

Age in Green

Sustainable lifestyle
for everyone

Handbook - part 3

PROJECT INFORMATION

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Programme Erasmus+

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Action Adult Education

Project acronym AgeinGreen

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PROJECT CONSORTIUM

P1

SI

INSTITUT ANTONA
TRSTENJAKA ZA
GERONTOLOGIJO IN
MEDGENERACIJSKO
SOZITJE



P2

FR

M3 MCUBE
ASSOCIATION



P3

ES

GANTALCALÁ
LA RIOJA



P4

CY

CENTRE
OF ACTIVE CITIZENS
FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT



P5

PL

FUNDACJA
MAPA PASJI



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INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is not just a trend — it's a mindset, a responsibility, and a way of life.

This handbook, Sustainable Lifestyle for Everyone, presents some of the key outcomes of the Erasmus+ project AgeinGreen, which promotes environmentally conscious living that is accessible and meaningful for all generations. Inside, you'll find practical guidelines for sustainable living — both at home and in the workplace — as well as personal stories from individuals who have already taken steps toward positive change. This handbook also aims to demonstrate that everyone, regardless of age, can make a positive impact through small, daily actions.



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Project summary and conclusion



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Project summary and conclusion

The AgeinGreen project objective was to address climate change through an intergenerational approach, aiming to engage older and younger generations in a shared effort to fight climate change and create a more sustainable future. The project goal was to raise awareness about climate change among older adults, empower them to make small but meaningful lifestyle changes, and encourage active participation in their local communities. At the same time, it also wanted to strengthen the connection between generations.

Throughout the project, a diverse range of activities was implemented to support these goals. A climate change training program was developed as a central tool for adult education, and fifteen intergenerational workshops in five different countries were held. In addition, an innovative “Climate Change Treasure Hunt” was created and tested, both in pilot settings and with real intergenerational groups. Alongside these interactive activities, the project also focused on creating long-term educational resources, including the development of three comprehensive handbooks with all major project results. While the first two handbooks target the informal educators and equip them with resources to conduct climate change workshops and climate change treasure hunt, this third one is created for everyone who wants to be inspired to live more sustainably in their home, workplace or locality.



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Project summary and conclusion

The project was carried out with partners from five countries meeting in person and online to coordinate efforts. Dissemination activities included multiplier events and broad sharing of results in multiple languages to reach a wider European audience.



Some of the major outcomes of the project include the successful creation of intergenerational educational materials, which were very well received by the participants. This positive reception demonstrates the sustainability of the project's approach, as partners are already exploring opportunities to continue implementing the workshops and treasure hunts beyond the project's duration.

The project notably increased climate change awareness among older participants, many of whom reported gaining valuable knowledge, sense of community, renewed hope for a better future, an active engagement in the activities encouraged deeper reflection and some have already reported tangible changes in their daily lives (switch to more sustainable alternatives in their daily lives, felt more confident and better equipped to discuss environmental issues, became more motivated to engage others in conversations about sustainability etc.)

Additionally, the project reaffirmed the importance and value of intergenerational workshops. Both older and younger participants found these sessions meaningful and enriching, highlighting the need for ongoing intergenerational dialogue and cooperation in addressing climate challenges. The exchange of opinions and stories across generations proved to be a powerful tool for mutual learning and motivation.



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Project summary and conclusion

At the same time, trainers and participants also identified areas for improvement, such as the need for greater flexibility in activity design and timing, access to additional resources for further reflection, and stronger integration of local resources to ensure relevance. These lessons point to the importance of adapting methodology to the specific needs of each group while preserving the spirit of the programme.]

The project also contributed to raising climate change awareness within partner organizations and fostered numerous new collaborations with local stakeholders. These partnerships have enhanced the partners' understanding of their local communities and strengthened networks around environmental and sustainability topics.

The project created a strong base for ongoing community involvement and cooperation between generations in climate action, with good potential for even greater impact in the future. By providing a reliable methodology and a structured, fun programme that can be reused and adapted by other trainers, AgeinGreen established a foundation for future initiatives. With further refinement and wider dissemination, it has the potential to strengthen community engagement, empower individuals, and contribute meaningfully to the collective fight against climate change.



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Guidelines for Sustainable Living — for All Generations



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Guidelines for Sustainable Living — for All Generations

Sustainable living isn't about perfection — it's about making thoughtful, daily choices that reduce harm and support a healthier planet and society. No matter your age or background, your actions matter. These guidelines offer practical ways to live more sustainably, inspired by the experiences and lessons learned throughout the AgeinGreen project.

1. Start with awareness

Everyone has a different starting point. Whether you're just becoming aware of environmental issues or have been active for years, what matters is being open to learning and acting.

Start by educating yourself — learn about climate change, carbon footprints, and how daily choices affect the environment. Understanding these topics helps you make more informed, meaningful changes. Knowledge also builds confidence and motivation.

Tip: Look up your personal carbon footprint and compare with a family member — then explore what each of you could do to lower it. Look for climate change workshops in your community.



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2. Make small changes with big impact

Simple actions — like turning off lights, avoiding single-use plastics, or reducing water waste — add up over time. Focus on consistency, not perfection.

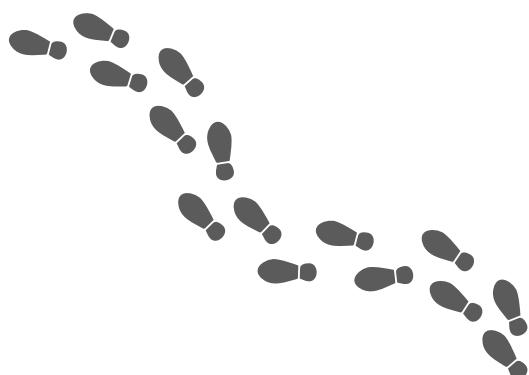
Tip: Set one simple weekly challenge — like reducing plastic, unplugging devices, or buying local — and do it with a friend or relative.



3. Know Your Community

A big part of sustainable living is understanding what's available around you. Explore where you can recycle specific items, access repair services, buy local produce, shop package-free, travel sustainably or learn about low energy housing. Local knowledge helps you make smarter and greener choices — and makes sustainable living easier.

Tip: Go for a walk in your local community with attention to explore sustainable options that are available around you.



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Guidelines for Sustainable Living — for All Generations

4. Reconsider What and How You Buy

Buy less and choose better. Support local or second-hand markets when possible, avoid unnecessary packaging, and invest in items that last longer.

Tip: Share your favourite second-hand shop or “swap” idea with someone else — or organize a clothes or book exchange in your neighborhood.



5. Think About Energy Use

Reduce energy consumption at home: unplug unused devices, insulate where possible, and consider switching to renewable energy if it's available.



Tip: Check if your local community offers workshops or information centers about energy efficiency and learn about it.

6. Eat More Sustainably

Choose more plant-based meals, waste less food, choose seasonal food and support local farmers. What's on your plate affects the planet more than you might think.

Tip: Try a “meatless Monday” with family members and exchange your favorite seasonal recipes — younger people can bring trends, older ones tradition.



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Guidelines for Sustainable Living — for All Generations

7. Travel Smarter

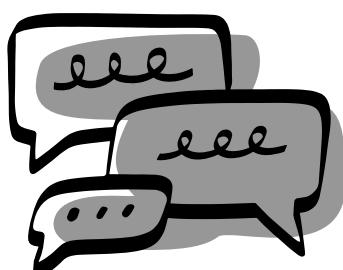
Walk, bike, or use public transport whenever possible. Avoid unnecessary flights and consider carpooling or eco-friendly travel options.

Tip: Share your ride to the store or a local event with a neighbor or family member — it saves fuel, reduces traffic (less congestion, less pollution) and builds connection.



8. Talk about it

Talk about sustainability with others. Whether with friends, family, or local groups, open dialogue spreads awareness and builds momentum for change.



Tip: Equip yourself with simple facts and answers to common climate change myths — that way, you'll feel more confident speaking up in conversations with friends, family, or community members across generations.



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Guidelines for Sustainable Living — for All Generations

9. Include All Generations

Encourage learning and cooperation between generations. Older adults often bring lived experience in living simply, while younger people offer knowledge and new ideas. Mutual respect and collaboration can lead to stronger, more effective actions.

Tip: Teach or learn something new from someone of a different age — for example, a grandchild can help set up a sustainability app, while a grandparent shares gardening tips.



10. Adopt Three Core Strategies for Sustainable Living

As you reflect on your lifestyle, consider these three powerful approaches that emerged from the AgeinGreen project:

- **Reduce overall consumption** — for example, travel less, live in smaller spaces, or simply buy fewer things.

Tip: Try a “no-buy week” or a “declutter day”, take rid of unnecessary things - alone or with someone close — talk about the difference between wants and needs.



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Guidelines for Sustainable Living — for All Generations

- **Improve efficiency** — by using energy-saving solutions like efficient vehicles, heat pumps, or well-insulated housing.

Tip: Create a shared checklist of simple upgrades or habits to save energy — involve all household members, no matter their age.



- **Change what you consume** — such as replacing meat with more plant-based meals, using renewable energy, or choosing public transport over driving.

Tip: Cook a vegetarian meal or plan a no-car day together — compare experiences and motivate each other to keep going.



11. Find and Join Like-Minded People

You are not alone in this. Join local or online sustainability groups. Sharing ideas and supporting one another makes action easier and more enjoyable — and builds lasting impact.

These guidelines were created based on reflections, feedback, and evaluations collected during the AgeinGreen project. They are grounded in the real experiences of older and younger participants alike. Together, their insights have shaped these practical, intergenerational strategies for more sustainable living.

“No one is too old or too young to make a difference. Every action counts.”



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Guidelines for environment-friendly practices at the workplace



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WP2: Guidelines for environmentally friendly practices at workplace

The partners agreed that during each TPM (Transnational Project Meeting), whether held online or in person, a dedicated session was included on this topic. IAT presented selected initiatives, documents, recommendations, and other relevant information related to creating greener workplaces.

In addition, at every TPM, the hosting partner presented their own efforts and areas of action in promoting environmentally friendly practices within their workplace.

General introduction

Green workplace

The green workplace is defined as a workplace that is environmentally sensitive, resource efficient, and socially responsible.

It is also defined as the sustainable strategies in the workplace where offices and practices are made more sustainable, efficient, while reducing costs, increasing productivity, benefiting the environment. The green strategies are based on concrete and cost-effective changes such as working from home, ways to cut commuting costs, video conferencing to cut down on travel, increasing access to natural light to save energy, and the like.



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WP2: Guidelines for environmentally friendly practices at workplace

Why sustainability and green practices at the workplace?

Individuals spend more hours at work than they do at home or elsewhere. A sustainable work environment makes a long workday less stressful and more enjoyable for workers. Some recommendations and tips:

Recycling:

Add clearly labelled recycling bins to shared office spaces such as kitchens and other common areas, and post recycling reminders near the bins listing the types of items that employees can recycle.

Use recycled paper (deforestation-free paper)

We can take steps to protect forests globally by ensuring that the paper we use is 100% recycled.

Choose clean/green energy electricity supplier

Using renewable energy (solar, wind, geothermal, hydropower etc.) is better for the environment.

Save energy

Turning off the lights and switching off electronic equipment in the office during off-hours will help to save energy and your company energy costs.

Lights – replace with LED

LED lights (bulbs) last up to six times longer than other types of lights, using up to 80% less energy, meaning less replacements and less of a need of lightbulb manufacturing and emissions.



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WP2: Guidelines for environmentally friendly practices at workplace

Promote reusable or recyclable dishware

When possible, provide reusable (or recyclable) mugs, cups, plates, and cutlery in your office kitchen.

Support working from home days

Having work from home days can help your employees save time from driving to and from work, and help cut down on emissions.

Heating and cooling:

Consider using a smart thermostat to schedule temperature throughout the day or for weekends. Consider blinds or curtains for your windows to help rooms from overheating.

Start composting

Eliminate food waste in your office - use a compost bin. Coffee grounds, peels and other fruits and vegetable leftovers are perfect for composting.

Get eco-friendly cleaning products

Many regular cleaning products are manufactured in ways that damage wildlife ecosystems.

Public transport

Encourage employees to use public transport, carpool, bike, or walk to work.



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WP2: Guidelines for environmentally friendly practices at workplace

Virtual conferences vs travelling:

Instead of face-to-face meetings, have online meetings. This saves effort, time, and other resources (gasoline, electricity, and water, etc.), ensuring participation for more people. Set a time-based limit on when a flight is permitted (i.e., journey time of 6 hours+ from your country to destination will require a flight, if not train or bus are allowed). Developing a travel policy sets a commitment as an organisation and helps advise staff on how they should be travelling.



