

ONE GENERATION PLANTS THE TREES, ANOTHER GETS THE SHADE.



A LITTLE HALLOWEEN PARTY NEVER KILLED NOBODY



FROM BOTTLES TO SAILING BOAT! 5 STEPS HOW TO REACH THAT!

KALAMATA THE CITY OF A THOUSAND FACES



READY TO RECYCLE

MUST VISIT SIGHTS IN PELOPONNESE!



LOCALS HOSPITALITY

Who are we?

The planet is drowning in the most useful material ever invented. We can see it everywhere, everyday, with everyone. There is too much plastic! The problem is not only in pollution caused by plastic products, but also in the lack of physical exercise in community and youth. So what are we going to do about it? We can build boat from plastic bottles. This idea was born last year, in Kalamata. This crazy idea has come true and here we are, 14 volunteers from 8 different European countries – Slovakia, Poland, Estonia, France, Spanish, Portugal, Romania and Italy. We participate on project called Bottles2Boats. The Project Bottles2Boats proposes a solution for the excessive use of plastic bottles. The volunteering team, in 10 days, transforms plastic bottles into optimist- type sailing boat. The optimist is small single-handed sailing boat for use by children, the maximum weight for the use of this boat is 65 kilograms. The bottles in this recycling program are brought to the project by local schoolchildren, who bring the bottles from their homes and from the nature. Bottles are then turned into a boat and later, the children who participated in sorting waste, will get free sailing lessons in return, which will also increase the amount of their physical exercise. We worked hard, we had some difficulties and changes in the boat-building process, but we made it and our boat, called JUMBO, was born. Friday, 8th of November was our big day. It was the presentation day of our boat, when it first time sailed on the Mediterranean Sea. Locals could come and watch the boat and also take part in activities: bottle shredding and net-making.

Who are we?

The boat will go to the sailing club, where it will be used for approximately 10 years. Bottles2Boats or B2B is a project of the youth and education organization, K.A.N.E. (Social Youth Development) and R.A.D.I.Ka.I.A, which stands for Recycling Awareness Design Innovation Kalamata Association - two organizations working in collaboration to improve the city of Kalamata. This year was the second time the project was held. The aim of this project is to raise awareness of the importance of sorting and reducing plastic waste, not only amongst volunteers, but also locals. The project hopes that the bottle shredding and looming processes would be taken to the national educational system and hence more people would be participants. The project could also be developed further – instead of using only the nets, next time the organisers proposed to use flakes, produced by cycling on an upcycled bicycle, and then, more different types of plastic could be used. Maybe there will be new techniques invented, which would make the boat-building process more effective. Right now, the polyester and fiberglass are brand new, but in the future, with the right equipment, maybe they could be made out of recycled bottles, which would make the carbon footprint of this project even smaller. Recycling turns waste into other things, which is like magic. We believe that recycling should be fun. It should be innovative, interesting, playful, educational a rewarding too. (Adela, Johanna)



KALAMATA

Have you ever thought about visiting Kalamata? I want to tell you about my experience here and I strongly recommend you this beautiful city in Greece. Kalamata is about much sun, good energy and positive people, with a mediterranean climate. There are a lot of reasons to visit it and I will give you some of them. First I want to tell you about the Kalamata Municipal Railway Park which is very funny and has trains for little children and they can make photos, explore the places etc.

KALAMATA

If you love Kayak here is the perfect opportunity to make this, on a beautiful river, in a quiet area. For that ones how want adrenalin is a special plan dedicate for the hiking above Kalamata and also can parachute from the mountain Taygetos. If you love sun, you can get bronzed to the beach which is very close to the road. In the evening is very nice to walk in the Kalamata Historic Center who has a lot of shops and restaurants. (Ana)

Educational circle of recycling

The interview with Anna Charalampous, from the organisation R.A.D.I.Ka.A. that stands for Recycling, Awareness, Design, Innovation, Kalamata, Association. An association registered in Stockholm, Sweden and functioning here in Greece.

What are the objectives of Radikala?

Our main aim is centered on the educational circle of recycling and this is a five fold aim with a five step boat building process.

