



European Commission

Repair Café

from MTÜ SPARK Makerlab

Repair Café volunteers give broken household items a new life

Paranduskohvik is a repair café in Tartu, **Estonia** that provides locals the tools, as well as the necessary expertise, to repair and upcycle their household items. In an effort to shift locals' mindsets from mass consumption to sustainability, five young people have set out to prove that reusing and repurposing goods is the way forward.

Kätlin, a 30-year-old graduate in landscape architecture, worked for many years in Estonia's first eco-sustainable hostel, when she decided to get more involved in environmental volunteerism. Kätlin says that she believes in the importance of empowering others and hopes that her work at Paranduskohvik will show people their potential and inspire them to repair or reuse more and buy less.

On a typical day, the repair café's youngsters prepare for their repair events. Kätlin and her colleagues meet, prepare food and gather all the tools needed for the event, as well as promote it online.

At the event, young people welcome guests, assess the needs of each person, direct them to the right teacher and assist them in their projects. Project organisers believe that after a year of service, each young person will leave with the organisational and practical skills needed in their future careers.

Paranduskohvik embraces European values such as inclusion, solidarity and sustainability, as it opens its doors to all people and empowers each person to make small but practical steps towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

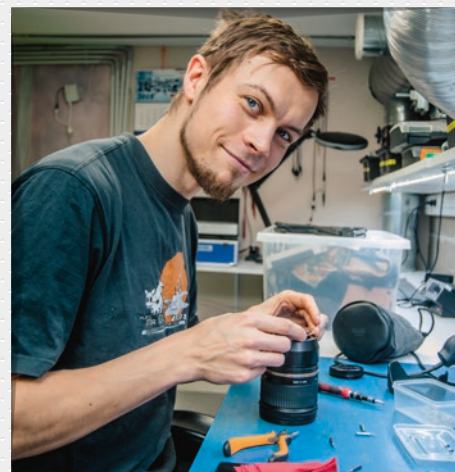


Spark Makerlab team

Kätlin
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What does solidarity mean to you?
"Transcending differences, sharing skills and giving selflessly."



EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS



European Commission

Solidarity Project



Mare d'inverno team

Roberta

What does solidarity mean to you?

“Respect for people and for the environment, unity of purpose and transcendence of differences.”



Wintertide

from LEGAMBIENTE TRANI

How young volunteers are transforming shorelines and transforming themselves

Mare d'inverno, or Sea at Winter, is a project aimed at restoring the shoreline's former beauty in Trani, Italy. After years of abandonment, pieces of the shoreline have remained littered with industrial waste and garbage, but six young people are determined to change this.

Through transforming their environment, project participants are also undergoing personal transformations, discovering new work skills and new passions. Roberta, an 18-year-old participant, studies at the local hotel management school. Since starting with the project, she says that her passion for the environment has awakened and, as a result, she has participated in several demonstrations in favour of environmental protection. Roberta and her fellow volunteers also joined the project to gain work experience, as they come from areas where jobs are scarce.

On a typical day, young people pick up their tools and trash bags and head out to collect waste and recyclable materials. They work on restoring vegetation and also monitor the area for any illegal dumping. Perhaps the most important work they do is dedicated to public education. Their ultimate goal is to re-convert the land into a usable public space, to show locals the importance of environmental reclamation and preservation.

Mare d'inverno was inspired by the European values of sustainable development, active citizenship and solidarity, ensuring a bright future for the environment and for the young Europeans who try to protect it.





European
Commission

Solidarity
Project



What does solidarity mean to you?

“For us, solidarity is one of the basic elements of building a good civil society, where joint actions lead to achieving jointly-set goals.”



Spherical research garden from Stowarzyszenie POLARIS - OPP

Coming together to grow plants and communities

As a response to unhealthy eating habits, the Spherical Research Garden project in Sucha Beskidzka, **Poland** ignites a passion for agriculture in young people, specifically those who live in remote villages. Young participants take part in building a spherical greenhouse from start to finish - from cultivation to harvest - and conduct scientific experiments to monitor progress.

The project is run by a group of five young people from different scientific backgrounds, but a common passion for agriculture and children's education. Wojciech Noga, 25, got involved in the project to apply the many concepts he had learned in his Technical Physics studies. His knowledge of design was invaluable in building the spherical garden, and his background in constructing environmental monitoring systems has allowed the group to conduct accurate scientific experiments.

Wojciech and his fellow volunteers begin each day with caring for the garden, then conducting workshops and experiments with local participants. Planning the workshops is particularly rewarding for the volunteers, as it gives them the opportunity to contribute their unique insights, learn how to manage a project and how to celebrate each small success as a team.

The project demonstrates European values, as it creates a venue for community bonding and seeks to remedy the feelings of isolation that villagers often face. Inclusion is promoted by providing equal access to free workshops in geographical areas where fewer learning opportunities exist.





European Commission

Urban ecology

from Obshtestven centar za okolna sreda i ustoichivo razvitie

Volunteer changes citizens' minds on the environment

The Urban Ecology project focuses on attracting attention, raising awareness and offering sustainable models for environmental protection in the city of Varna, **Bulgaria**. Through its waste reduction and recycling programmes, civic awareness campaigns, and school outreach efforts, the project aims to make locals aware of their ecological footprint.

At the centre of this project is volunteer Valentina Vagge, 28, from Italy. After graduating with a Master's degree in Local and Global Development, she joined the Urban Ecology project to kickstart her career in the environmental NGO sector. As a foreigner, her participation has not only piqued the locals' interest in the initiative, but has also allowed her to highlight the international dimension of environmental sustainability and share good practices from her home country.

Every week, Valentina visits kindergartens and schools in support of the paper and waste recycling programme, providing information and getting children involved in paper recycling activities. She also works in the urban ecolab, measuring pollution, noise and radiation levels in order to inform the public of the state of their environment and motivate them to take action.

Project leaders believe that the Urban Ecology project exemplifies European values – ecology, environmental conservation, sustainable development and active citizenship. Furthermore, having a dedicated foreign volunteer like Valentina has shown the importance of cultural exchange in addressing common European issues.

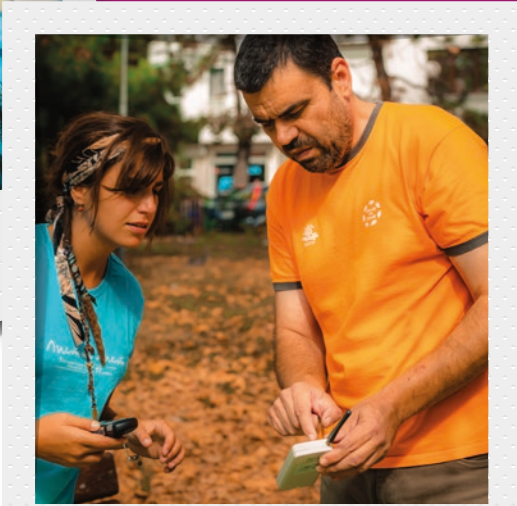


Valentina
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What does solidarity mean to you?

“Teamwork, with the aim of establishing mutual support and understanding within the society and improving the quality of life for everyone.”



EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS