

Newsletter

December 2024

## **Raising Environmental Awareness Through Art**

A partnership of 6 countries, funded by Erasmus+  
Raise awareness, sensibilize, and prevent harmful attitudes against  
the environment through art and advocacy-artivism.

### **Co-Ordinator of the project**

United Societies of Balkans (Greece)

### **Partners**

- Together For Life Shoqata (Albania)
- Udruzenje Agencija Lokalne Demokratije Iz Mostara (Bosnia & Herzegovina)
- Zelena Akcija (Croatia)
- Jovesolides Egypt (Egypt)
- Lesvos Solidarity (Greece)
- Asocijacija Za Demokratski Prosperitet- Zid Udruzenje (Montenegro)

## What's the aim of the Rest\_Art Project?

The aim of the innovative project Rest\_Art is to promote environmental awareness through the power of art. Our goal is to bring about meaningful and lasting change by engaging the public and key stakeholders in the preservation of our environment. By combining esthetic practices with ecological activism, REST\_ART aims to raise awareness, sensitize communities, and prevent harmful attitudes toward the environment. Through planned mobilities and a comparative approach, we shed light on plastic waste management and promote positive action at the community level.



# EVENTS

## February 2023

### Kick-off Meeting in Thessaloniki, Greece

The 1st Transnational Partner Meeting (TPM) was held in Thessaloniki in February 2023.

Each partner participated with two representatives from each organization. USB hosted the meeting and as the coordinator of the project presented, discussed and shaped the next upcoming activities of the project. The partnership decided on a step-by-step approach to develop the project at the international and national level.

The highlight of the meeting: The visual identity of the project was co-decided by the partnership. The design of the logo was created by the press officer of the USB.



**JUNE 2023**

## **"No-formal environmental education in youth work" Youth Exchange in Stratoni, Greece**

As a type of artistic activity, the visual arts belong to the phenomena of social consciousness. In all phases of the historical development of mankind, they have occupied an important place in the spiritual appropriation of reality, in ideological life and in social struggle.

USB organized and hosted the youth exchange in Greece.

The mobility took place in Stratoni, in a green open area near the sea, where participants had the opportunity to be in contact with nature while working on the planned activities for 6 days.



**JUNE-JULY 2023**

## **Local activities in each country**

After gaining new skills and competencies, each participating organization launched a local activity where they disseminate the artworks from Youth Exchange and continue with new works made from microplastics and non-recyclable materials.

**S e p t e m b e r 2 0 2 3**

**Training Course in Mostar – Debates and creative activities, sustainability in communities**

The training activity of the project REST \_ART was conducted from 18 to 24 September 2023 under the coordination of LDA Mostar and in cooperation with all partners of the project. The training was organized for 20 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Egypt, Croatia, Montenegro and Albania.

During this 5-day mobility program, 20 participants including 2 trainers, came together to become champions of environmental awareness and change-makers in their communities. Through artistic forms and expressions, they explored, understood, and challenged their knowledge of environmental degradation.

The full program of activities and workshops was aimed at familiarizing the international team of people with the concepts of environmental awareness (plastic and reduce, reuse, recycle) through art. The visit to concrete environmental initiatives in Mostar, the photo- reporting activities and interviews, and the debates inspired the participants and the result is a booklet of articles they wrote during the training.



**October 2023**

## **Study Visit in Zagreb, Croatia**

Twelve participants from 6 countries had the unique opportunity to meet with Zelena Akcija, an organization affiliated with Justice & Environment, Zero Waste Europe, Break Free From Plastic, CEE Bankwatch, The European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Climate Action Network Europe, GAIA (Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives), IPEN (International Pollutants Elimination Network), South East Europe Network on Natural Resources, Energy and Transport (SEENET), and the Green Forum, during a recent study-visit in Zagreb, Croatia.