Delete old emails and digital files

Emails are responsible for a large amount of CO2 emissions; data centres storing our files need a lot of electricity to run.

Green purchasing:

Where suitable, make greener shopping by leasing or renting machinery (photocopier etc.) instead of purchasing them. This means less consumption of natural resources and the reduction in production.

Print less!

Encourage staff to make use of digital tools and software that reduces the need for print. Set the default on printers to printing black and white, and double-sided.



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WP2: Guidelines for environmentally friendly practices at workplace

Waste hierarchy:

We can conserve the planet's resources by remembering the waste hierarchy.

Refuse/prevent (stop purchasing or accepting items), reduce (buying in bulk, reducing quantities, reducing packaging), reuse (reusable options, reusing containers and packaging), recycle (recycle as much as possible), rot/dispose (composting food waste).



Further reading:



- Sustainable Workplace – Earth.org
- Employers & Social/Environmental Practices – The Guardian



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WP2: Guidelines for environmentally friendly practices at workplace

Social responsibility and sustainable development strategies for organizations, companies

More and more public and private institutions, educational, research organizations and NGOs adopt their own CSR strategy. It can be called differently; it is a commitment, confirmed by the board for the organization to become more sustainable and responsible towards its employees, society and our planet.

CSR – corporate social responsibility

Corporate social responsibility is a strategic initiative by organizations (companies), making efforts to operate in ways that enhance society and the environment. Organizations integrate social and environmental concerns in their operations and interactions with their stakeholders and end-users. EU rules require large companies to publish regular reports on the social and environmental risks they face, and on how their activities impact people and the environment. These reporting rules apply to large public-interest companies with more than 500 employees. The companies will have to apply the new rules for the first time in the 2024 financial year.



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WP2: GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRACTICES AT WORKPLACE

AgeinGreen partner organizations' activities for green workplace

Slovenia: Anton Trstenjak Institute for gerontology and intergenerational relations



At the AgeinGreen project Kick off meeting in Ljubljana, 24/25 October 2023 partners met in person; the draft version of this document was presented by IAT.

It consists of introductory part with general presentation of “why and how” each organization or company should introduce “green” and climate friendly practices in their premises and events, as well as into their everyday working routine (see above).

The second part of the document will be a work in process type of document; during each project meeting each hosting partner organization should prepare a session about their already climate friendly workplace and what are they going to do about this in the future.

In the afternoon session, the “green” sightseeing tour in the Institute’s offices and the building was organized, presenting good practices:

- Food waste: distribution of unsold food from supermarket Mercato to people in need, done by senior volunteers), supported by IAT (organization, contact with supermarket and humanitarian NGOs, distribution of food etc.)
- Saving energy, using LED lights, only carbon free electricity etc.
- No more plastic cups, plates, folders etc.
- Print less, use of recycled paper, also in toilet
- Saving water (various measures)
- Use of public transport, bus, train, if it makes sense (not too time consuming) to travel for work (project meetings), as much as possible
- Urban vegetable garden, hens keeping for eggs and composting (leftovers) – promotion of self-sustainability and self-sufficiency in urban area.

In the next years, the institute want to focus specifically on digital cleaning, explaining why and how to do it properly and motivate staff members to do it regularly (preparation of a plan with guidelines).



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WP2: GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRACTICES AT WORKPLACE

Spain: Gantcalá



Green initiatives of project partner Gantcalá were presented at the second project meeting, held online, 25/26 April 2024.

Gantcalá presented their already adopted strategy "Politica verde Gantcalá" with very detailed explanations about how they follow green agenda in their organization and in their offices (workplace). They explained how they follow the commitments from this document in practice.

Employees are encouraged to work remotely only if the circumstances need it. Being in the workplace helps to save energy as all the team is together in the same room. All staff are also encouraged to walk to the office, since it's located in a very walkable area. They also try to combine travels for various projects. Due to their location and bad connections, they rarely have a chance to travel by train or other greener public transport.

Other partners were impressed by this document, which could be seen as a good practice for others to follow the green agenda at their work in general (not only the workplace).

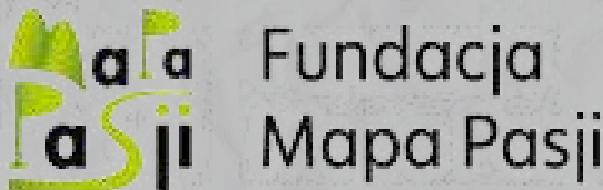


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Poland: Mapa Pasji



The third project meeting was carried out in person, 7/8 October 2024, in Krakow hosted by Polish partner Mapa Pasji.

Ania Kowalcze presented MaPa's eco-friendly practices. Their office is small, therefore most of the staff members work from home. They reuse paper, notebooks from previous conferences. At Mapa Pasji they try to avoid travelling by car and use public transport; if they travel by car, they travel together in one car. For the events they use local food.

They place leftover food in so-called »social fridges«, which is Krakow's initiative for decreasing the food waste. They also collect the batteries and then give them to schools where they have incitive that children earn the cinema tickets by collecting the used batteries (1/2kg per pupil). MaPa is a good example of how the organizations can join and cooperate with ongoing local initiatives.

IAT presented a leaflet Green Erasmus Recommendations to participants for greener mobility within the Erasmus + programme and some other sources for green workplace practices.

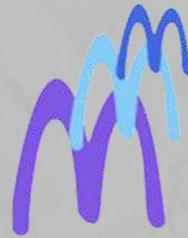


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WP2: GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRACTICES AT WORKPLACE

France: M3 Cube



The fourth project meeting was held online, 21/22 May 2025.

The hosting partners M2 Cube presented the list of environmentally friendly and sustainable workplace practices.

They work in an urban location with no outdoor space (except for a bathroom in an inner courtyard). The only greenery they have are the plants kept in the office; their solutions are therefore exclusively 'urban options'.

Shared premises: by sharing premises with two other associations, they reduce the costs and resources required to run the premises and, above all, avoid having empty premises that consume energy. There is also no point in maintaining premises that are empty half the time, therefore, sharing premises with other organisations (at weekends and in the evenings), means less waste of resources.

Recycling: at M3 Cube they recycle as much as possible, sorting all their waste - paper and cardboard, plastic, also electronic items such as old computers that are used for IT classes.

