable lifestyles and create their own employment opportunities. In the long term, project partners foresee a behavioral shift on behalf of the participants towards more sustainable and resilient patterns, an enhanced ability to communicate in different environments, increased confidence and feeling/showing empathy.

Moreover, SUSTRARES provided valuable knowledge and practical everyday skills for their professional development regarding energy autonomy from renewable sources, natural housing, waste management, food self-sufficiency, agro-ecology, health self-management, participatory decision making, and cooperative entrepreneurship issues. As a catalyst for change operating in an intercultural environment, the project partners give non-formal education and experiential training high priority in order to help young people acquire the necessary skills and competencies to respond successfully to change and to increase their possibilities to play an active role in shaping society and their realities.

Project partners used Youthpass for the certification and recognition of the skills and competencies acquired by participants. From the very beginning of the project, the project coordinator informed all youth workers and trainers that they were individually entitled to receive a Youthpass Certificate and disseminated the YouthPass Guide prior to the youth worker mobility. An info session towards the end of the training course provided participants with all the necessary provisions in order to apply for a YouthPass Certificate and enabled them to reflect more consciously on the acquired skills and competencies.



•SUSTRARES•



- Join a European network of trainers, youth workers, activists, practitioners and researchers.
- Get trained on self-sufficiency issues, socio-ecological transformation and regeneration practices, DIY and convivial applications
- Visit vibrant sustainability transition initiatives.
- Build your social, professional and entrepreneurial skills.
- Empower your peers and get inspired from becoming the change.

Training modules: energy autonomy with renewable energy sources, agro-ecology, natural building, waste management, food self-sufficiency, self-management of health, participatory decision making and visioning, non-formal education methods/ training of trainers, social engagement, cooperative entrepreneurship.

Skills addressed: Group management and team work, deliberation, leadership, self-awareness, analytical and creative thinking, participatory planning, project management and conflict resolution, monitoring and evaluation, be adaptable, flexible, and communicative.

Competencies enhanced: ability to organize own learning (learning to learn), effectively manage time and information, be pro-active, have a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, be creative and innovative, work in groups and collaborate, deal with diversity, and turn ideas into actions.

SUSTRARES was a successful youth worker mobility (training course) funded by the Erasmus+ Programme and organized by **ILIOSPOROI** network in Greece during September 2016.

As a follow up, **SUSTRARES** project partners and participants decided to expand the partnership as a EU wide network of collaboration, skill development, and exchange of knowledge and best practices. The network is open to individuals and collectives, organizations, and sustainability transition initiatives.

SUSTRARES partners will submit a proposal for a contact making seminar in order to set up and expand the network on 26 April 2017. The seminar will be realized in *Esporas Del Sol* Sustainability Transition Hub in Vlachia, Evia, Greece, during the last ten days of August 2017.

If you wish to join **SUSTRARES NET** and take part in the planned contact making seminar please send us an email: iliosporoi@yahoo.gr by the 5th of April 2017.