1. Environmental awareness, this process begins in school and other local establishments, they help us collecting the plastic bottles and we have specific collection bins so they are informed of the program Bottles2Boats and they take the bottles specifically for this use, for the program.
2. Physical activity, from the use of the plastic shredders and also from the products, in this case, a sailboat. We believe that we should upcycle the equipment to build something that will promote exercise and physical activity.
3. Innovative recycling, which is the use of the plastic shredders and the looms that we customize so that we can upcycle the material into nets and use them to build the sailboats.
4. Upcycled material, it is in the use of bottles to the sailboat and it can be used for sports and for training purposes.
5. Reward for the participation of these students and establishments, all the participants in the program who collect the bottles. When the bottles are transformed into boats, they can be used for free sailing lessons in the sailing club of Kalamata, Aeolos.

How did you have the idea of Bottles to Boats? What are the goals of this project?

The idea came from the problem of plastic waste that we see everywhere and most of it ends up in the sea. And here in Kalamata there is a lack of environmental awareness in the youth and society, and we hope to change that, as well as encourage physical activity and exercise in the youth which is another problem.

What will you do after the inauguration of the boats?

After the presentation, we do hope that in the future we will be able to branch out and build not just sailboats but some other products that can be in recycled materials and yes, we definitely want to promote this in all schools, organisations and establishments; to everyone, on a local, a national level and also international.

Who are the main sponsors of B2B Project?

Bottles2Boats is a partnership of several organisations and companies. Social youth development K.A.N.E. and R.A.D.I.Ka.A., teamed up to create this program Bottles2Boats. Our main partners are Aeolos, the nautical sports school of Kalamata; Messinian Boats of Antonios Tsoikas; Ergopack Andonia Water, the European Solidarity Corps of Greece; and Erasmus+.

What do they bring to the project?

These organisations are helping us, supporting us, not specifically financially at the moment, but it is more support, knowledge and time. European Solidarity Corps is sending the volunteers to help us with the program. Messinian Boats is helping us with the knowledge of boat making. Aeolos is helping us with knowledge of sailboats for the Optimist Dinghy and also to promote the sailboat to the town of Kalamata and to others who are coming from other parts of Greece. And Andania water is helping us with our material. So we have these partners who are helping us for now, with knowledge and materials and in other forms. Not specifically financially.

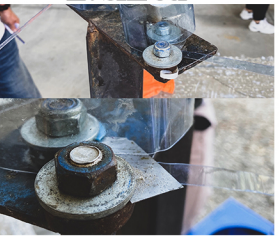
Bottles2Boats process

The boat-building process consist of five steps. Then the voluteer team came to the scene. Some of us cut the bottoms of plastic bottles, which made them fit for shredding on the manual stringing machine, into plastic strings and others built a loom, traditional tool used to make clothes.

1. collect



2. shred



3. weave



4. build



5. sail



Educational circle of recycling

Why is communication important for you? What ways do you use for communication?

In a project like ours, communication is the best way to promote a project. We mainly use social media (Facebook and Instagram), still focus on the youth, giving a lot and learning a lot through social media. Verbal communication and mailing for associations and municipalities is used, as well as awareness-raising activities for children at school.

Why do you think it is important to aware children about the environmental issues we have? And what ways do you use for them discover the project?

It is very important for us that the youth of Kalamata come on site to discover the B2B process and learn about volunteers work techniques. This is the best way for young people to be interested in this project, to see, to learn and to understand. I think it is as important as interesting to work with public schools. Often, students are not really involved in what is said in class. We believe that changes of society start from there. It is encouraging for them to see that something can be done about recycling and reuse of waste. We want to make them actors of their knowledge so they realize that they can act themselves and contribute to recycling at their own level, everyone can do their part. It is "themselves, for themselves, from themselves": it is the circle of education.

Why this partnership with Kane? What are the common objectives of your organisations?

K.A.N.E. is an association for youth and social development. So for us, it's the ideal partner, because our common target is obviously youth. Our goal is to promote better social development, through informal education and awareness of sustainable development among youth, in order to have a social, environmental and societal impact. We already knew K.A.N.E. because the association has a certain influence in the city, it offers a plurality of activities and programs.