Composting: without making actual compost (as it is difficult to store in offices), they try to maintain our plants with natural fertiliser, such as coffee grounds, collected weekly.

Limiting paper printing: they try not to print anything unless it is necessary for work. When printing, recycled paper is used or old paper that has only been printed on one side.

Saving energy: their main action is to turn off the heating when no one is using the offices, and to adjust the temperature to the standards recommended by the French Climate Agency for the office, avoiding leaving electronic devices such as printers plugged in all the time. Finally, they carry out small repairs by themselves to prevent heat and energy loss. For example, they filled a gap under a poorly fitting door with a homemade door draft stopper.



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France: M3 Cube



Reducing waste: they try to adopt the following principles. Prevent: stop buying what is not necessary, print only in black and white, etc., Reuse: reuse old files and plastic sleeves from old binders, do not buy items that will only be used once, and Reduce: buy in bulk, reducing quantities, reducing packaging by placing no more than one order every three months.

Tableware is reusable (no paper cups or plates) and washable after each use.

Transport: M3 Cube encourages employees to use public transport or walk to work if possible. To do this, they rely on government assistance, which reimburses employers for half of their employees' transport costs. Finally, the best practices already and the good example set by our most senior colleagues help new employees to use public transport as much as possible.

To limit carbon footprint, they started prioritising virtual conferences with partners rather than frequent face-to-face travel.

Finally, they encourage remote working (two to three days per week).

For the future: they are working on a few ideas to implement in our office:

Lighting: they will replace office lamps; neon lights to switch to LED bulbs.

In progress: they are working on digitally cleaning up their computers and professional accounts, which are major energy consumers worldwide and to accomplish this, they will reserve a few hours each month to delete old emails and digital files. For the oldest and largest files (video, audio, etc.) that are important to keep, they store them on external hard drives. At their monthly team meetings staff members are reminded about the importance of fighting digital pollution. They also avoid sending unnecessary emails (internally, for example) and prefer to communicate directly whenever possible.



WP2: GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRACTICES AT WORKPLACE

Cyprus: Citizens Act



The final meeting was hosted by Citizens Act, on 10/11 September 2025, in Nicosia.

Citizens Act integrates sustainability into its daily operations and workplace culture, aiming to reduce environmental impact while also using its offices as a demonstration space for community education. Their eco-friendly practices include:

- Energy efficiency: LED lighting is installed throughout the offices, and staff are encouraged to switch off lights and electronic devices when not in use.
- Water conservation: Toilets with a dual-flush system are used to minimize water consumption.
- Waste reduction and recycling: Printing is avoided whenever possible by relying on digital tools. When printing is necessary, it is done double-sided and in black and white. In addition, old notebooks or paper waste is used for notes and general use.
- Recycling bins are placed in common areas for paper, plastic, and other office waste.
- Creative reuse initiatives: Paper waste sometimes is repurposed into seed balls that are used in urban greening activities.
- Natural cleaning and hygiene: Instead of only commercial products, the team uses handmade natural soaps created in-house for handwashing, reducing packaging waste and exposure to harmful chemicals.

In addition, Citizens Act is in the process of establishing an indoor “Green Urban Room” that will serve as a flexible “Green Lab” for sustainability activities, particularly designed for groups who cannot easily access nature. This multifunctional space will feature:

Vertical gardening and indoor composting to demonstrate food-waste reduction and local food production. Educational boards explaining recycling, energy efficiency, and climate action. DIY workshops such as natural soap and candle making, seed bomb creation from shredded paper, and other upcycling practices. A small solar panel charging station to illustrate renewable energy in practice. Through these measures, Citizens Act not only creates a more sustainable workplace but also turns its offices into a practical learning hub for staff, volunteers, and the wider community.



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Collection of personal stories and promises



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MAURA AND SEAN AND THEIR DECISION TO RETURN TO TRADITIONAL, LOCAL FOOD PRACTICES FOR A GREENER FUTURE

When the Covid pandemic paused all their plans, we felt it was time to make the next chapter of life more meaningful. The AgeinGreen project inspired us to reflect on the traditions we grew up with - the ones rooted in sustainability, simplicity, and local food.

Both of us come from farming backgrounds, and Sean continued to work the land as a cattle farmer. Our mothers were not only excellent cooks but also mindful of waste and deeply connected to seasonal, homegrown food. Sean fondly remembers his mother's daily bread-making and buttery boiled potatoes, while I recall churning butter as a child on my grandmother's dairy farm.

Inspired by these memories, we have started returning to those habits: baking bread, growing more of their own food, and using what's available locally rather than buying processed goods. I still use my mother's old, grease-marked cookbook full of handwritten recipes - each one is a reminder that sustainability isn't new, it's just something we've drifted from.

For us, Maura and Sean, going forward means going back, to a way of life that fed both body and planet well.





STORY NUMBER 1: THIS IS A STORY ABOUT:



ELENA TRANSFORMED A NEGLECTED SPACE INTO A COMMUNITY GARDEN

A few years ago, I noticed a small, fenced-off plot near my building, overgrown, neglected and full of trash. Most people passed by without a glance. But to me, it felt like wasted potential.

I had no experience in gardening, just a growing need to reconnect - with the earth, with others, with purpose. One day, I brought gloves, a rake, and a few seedlings. That was the beginning.

At first, I worked alone, clearing weeds and turning the soil. Slowly, neighbours got curious. A child helped me plant beans. An elderly man donated compost. By the end of the season, we had tomatoes, herbs, and sunflowers swaying in the breeze.

Now, we're a group of ten who share the care of our little garden. We grow food without chemicals, exchange recipes, and share harvests. It's not just about vegetables, it's about friendship, responsibility, and learning to live more lightly on this planet.

My lifestyle has changed. I eat more local produce, waste less, and I've started composting at home. What began as a personal act became a shared transformation.

This small space taught me that sustainability doesn't always start with big gestures, deeds. Sometimes, it starts with seeds.