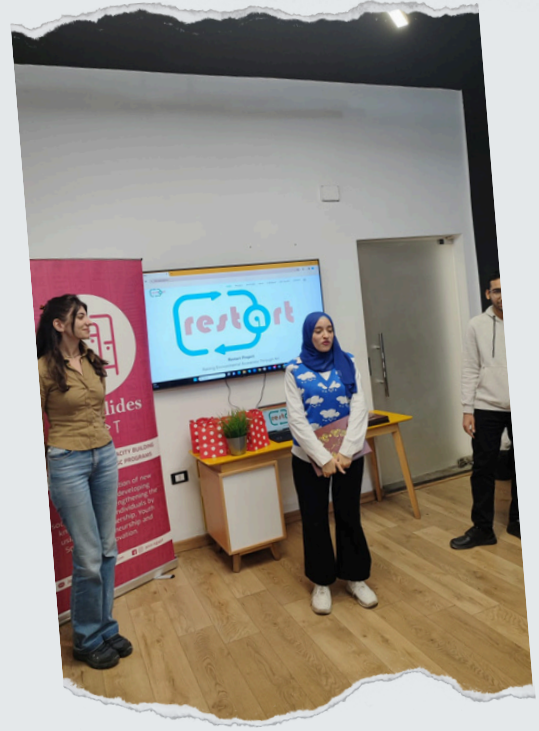
The primary focus of the visit was “artivism” a powerful means employed by Zelena Akcija to raise awareness about environmental (in)justice issues. Through various artistic mediums, participants actively engaged with this concept, gaining valuable knowledge and experience in the realm of environmental protection.



**October 2023**

**Transnational partners' meeting in Cairo, Egypt.**

Partners convened to evaluate progress, share insights, and plan upcoming activities. The meeting emphasized cross-cultural exchange and the importance of aligning project goals with local contexts.



**March 2024**

**Study Visit in Mytilene, Greece 3-9 March 2024 - A journey of discovery, creativity, and collaboration.**

From each partner of the project two representatives were hosted by Lesvos Solidarity to a unique study visit. It was a journey of discovery, creativity, and collaboration.

The participants explored environmental sustainability at the Kalloni Environmental Information Center and engaged in dynamic discussions with professors at the Aegean University. The consortium had the opportunity to discuss innovative solutions to pressing environmental challenges.

A highlight of the experience was the hands-on engagement at the Mosaik Support Center, where participants crafted products from recycled materials and participated in workshops on dorigamography, blending tradition with sustainability.

Equally impactful were the encounters with community-driven initiatives such as the Solidarity Kitchen and Safe Passage workshops, where the participants witnessed the profound power of unity and collective action in empowering individuals and promoting inclusion.

This journey emphasized the importance of environmental education, community involvement, and cultural exchange in addressing societal and environmental issues.



## October 2024

### Transnational Partner Meeting in Montenegro

Montenegro (October 2024): In the final stages of the project, partners gathered to review outcomes, discuss sustainability strategies, and prepare for the closing activities. This meeting marked a pivotal moment for reflecting on the project's achievements and planning its legacy.





# DELIVERABLES

## Artworks Booklet

The Artworks booklet showcases the transformative power of art in raising environmental awareness. Created as part of a youth exchange held in Stratoni, Greece, this booklet highlights creative activities focused on upcycling plastic waste into artistic and functional pieces.

Participants from six organizations engaged in workshops such as collage making, planting seeds, and creating art installations using recycled materials like plastic bottles, pots, and lids. The program culminated in a public exhibition at the park, where the works were proudly displayed, demonstrating how artistic expression can inspire sustainable practices.

