



Eco upcycling training course is a non-formal education program for people in the field of youth work, held from 20 to 28 October 2020 at the Hotel Bitoraj located in Fužine in mountainous Croatia. The program was organized by the NGO Institute of Youth Power Croatia and is the first of a total of three planned trainings within the broader ERASMUS + KA2 project Sew the future. In addition to five participants from Croatia, the training was attended by twenty other participants from Belgium, Greece, Italy and Poland. In this multicultural environment, project participants had the opportunity to learn theoretical knowledge and acquire practical skills on environmental issues such as sustainable development and green policies of the European Union. Every day, the activities started with games such as ice breakers and other energizers. Most of the activities were based on working in mixed groups. Throughout the project, the creativity and innovation of all participants was encouraged and they all contributed to performing tasks in a way that suited them best. The emphasis was on mutual cooperation in solving the set challenges and conducting constructive discussions on topics such as: green economy, youth unemployment, positive and negative sides of certain energy sources, sustainable policies and practices, human rights, 5R, performance and responsibility of individuals, nations and supranational organizations in environmental protection and the fight against climate change. Practical workshops included making jewelry from used plastic bottles, personalized gift bags made from recycled paper and collecting waste from the environment to create an exhibition of sculptures from garbage collected on the streets of Fužine.

Between 15th and 23rd November 2021, in a small Polish village called Murzasichle, an enthusiastic group of young people from all over Europe gathered to participate in a training course called "Sewing for social inclusion". During the training, we had the opportunity to learn the basics of sewing, upcycling, and making creative projects, all in the context of social inclusion. The education was divided into two main parts - the theoretical part about social inclusion and a practical part, where we had the opportunity to learn the basics of sewing. One of the goals of the training was that each participant will successfully make their own bag. The previously mentioned "upcycling" was involved in the whole story as the source of the materials we worked with. Before our arrival, the organizers of the education contacted local trades that work with various types of fabric (tailors, furniture upholstery, etc.) and took over from them the remains of materials that would otherwise end up as trash. The special feature of this training was the enthusiasm that manifested itself in the fact that many sewed their own projects and experimented every day until late at night. We also had a private fashion



show wearing our extra pieces we made through the week, along with pieces bought in Polish second hand shops we visited or which we got in a clothes swap event organized as a project activity.

„Eco entrepreneurship“ training course was held from the 3rd till the 31st of May 2022. in Thessaloniki, Greece. It being the last part of the amazing three-part project „Sew the future“ this group of young and eager Croatians already had high expectations for it going in. During this project we had the opportunity to expand our knowledge about sustainability and ecological issues that we gathered during the last two installments of the „Sew the future“ project held in Poland and Croatia. Every day was filled with incredibly fun activities such as SWOT analysis of our entrepreneurships, learning about how to brand our ideas and role play. We even had a study visit to the incredible Naomi workshop in Thessaloniki where we had a chance to meet some of the amazing refugees working there and to buy their handmade, sustainable products. This project really helped our creativity and pushed us towards innovation through activities such as business cafe and design for sustainability. We also had complex debates about sustainability and the transition towards climate neutrality. We learned a lot about each other's culture, including Greek dances, Polish games and Italian gesticulation. This project with its informative and fun activities about eco entrepreneurship was one of the best experiences in our lives.