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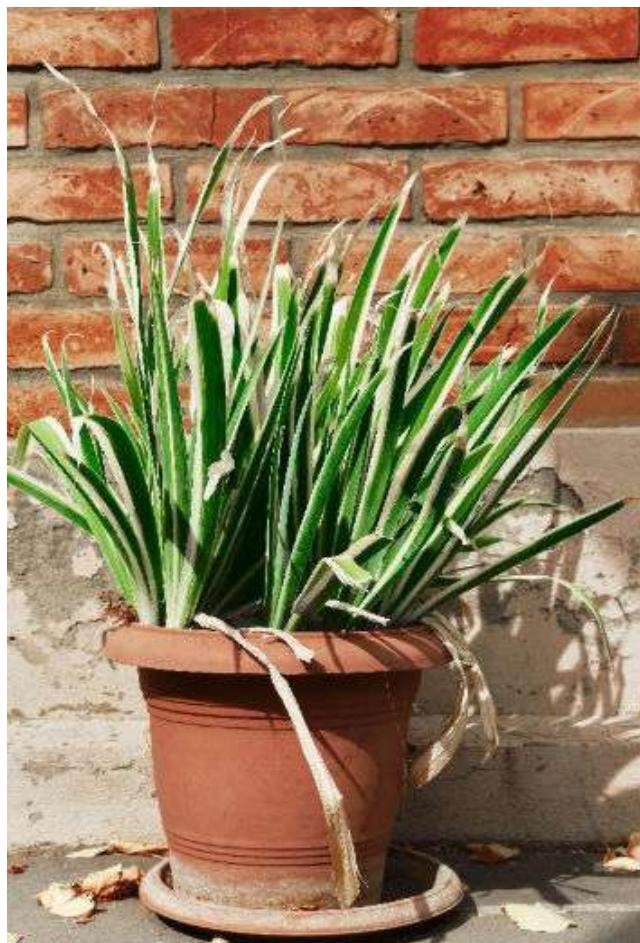


DORIS AND HOW SHE STARTED SHARING PLANT CUTTINGS WITH HER FAMILY TO GIVE THEM A SECOND LIFE

I've always loved having green in my home, but I'll admit, I'm not the best at keeping plants alive. Over the years, my windowsills have seen more withered leaves than blooms.

One day, I noticed that my spider plant was sending out long runners with baby offshoots. They looked full of promise, like they wanted a second chance. I cut a few and brought them to my daughter-in-law, who has green fingers, her plants always grow well.

A week later, she sent me a photo. The little spider plant was thriving, already greener than it had ever been in my kitchen. That small success lit a spark.



Since then, I've made it a habit: every time one of my plants grows a new shoot, I clip it and offer it to someone I know. My sister rooted a plant in her office. My neighbour revived a jade plant that had nearly given up on me. It feels like a quiet chain of life spreading through the people I care about.

Now, instead of throwing away dying stems, I see them as beginnings. I waste less. I talk more with friends and family. And though I'm still not a plant expert, I've become something else, a connector.

It's a small way I contribute to a greener world. One cutting at a time.





GUY AND FRANCE, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL CONSUMPTION

For professional reasons, we have worked abroad throughout our careers, living mainly in Germany, the United States, Spain and North Africa. As we always lived there for quite a long time, we tried to integrate as much as possible, adopting local practices and not bringing products and items we were used to from far away (France). For us, this meant going to markets a lot, not settling for the more generic products found in supermarkets, and buying or repairing our belongings in local shops.

Since retiring, we have kept up this habit and have always encouraged our children and now our six grandchildren to do the same. We strongly believe in the importance of human contact and the social fabric, and we do our best to maintain it in our small town in Eure-et-Loire. We buy our food every Wednesday and Saturday at the market, we visit our local shopkeepers for recommendations or help with a faulty product, and we always make sure we don't buy anything we don't need or can't get by other means (recycling, swapping with a neighbour, etc.).

We have learned all these lessons from our travels and from the conversations we have had with all the people we have met, who have made us understand the importance of responsible, local consumption and trusting our retailers. Not only does this ease the strain on our wallets, but above all it allows us to take action for the planet on a daily basis without too much effort!



SOLANGE, WHO ADAPTED HER DIET TO REDUCE HER CONSUMPTION OF MEAT AND FISH, THANKS TO EGGS

I have always had a special connection with chickens and eggs, which later in life led me to become interested in the nutritional properties of eggs as a substitute for other sources of protein.

When I was little, I loved going to my grandparents' house, where they had chickens. I played with them all the time, especially with one that I loved, and I looked after them during the school holidays. These chickens were often served at my grandparents' table for large family meals, during which I refused to eat the poultry because it made me too sad. However, I negotiated with my grandparents that as long as the chickens laid eggs, we could leave them and only eat them when they were too old. I was even allowed to keep my favourite chicken with me. I put her in my parents' kitchen, and she continued to lay eggs for a long time, much to my delight, as I loved eggs.



I have therefore been very committed to an egg-based diet for a long time, and I have thought a lot about how to incorporate them more into my cooking, as they are a very good source of protein and can replace other ingredients that we currently consume far too much and which are far too harmful to our planet and our health. They are also full of vitamins, healthy fats and antioxidants.





SOLANGE, WHO ADAPTED HER DIET TO REDUCE HER CONSUMPTION OF MEAT AND FISH, THANKS TO EGGS

I prefer to cook them in the microwave, because it's quick and fat-free (but don't forget to pierce the egg so it doesn't explode when cooking!), and enjoy them with raw vegetables and oat flakes. Finally, I find it the simplest and most effective way to reduce our meat and fish consumption! It's even reassuring to know that you're eating something very healthy that comes from a chicken you've fed yourself. Why deprive yourself of something that's good for your health while taking care of the planet?





HOW BÁRBARA BECAME A SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVIST

Born in 1947 and raised in a village, I grew up among aunts and neighbours who were like family. I firmly believe in sustainability, but not only from an ecological point of view, but also from a human and social one. For me, living sustainably means consuming the minimum necessary, respecting nature and people. I don't believe in progress if it's not universal, if it doesn't reach everyone. If only a few enjoy it, it's not progress, it's privilege.

I have had a vegetable garden for years. I consume little, not because I deprive myself, but because I don't want more. I have travelled, yes, but always consciously. I am very concerned about current habits, excessive consumption, dependence on mobile phones, the disconnect between people.

I watch a city like Logroño that talks about sustainability but acts contrary to it. Consumption and bars are prioritised, and the enjoyment of natural spaces is forgotten. Change will not come from above; it will come when citizens wake up. When our rights are truly affected, we will wake up. I hope it only takes a little scare.

Despite everything, I am optimistic. I have shared spaces with young people who have given me back my hope. There is fuel, all that is missing is the spark. I trust them.