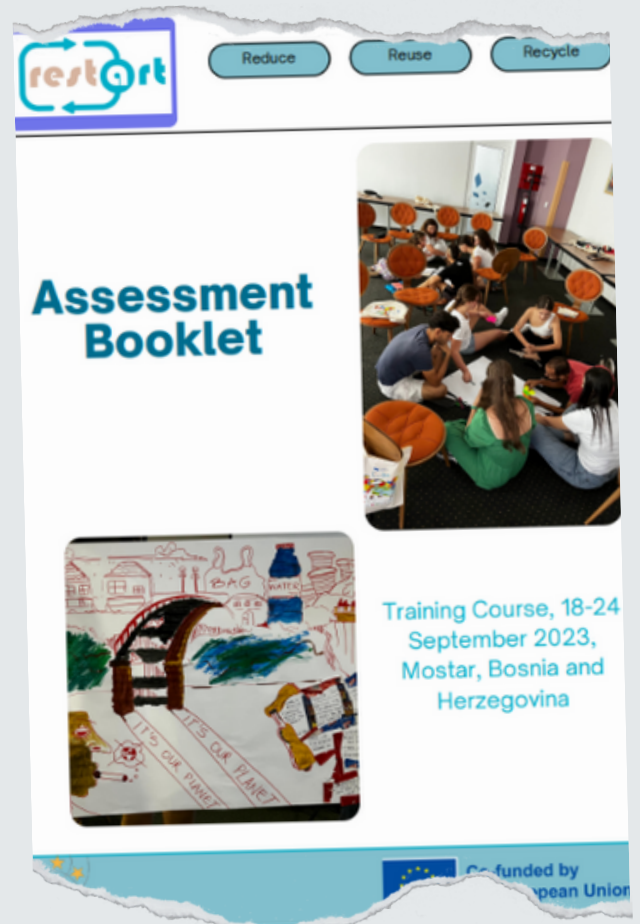
The booklet reflects the belief that art can sensitize and empower individuals to take action for the environment, bridging creativity with meaningful change. It is an inspiring resource for educators, youth workers, and environmental advocates looking to integrate art into sustainability efforts.



## Assessments Booklet

Personal Reflection Stories. Within these pages, we invite you to explore the profound experiences and insightful journeys of the 18 remarkable participants hailing from Albania, Croatia, Egypt, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. These diverse individuals came together in the captivating city of Mostar to participate in a transformative training course under the umbrella of the REST\_ART project.

This booklet serves as a testament to their collective growth, learning, and the deeply personal stories they crafted as a result of their engagement with REST\_ART. Each story within these pages offers a unique glimpse into the rich tapestry of perspectives, challenges, and triumphs that emerged as these participants embarked on a creative and introspective journey. Through the lens of their stories, we witness the powerful interplay of art, culture, and self-discovery, all within the context of this remarkable project. Join us in celebrating their diverse voices and the lasting impact of REST\_ART.



## **Artivism Against Plastic Empowering Environmental Change Through Creativity**

In an era where environmental challenges like plastic pollution require urgent action, innovative approaches are key to driving change. Drawing on the successful strategies of Zelena Akcija (Green Action/Friends of the Earth Croatia), this educational material highlights how artivism—the fusion of art and activism—can inspire action, raise awareness, and mobilize communities. This guide offers practical insights for activists, educators, and community leaders to harness creativity in the fight for a sustainable and socially just future.

## **Humanitarian Aid and Environmental Sustainability The Lesbos Solidarity**

This booklet showcases the transformative work of Lesbos Solidarity, where art, humanitarian aid, and environmental sustainability come together to inspire change. Highlighting initiatives such as the Mosaik Support Centre and the Safe Passage Bags workshop, it explores how art is used as a tool for empowerment, healing, and advocacy. This booklet serves as a testament to the power of art to build resilient communities and drive positive, socially just change.



# Art as a medium for environmental awareness in Local Communities

This booklet highlights the impact of community engagement and artistic methods in advancing environmental initiatives. Featuring insights from diverse organizations and in-depth interviews, it showcases how creative approaches and community participation drive meaningful change. Accompanied by photographs, the booklet raises awareness and visually underscores the importance of environmental sustainability while offering actionable recommendations for organizations, local authorities, and communities.



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