What is the purpose of the event and who is invited?

Yes, we are looking forward to this inauguration, we invited everyone in Kalamata, several representatives of the ministries of the Greek government (Ministry of Youth, Sport, Environment), schools are invited, as well as organisations and sailing clubs and anyone who is interested in sailing. We invited a lot of people from different departments, different areas, they can come to Kalamata and witness the exhibition, the presentation of the boat. Media will be present too. (Colette,Suzie)



Bottles2Boats process

But this time, the loom was used to make plastic nets, which could later be put inside the boat. In order to make one boat, seven nets were needed. Nets were then cut to pieces in the shape of a boat, and were covered with polyester and fiberglass, later also epoxy. Lastly, all the pieces were put together and after drying, the boat was ready to sail.

How to reduce plastic (and why you should?)

As I do almost every day, today I logged in to my Facebook account and started to scroll down in the news feed. Suddenly, a notification popped up. "You have memories to look back on this day", it said. So I pressed the "open" button and saw a TED-Ed video "What really happens to the plastic you throw away - Emma Bryce", about the lives of three plastic bottles, which I had shared 4 years ago. It was about 1500 days ago, when I pressed the "share" button, hoping to bring attention to the importance of sorting plastic and the harmful effects of throwing plastic away. Hoping that others would also share this video and hoping that people would take action. But 4 years later the problem is still here, still existing, increasing and even more topical than before. 4 years later and many people are still doing all they can to drown the planet in trash. Their devotion can, for example, be seen in the plastic cups and bottles thrown on the streets and in the garbage patches in the ocean. Most of the trash is made of plastic. The Great Pacific garbage patch, for example, is estimated to contain at least 79 thousand tonnes of ocean plastic inside an area of 1.6 million square kilometres, (in comparison, this is about 12 times larger than the area of Greece, or 35 times larger than my home country, Estonia). In 2015, the grand total of all plastic ever made was amounted to 8.3 billion metric tons and more than half of it was manufactured in the 21st century. The overproduction of plastic is increasing on an alarming rate and is a great risk for the environment, and in general, to the planet. It is extremely important to divest from (over)using plastic and here are a few tips, how to do that.



1. Bring your own cup

If you are this type of a person who regularly buys coffee to-go, then please invest in a reusable coffee cup or just bring your own mug. This is much better for the environment - in Greece alone, about 000 000 1 cups are thrown away daily, now think about Europe or the world! - and it can be cheaper, too! Many places sell beverages to your own cup with a great discount! Win-win!

2. Drink tap water

In most regions of Europe, including Greece (except some small islands), tap water is potable and totally safe to drink, which means that there is no reason to buy bottled water. In this case, you are basically just buying a bottle and throwing it away some moments later. Buy a reusable bottle and when you need to, refill it!

3. Buy in a bulk/a bigger amount

When possible, try to avoid unnecessary packaging. For example, there is no need to buy bananas in a plastic bag. In some places, it is possible to bring your own containers, which is also a good option. When buying in a bulk seems to weird, you can also try buying a larger amount - instead of buying many 500g packages of pasta, buy one 5kg package which will last more.

If you think that you are only a small creature, whose actions will not matter, please, think again. Your voice matters. Your thoughts matter. Your actions do matter. If you still do not believe it, think about Brexit or the US Elections 2016 - how small was the percentage difference! If those people, who did not vote, would have, the present would definitely be different right now. And the same thing goes with plastic usage! "I don't matter" ... thought 7 billion people. Your actions definitely matter. So start acting towards the greener planet. The time has come. (Johanna)

4. Use soap instead of shower gel

Soap bars are usually packaged in paper, but liquid soaps usually come in plastic. Environmentally speaking, one should prefer bar soaps to liquid ones, as liquid soaps require five times more energy for raw material production and nearly 20 times more energy for packaging production than bar soaps do. Both have the same effect, but bar soaps' carbon footprint is smaller. The choice is yours to make!

5. Sort your waste

A lot of materials are reusable; old products and/or waste can be turned to something new, but new products will have a good quality when the materials come from one certain source. Plastics must not be mixed with glass or with compost, they should be separated. And by waste sorting, you can help to make a difference.

6. Do not consume what you do not need

Many people are tricked to buying something that they do not actually use. It is important to recognize if you need to buy that metal straw or fancy glass jar in order to save the planet, or will you be just as happy without them, too. Producing "eco-friendly" products still takes a lot of energy and you can choose if you want to support it or not.



Bottles 2day Boats 2morrow

It takes at least 450 years for a plastic bottle to completely degrade and in some cases it can even take 1000 years. Plastic pollution is one of the main problems of the modern society and being a problem, it has to be solved - that's how Bottles 2Boats project started. A couple of people understood the negative impact of the plastic bottles on the environment and initiated the process of collecting, cutting, shredding, weaving and transforming it into nets of a boat. It was like working in a little factory and above all, we acquired the ecological thinking which is essential in the recycling process. During the working days, children from schools have been invited to see how it works and with this occasion we tried to make them aware of the bad impact of plastic pollution. At the end, when the boat was ready we could see it sailing and a fulfilling feeling involved all of us! Working with your hand to create something does wonders for your brain, that's what scientists say and they are completely right. And what do you think about doing something productive from plastic waste? I think is even better, am I right? I was impressed the minister of the Environment & Energy himself sent us a message of gratitude for B2B initiative and for our volunteering work. I hope the echo of this project will resonate in all Greece and even in the other countries in order for the people to protect the planet because is ours. (Cristina)



Water or plastic?

Covering more than %70 of the earth's surface, water is the most abundant natural element of them all. %96,5 of this water are seas and oceans spread around the planet sheltering more than 200,000 marine species, who's existence is in critical danger because of human waste and activity. According to the United Nations, at least 800 species worldwide are affected by marine debris, and as much as 80 percent of that litter is plastic. Fish, seabirds, seaturtles and marine mammals are being tangled in plastic debris or are eating it causing suffocation, starvation or drowning resulting into death. It may not look like this, but we depend on the oceans, from the weather and resource point of view, to live. The fact is that, as time passes, we are deteriorating this ecosystem to the point where we are being served fish with a special ingredient: PLASTIC. Each year, from 4,8 to 12,7 million tons of plastic are dumped in the oceans; specialist warn about the possible presence of plastic in our bodies. From this millions of tons, we recognise two big groups: - Macroplastics: between Hawaii and California, covering more than 1,5 million Km2 and weighting around 79,000 tons it is known as the Great Pacific garbage patch, a gigantic floating island formed by visible plastic waste. Microplastics: on the other hand, under the effect of sunlight, the big plastics start to degenerate into smaller and smaller pieces until they become visible only with microscope. The danger of this plastics appears when this ones enter the food chain. There is no known danger of plastic being in our bodies actually, but plastics do have cancer-related substances, so it's better if we keep them away from our meals. Apart from invading the food chain, plastic is also on its way to destroy marine ecosystems: the biggest coral reef known as The Great barrier reef has already encountered plastic long ago and started to die.

Water or plastic?

What plastic is actually doing, apart from polluting, is altering the functionality of marine life. A hungry fish swallows a solid and colourful thing that looks like food. After this meal, the fish feels full. But, what is there to digest in a piece of plastic? Nothing. Here's a confusing situation for the fish: he ate something but feels weak. A week later the fish is found floating on the surface of the sea. The solving of this problem comes down to the origin of it. For the plastic to arrive at the oceans is not hard: it is left laying in the streets waiting for a storm to drag it to the sea. Everyone knows the famous Rs: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. All though recycling sound very good, most of the plastics are not recyclable and does ones that are form part of an expensive recycling process that few companies want to support. So, as much as we follow the three Rs, the plastic is still being made. And there's the origin of the problem: plastic has to stop being manufactured. How is this going to end? No one knows. But one thing has to stay clear: no other problem cares as long as the ones that threaten the environment are not solved. It's the base of the column. It's not about the end of the world, it's about saying goodbye to our modern ways of life: just like all the other species, we will have to adapt to our surroundings. The situation is critical but not catastrophic: we're still on time to transform the waste in to bad and the bad into good if all the grains of sand create a big dune. SMALL STEPS. BIG IMPACT. "There is two worlds on earth: the land and the oceans. Both of them depend on each other. That means that the collaps of one causes the same to the other one". (Thomas)