BASI MANAGED TO OVERCOME A CONSUMERISM AND UNSUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Basi Laencina, born in 1953:

I've always been deeply aware of the world around me. I've never had many luxuries, so I learned to live with little, just what I need. I worry about the planet, society's apathy, and the lack of commitment. I rebel against that. I recycle, buy seasonal products, avoid big chain stores. I refuse to shop online or fill my house with unnecessary things. People say I'm stingy. I say I'm responsible.

At my last job, in a restaurant in Fuenmayor (La Rioja), there was at least some awareness. They bought from the local market, from local farmers. It was the exception, not the rule. Most of the industry is still blind to the climate crisis. But from my place, I've tried to contribute independently of my job. It's never been a burden. It comes from the heart.

Sometimes I look out the window and see neighbours tossing huge bags of unsorted trash into the bins. In my building, only two of us recycle. That hurts. Because even if one is just a grain of sand, every action matters. And because I still have hope. If I didn't believe we could change things, I'd stay silent. But I don't. I never have.





LAURA BECAME A RESPONSIBLE CONSUMER

Laura Oliván, born in 2000:

I have always lived in small cities, but that has not prevented me from reflecting on the impact of our everyday decisions. One of the most significant changes in my life has been adopting a more sustainable consumption lifestyle.

My first real contact with the idea of reducing meat consumption was at the age of 16, when we were shown a very shocking documentary at school about the meat industry: deforestation, carbon footprint, water footprint... I didn't give up meat at that moment, but the seed was planted. Years later, with more information and surrounded by people who didn't eat meat, I decided to give it a try. I went about three years without eating meat, with varying degrees of flexibility.

I still try not to eat meat if I can avoid it, but I'm not as strict anymore. I think the important thing is not to eliminate it completely, but to reduce it. You don't have to stop eating meat altogether, but you do have to be more aware, informed, and know that there are many nutritional alternatives available to us today.

Changing habits is not easy. Stopping buying fast fashion clothes or giving up certain foods is difficult because it goes against what we are used to, but when your principles outweigh what you feel like at the moment, then something has changed. And I think that's where responsible consumption really begins.





HOW ROSA BECAME A CIRCULAR ECONOMY ADVOCATE

Rosa Córdoba, born in 1978:

I consider myself quite sustainable. I don't have a car, for example, which limits me in certain ways, but I accept that as a conscious choice. I try to get around by bike or on foot, and when I go shopping, I prioritise local products, even if they are more expensive. For me, it's not just about the price, but the overall impact of each decision.

I also pay attention to small gestures: I am very conscious of water use because I experienced water shortages as a child, so when I wait for the shower water to heat up, I use it to fill the cistern; sometimes I even use a manual juicer instead of an electric one, and in general I try to consume in moderation and with common sense. I don't shop online, among other things because I know what it means for the environment and for the working conditions of many people.

In my teaching work, I try to introduce sustainability into the content, talk about the circular economy and promote a more social vision of business. This is what I believe, and what I want to share with my students. I know that the message doesn't always sink in, because it often clashes with convenience (one of the good and bad facts about capitalism), but I believe that as teachers we have a very big responsibility. Sometimes it is enough for just one person to take the idea on board.

Despite everything, I remain optimistic. I believe that the younger generations are very creative, and although we are leaving them a complicated world, I am also confident that they will be able to turn it around. Perhaps we will take better care of what remains.





KONSTANTINOS AVRAAM AND CHOOSING THE BIKE OVER THE CAR.

For most of my life, and due to the fact that I live in Cyprus I relied heavily on my car, even for short distances. I always wanted to try other ways of moving around, but it felt difficult so after participating in the AgeinGreen workshops and treasure Hunt I decided to challenge my habits and try to reduce my carbon emission footprint. I fixed my old bicycle and I decided to start cycling.

I have to say that I am generally really sceptical on when and where to use it. The roads in Cyprus are not very friendly for bicycles. There are no bike lanes, and most of the time it doesn't feel safe.



That's why I decided to use it only for short distances, where I know the streets well. Still, this small change has made a difference to me and I hope it makes difference to the environment as well. I know I won't stop using my car, but now I think twice before starting the engine. If it's a short trip, I ask myself, "Can I bike there instead?"





STAVROULA PETROU IS TRYING TO COOK MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MEALS FOR HER FAMILY.

Because of work and many responsibilities, I often don't have the time to cook the kind of meals I would really like for my family. Most days, I rely a lot on my mother, who helps with preparing food. Without her, it would be much harder. I am glad we both joined the AgeinGreen workshops.

During the 2nd AgeinGreen workshop, we learned about how food choices affect the environment. I was really surprised to hear about how much carbon is linked to certain foods, especially meat and products that travel from far away. It made me think differently.



Even though my time is limited, I've set a small goal: to try and cook more meals that are better for the planet. That means using more local and plant-based ingredients, wasting less food, and choosing simple recipes that I can manage.

It's not always easy, but I'm trying. And I hope I can slowly make this part of our routine, with my children also learning from it.





Story Number 4: This is a story about:



PANAGIOTA EUAGOROU IS HELPING HER FAMILY EAT IN A MORE SUSTAINABLE WAY.

I have been cooking for my family my whole life. I always helped my daughter Stavroulla a lot, since she works long hours and has many responsibilities. I usually prepare lunch for her family. I am happy with this. Anyway for me cooking is a way to show love.

After the information we learned from the AgeinGreen workshops we decided that maybe we can do some more vegetarian, eco friendly food for the family. I was surprised to hear how much pollution is linked to things like meat, packaged food, and long-distance transport.

Now, I try to cook more plant-based meals when I can but to be fair we are already doing it. Many of our traditional Cypriot recipes are already quite sustainable, like lentils, beans, and seasonal vegetables.

But I must say it's not always easy. My daughter's family has six people, plus me and my husband. That's eight mouths to feed every day. And not everyone likes the same things. Some of the kids don't enjoy vegetables or legumes, so it can be hard to find recipes that everyone is happy with.



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ELINA PROTOPAPA IS LEARNING TO THINK TWICE BEFORE BUYING NEW THINGS.

As 18 year old girl, I often buy more than I need, especially clothes. It's so easy to order something online or pick up something cheap from big chain stores. Sometimes, I wear it once. Other times, it just sits in my closet or even ends up in the recycling bin with the ticket on it.