The Beauty of PELOPONNESE

Roadtripping Peloponnese has been a wonderful adventure. And to do it off season has been even better as I'm usually quite allergic to anything too touristic. To have all these beautiful little towns and villages like Dimititsana, Stoupa, Areopoli, Karoni, Nafplio mostly for ourselves has been a bliss. Very often it felt like time was still and I was walking on an empty movie set. On times accompanied by some cats or old people. Which brings me to something I love about Greece. Old people seem to be enjoying their lives here more than anywhere else. No one is waiting around to die. This is paradise and they just keep on dancing. As much as I love strolling through new towns and villages filled with happy old people, nothing brings me more joy than time in nature, especially in the mountains. So for me the highlights of the trip remain hiking to Akrotiri Tenaro Lighthouse on a full moon night and getting myself on top of Mount Taygetos. Feels good to do something so challenging, especially if it is as rewarding as all the views on Taygetos. It is quite impossible to find the right words to describe this journey. Everyone who has ever hiked a mountain can get close to understanding and anyone who hasn't should go on it. Definitely a good reminder of what a great effort in life can lead to. Feeling high for life has become my constant here in Greece. My adventurous spirit is satisfied. I've danced with locals, drank endless amounts of tsipouro, ate Greece yoghurt and feta cheese, swam in the bluest waters, built a boat, hiked in the moonlight, slept on the beach, met some unforgettable people, laughed until my face hurts again and again, watched thunderstorms, touched the clouds, seen some of the greatest views of my life, visited monasteries, felt the presence of God. Greece, like any other place, is not without faults but this is what I've chosen to take home with me. "To move, to breathe, to fly, to float. To gain all while you give, To roam the roads of lands remote, To travel is to live." -Hans Christian Andersen. (Kertu)



NIGHT LIFE NIGHT LIFE NIGHT LIFE

We already knew that Greece was a country of intense flavours, but we never thought it would be so much. Our first dinner away from home was at Tishoba, a place marked by its simplicity, friendliness and wonderful diversity of dishes. Very traditional flavours, with homemade ecological wine and some vegetarian options. Walking through the historic streets of Kalamata, we go to the Santé café, where we will relax around a shared table, digesting dinner. A cappuccino or a tsipouro, depending on the taste of each one, starts to warm up our evening. We can also opt for the freshness of the various beers you have. Already with the night moving on, the group is divided, some choose to go to the Kytaro, a rock bar, with a multitude of drinks to choose from and a lot of movement, good to start the dawn. The rest of the group opts for the quiet Manam, where music is at everyone's choice, the Kalamatas (typical olives) are delicious and the atmosphere is cozy. With a lively evening, the group meets on Route 66, which everyone talks about, where the music is varied and the atmosphere is festive. After a few typical drinks and more, hunger returns, it's time to go to the Tzimi's, where the pita is good and big. This delight is eaten both at night and during the day, sitting on the wall of the marina and watching the incredible Kalamata sunset. Although Sundays are closed, this is no excuse to stop eating pita, because there are lots of great places to do it. Prices range from €1.80 to €2.50. Already the next day, to relax, an ice cream on the beach, in any of the excellent ice cream parlors there is. Back to building our boat, we take a break in the middle of the morning to drink an espresso from Estrada coffee, 200m from our workplace. And so ends our flavours trip through Kalamata, for the time being. (Manuel)

"[...] So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.", or the essence of travelling by H. Jackson Brown Jr. From the southernmost parts of the region of Mani, at the lighthouse, to the stunning city of Nafplio, the Peloponnese has much to offer. Mountains, beaches, and of course, olive trees, are everywhere. But it is much more than what you ever could imagine. A calming aura emanates from these endless features. A balance between adventure and peace, feeding your soul through your eyes. I had the chance to see all of Nafplio from a small street that overhangs the city, to discover an abandoned building full of graffiti above the beach, where people would come and reconnect with themselves or have parties altogether, to see the shiny castle at night, dominating the city. And to eat pitas, of course! Not only because everyone loves food, but also because we want to discover other cultures and dishes. Off the beaten tracks, you can go down the region of Mani as well, at the lighthouse, and if you feel adventurous, do it at night! You will be able to witness how nature can be powerful. You will experience the strong winds, the way the white light of the moon reflects on the dark-blue sea, and a starry night. I would most definitely recommend it to you! Not so far from the light house is a city, Areopoli, whose sidewalks, roads and houses are all made out of particular stones. It is also important to consider the history of this place. As a matter of fact, a clan ruling the city slowly pushed the Ottoman Empire away from Greece, one city at a time. Additionally, if you want some other stunning views, you could go to Lousios Gorge, a vibrant hiking place in the forest. There lies the monastery of St John the Baptist, which is built against a cliff. And, farther north in the Gorge, there is the Old Philosophou's Monastery, a paradise for cats with also a wonderful view. If you make it so far, you will be rewarded by cuddles for sure! But don't forget to bring some food! Here is a bit of what Greece has to offer, and that is just in the southern parts of the Peloponnese! (Adrien)

On a Halloween night we were invited to a party in youth center. Party was unexpected good as I'm usually very sceptic about Erasmus parties, but the good vibes hit me right when I stepped in. Everything was perfectly decorated. You could clearly see the work put into this by the amazing volunteers of the youth center who we finally had a chance to meet on the party. They thought of everything. On the second floor the "Horror tunnel" surprised me so much: decorations, darkness, strange noises and actors that grab you by the arm or leg... you will come out from there only after some jumpscare and trust me, they worked. But let's go back on the first floor. Vibe was more welcoming, people were wearing spooky costumes and the music made our bodies move in no time. Yeah, the music was perfect for the party, different genres for different people with different liking and what I really appreciated was the possibility for us to choose the songs. Made everybody more involved and motivated to dance. Loads of fun, dancing and socializing everything you could want from the party. Like for the drinks. Personally I prefer the beer, but for who is a cocktail fan the options were not few and all the drink were Halloween themed. Spooky things everywhere. Like all the greatest parties it was closed down by the police which of course didn't mean the end. The enthusiasm was so high to limit himself inside the building. Spooky parade continued on Kalamata's streets and found its end in a pita place early in the morning. (Davide)



More than an EXPERIENCE

For me this project B2B means a lot of sun, in comparison with Romania where now it is a very cold weather. Here I found a very good food, traditional food, good people, beautiful landscapes where you can see in the same place the mountain and the sea. I discovered a lot of things and I'm coming back with more knowledge. #B2B is a unique experience where I developed myself. (Ana)

I'm eternally grateful for B2B project that gave me the chance to come and discover Greece. Month here has thought me so much and fed my soul on each step. First of all to live here in city of Kalamata is to be surrounded by mountains and the sea, to be able to welcome and say good bye to the sun on several rooftops each day, to explore abandoned buildings and endless piles of trash and to find beauty in this chaos. To wonder the streets and realize, cats are kings in this urban jungle of Kalamata. In addition to all that I've had the luck to see more of Greece. (Kertu)



If I should describe this project in one word, this would be experience. It was a period of learning and developing myself and having fun in the time spent here. Kalamata is a beautiful city with a lot of touristic objectives. I loved the fact that you can capture the sea and mountains in the same picture. I am passionate about the recycling and ecology and this is the reason I applied for this project. I was glad to be involved in this particular programme and I hope our work here as volunteers will last for more years and the people will come after will be inspired by us. I strongly recommend to all young people to participate in a volunteering programme because of the challenges it brings, energy and good memories it offers you. (Cristina)

(Adela, Adrien, Alice, Ana, Colette, Cristina, Davide, Johanna, Kertu, Manuel, Patrik, Suzie, Thomas, Viktor)
France, Spain, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Italy, Portugal, Estonia