Even before the workshops, I knew that these kind of actions were not good. These cheap products often come from far away, they're not made to last, and they create a lot of waste. But it's a habit many of us have, especially when everything is fast and easy to get and in a society that you try to impress everyone.

Consequently, If I had to set one personal goal, it would be this: to think twice before buying something.

Do I really need it? Will I use it? Can I find it second-hand or borrow it?





Story Number 5: This is a story about:



NITSA MESARITOU AND HER DECISION TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

Through AgeinGreen, I learned many new and useful things about the environment. The workshops opened my eyes to daily habits I could change, but also made me think more deeply about the bigger picture especially about the climate crisis. However, I do not want to speak about daily habits that I might change but about something else.

During one of the sessions, a discussion came up where someone expressed doubts about climate change. I felt uncomfortable. I wanted to speak up and defend what I believe, but I didn't feel confident enough. I thought I knew enough, but in that moment, I realised I needed to learn more. I didn't want to just repeat what I heard. I wanted to understand the facts.

So I have made a decision: I will continue learning. I want to read articles, find trusted sources, look at real data, and understand the science behind the climate crisis. Not just for me, but also to be able to share this knowledge with others, clearly and calmly when these conversations happen again.

Sometimes we think learning stops at a certain age. But I believe it's never too late to become more informed, more critical, and more ready to stand up for what matters.



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HOW MELITA GOT RID OF THE SMELL AND FLIES

At home, I had a very poorly organized system for waste disposal, sorting, and everything related to garbage. As a result, there was an unpleasant smell in the kitchen and a constant battle with flies. By chance I came across a website offering a variety of bins. I was impressed by the beautiful, designer's bokashi organko bin, into which you press organic waste, cover it with a lid, and there are no smell or flies. If you have a house and a garden (lucky you!), you can bury this "bag" of compressed organic waste in a compost bin.

Some time ago I bought a litter box for our cat. I forgot to check the dimensions and when the package arrived, I knew right away that it was too big. I put it in the corner of the kitchen and decided to use it for other waste. My family members complained because they had to take five extra steps, but it was worth it. This bin also had a lid, so goodbye smells and flies. I empty it every

2-3 days. Thanks to the new waste management system, the air in my kitchen is much better, and I use less garbage bags.





HOW OLGA STARTED SAVING WATER

I feel very grateful to live in an environment where we have plenty of high-quality water available and I am aware that this cannot be taken for granted. A lot depends on how we behave.

I have a garden that needs watering in hot weather. I try to use all the wastewater from washing vegetables, my hands, and anything else that does not contain too much soap or powder to water my garden. I also have a container under each tap to catch the water so that as little as possible is wasted.

I also save water in my personal hygiene, for example when showering. I don't indulge myself and don't let the hot water run more than needed. I don't overdo it with soaking in the bathtub either. It goes without saying that I save water also on holidays, if I stay in a hotel, even when water is included in the price of accommodation.





HOW OLGA CONTRIBUTES TO REDUCING TRAFFIC POLLUTION

For now, I still enjoy driving my car, but I choose destinations where I can go without it. To singing practice with my choir I take the city bus, which runs whether I'm there or not. I don't have to look for a parking space, I don't pollute the environment, and one of the singers from the choir gives me a lift back home. Of course, I have to take the car for bigger purchases, but I do all my smaller shopping on foot or by public transport. I visit friends at the retirement home in Škofljica and get there easily by city bus.

These are just a few examples of how I try to be environmentally friendly. I will continue to strive to improve what can be further improved.





HOW SMILJA RIDES HER BICYCLE IN ALL SEASONS

Even as a child, I was often on a bike or roller skates, happy as long as the wheels were turning. My parents always walked or cycled wherever they could.

When I started my own family, my partner was also an enthusiastic cyclist. He bought a road bike in Italy because at that time, high-quality bikes were not yet available in Slovenia. This shared enthusiasm for cycling was automatically passed on to both of our children, so strongly that despite having their driver's licenses, they only use bikes (city, gravel, road bikes).

In Ljubljana, I cycle an average of twenty kilometres a day. My husband and I also cover longer distances by bike, taking the train with our bikes. On average, I use my car once or twice a month, only for longer distances.

There is no doubt anymore that the climate is changing, as there have been no such sudden weather events in the past. In our family, caring for the environment and riding bikes rather than driving is our way of life. Even in winter, I use my bike, despite the cold.

Because we are so consistent with cycling, I think we have become a shining example in our neighbourhood, as I notice that in the last years there are more cyclists among our neighbours and friends.





Story Number 5: This is a story about:



HOW CYCLING BECAME TJAŠA'S DAILY ROUTINE

Cycling became part of my routine a few years ago. Before that, I mostly took the bus to college and to run errands. Since cycling has a positive effect on both the environment and health, I decided that a bike would be my mode of transportation to college. By daily cycling my bike soon became my regular means of transport to go everywhere, to college, to work, to run errands... regardless of the season or weather conditions. I also use bike to discover new places when I'm on vacation.



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HOW ALENKA BECAME A FLEXITARIAN

*flexitarian: a person who eats a predominantly vegetarian diet but occasionally eats meat or fish.

I never really liked meat much. During my student years, I was a vegetarian for a year or two. But then I was often tempted by the delicious smell of prosciutto or various dishes with some meat—stuffed peppers, sarma, ragù, etc. So, I gave up my strict vegetarian diet.

When we were preparing the AgeinGreen project, I researched various sources and was surprised by the information about how badly meat production and transport affect our planet; I knew something about this, but not in details and figures, which made me re-consider my everyday routines and choices. I came across the concept of flexitarianism, which means reducing meat consumption and eating more plant-based and locally grown food. This compromise seemed ideal to me, and I decided that this would be my chosen diet. I made a plan for myself: some red meat every few weeks and chicken or fish every week. And, of course, lots of fruit, vegetables, eggs, nuts, pasta, and dairy products.

I must admit that flexitarianism is beneficial for my body and last, but not least - also for my soul, as I know that in this way I am contributing to the common good and a better planet. And without strict restrictions, I can still enjoy delicious Easter ham and roast meat for Christmas.



BASIA WHO DECIDED TO LIVE A CLIMATE-FRIENDLY LIFE

My adventure with ecology actual began in high school. While attending sailing camp, I noticed how polluted the water in the lakes were. In addition, a nitrogen factory was built in my hometown, which caused a significant deterioration in air quality. There are days when it is really hard to breathe. I realized how serious an impact human activity has on the environment.

Today, all my activities are in line with ecology. It is my natural way of life and I cannot imagine any other. Every purchase is carefully considered, and whenever possible, I try to give things a second life. I have clothes that I have been wearing for many years because they are still in great condition. I don't waste food, and all my vegetables and fruit come from my own garden, which is my pride and joy. I love taking care of it and enjoy its abundance. I also make my own preserves, and I only spray my plants with natural infusions, such as garlic.

I also use wax wraps, an eco-friendly alternative to avoid film and aluminum foil. They are made of cotton fabric soaked in beeswax. It is a reusable product that is great for packaging and storing food, while helping to reduce plastic consumption and waste. They are beautifully made and practical. There is no trip I would go on without them.

I am also constantly expanding my knowledge of ecology. I recently participated in a workshop where I learned how to sew bags for storing vegetables and fruit from used curtains. Soon I am going to another one, where I will learn how to use food waste and leftovers creatively. I consider educational activities to be an essential part of acquiring eco-habits. Inspiration from others is the best motivation!



RENA, WHO EXPERIENCED FOREST BATHING WITH LOCAL CHILDREN

For eight years, I have been volunteering at a local orphanage. One of my recent activities was a unique pro-ecological workshop for children and young people from this facility.

I decided to invite the young participants to experience the Japanese technique of forest bathing (shinrin-yoku). It is an extraordinary form of contact with nature, in which all the senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste - become the key to a deeper and more conscious perception of the surrounding world. We walked slowly, in silence, without phones, media, or private conversations. Instead, the participants focused on carefully observing and enjoying nature. After each exercise, they shared their impressions verbally.

In a world where young people increasingly live in virtual space, this experience became a discovery for them, a return to real, uncontaminated contact with reality. Forest bathing, although still new and little known among young people in Poland, is a beautiful way to "reset" the mind and body. This activity also has an impact on the environment: they protect forests from commercialization, support CO₂ absorption and water retention, reduce the pressure of mass tourism, and increase the chances of preserving biodiversity.

For me personally, this is proof that even a simple but conscious presence in nature can change your perspective and be the beginning of a long lasting, ecological change.



AGA FROM KRAKOW WHO DEEPLY BELIEVE IN AN ECO-FRIENDLY LIFESTYLE.

The most valuable things are free, but we don't appreciate them.

I have been a vegetarian for five years, and health considerations also influenced this decision. I think what we eat is extremely important and that we should choose foods that are as unprocessed as possible. I rely on the gifts of nature - both from the forest and from my own garden. I have learned to recognize and use herbs. The most valuable things are free, although we often underestimate them.

I buy directly from local farmers at the market – I call it local patriotism. I also often exchange crops with my neighbours: for example, when I have an excess of lettuce, I give it away and in return I get other vegetables or fruits. Thanks to this, nothing goes to waste, and we can all enjoy healthy and natural products. I love these neighbourhood exchanges and always enjoy participating in them.

I avoid large stores and supermarkets. Every purchase I make is well thought out; I no longer buy impulsively. I avoid advertisements and temptations to buy unnecessary things. I even buy cosmetics only to a minimal extent, because I am learning to make them myself—all you need is a little coconut oil and vitamin D to make a simple and natural cream.



AGA FROM KRAKOW WHO DEEPLY BELIEVE IN AN ECO-FRIENDLY LIFESTYLE.

I am a regular customer of organic and eco-friendly stores. I consciously avoid plastic because I know that its excess is toxic and harmful to both us and the environment. I return unused packaging to special collection points, so that someone else can reuse it. I have also joined local Facebook groups where people post about places where you can pick up items, they no longer need for free. My husband works with wood, so we can use these items to create beautiful furniture for our home at minimal cost. We are about to renovate an old and beautiful piano.

For me, it is crucial to understand that ecology is not only a lifestyle, but above all awareness of how important it is to take care of our planet and ourselves. Seemingly "small" actions can bring a lot.



ERYK FROM TARNÓW WHO BELIEVES THAT TOGETHER WE CAN DO MUCH MORE

When I moved out on my own, my approach to ecology changed a lot. I started to wonder if I really needed to buy new things when I could use the ones I already had. My parents taught me that it is better to repair things than to replace them immediately. Excessive consumption only causes harm.

I take part in Erasmus+ youth environmental projects. I recently had the opportunity to travel to Romania and Spain, where one of our tasks was to clean up the beach. We collected waste along the coast. We learned that if there are 50 plastic items per square meter, the beach is considered polluted. We found over 200! Most of them were plastic cotton swabs that end up in the seas and oceans through the sewage system. We also found huge amounts of plastic pellets transported by container ships. The scary thing is that when the cargo is damaged, it is more profitable for ships to dump it into the water than to deliver it to port. The pellets are the size of lentils and virtually impossible to clean up, and fish often mistake them for food. They then end up on our tables, poisoning us again. That is why I am against shopping on large Asian platforms – it only fuels this "plastic problem."

During the projects, we also worked on developing eco-friendly city plans: we calculated the carbon footprint, planned public transport and bicycle path networks, and looked for ways to live more sustainably in urban areas. Such experiences make us realize how important these activities are. After returning to my hometown, I am happy to share the knowledge I have gained and inspire others, because I believe that together we can do much more.



KASIA AND HER ECO LIFESTYLE WHICH SHOULD BECOME THE NORM

My mother "infected" me with ecology. Even before mandatory waste segregation was introduced and before ecology became a widely discussed topic, we tried to live in harmony with nature in my home. Today, as an adult, I cannot imagine any other lifestyle. What is still new to many people has long been part of my everyday life.

I try to make every aspect of my life eco-friendly. Water is especially important to me. I don't waste it – I turn off the tap when brushing my teeth or washing my hair, and I take showers instead of baths. I only buy mineral water in returnable glass bottles with caps, and I return them, so they are back into circulation. This means I always have a fresh supply without generating plastic.

I also attend lectures organized by the Department of Environmental Protection in my city because I want to stay up to date with new eco-friendly solutions and practices. Recently, I learned about an interesting way to regulate the aquatic ecosystem. When there is an excess of fish in rivers and they cannot be transferred or used, they are given away free of charge. This restores the balance in nature and at the same time nothing is wasted. It seems like a simple solution, but it can bring many benefits.





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