



ecogenia

**ECOTOURISM
PILOT PROGRAM
IMPACT REPORT**

DORIDA • MAY - JULY 2022

Civic service in Greece is possible – it serves youth, sustainable development, and communities in need.

Ecogenia is the organization making this happen today.

Highlights

7 Cohort Members	1,575 Hours Served	85 Hours of Training	5.5km Trails Revitalized	200 People Reached
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ecogenia

VISION

Uniting a generation to create a resilient and equitable future.

MISSION

Mobilizing youth through civic service to accelerate sustainable impact for Greece.

GOAL

To become a national climate corps, where millions of young Greeks will demonstrate the power of their generation.



We are proud to share our first program impact report. This represents over two years of work that culminated in successfully completing our inaugural pilot from May 2 to July 1, 2022 – the first steps of offering a national civic service program for Greece.

As you read more about our program outputs and outcomes, we invite you to imagine what this will be as we scale across the country, and expand from a 10 week program to a full 6-10 month service term.

The Potential for Ecotourism in Dorida

We prioritized our pilot programming with an ecotourism project because of its significance for Greece's economy and environment. The tourism industry makes up 20% of the workforce, particularly for our target age group (18-30 year olds) and accounts for 18% of the country's GDP.

From the beginning, our commitment was to addressing a need that was identified by the local community and to working in underserved parts of Greece. As we sourced input from our advisors and network, the region of northern Dorida – a mountainous prefecture made of **18 villages** – emerged as a viable location with potential for scaling. Dorida is rich in biodiversity and strategically important because of the Mornos dam that provides the water to the Attiki region. The two villages we served, Alpochori and Zoriano, have a total of no more than 30 permanent residents, with up to 250 visitors during the summer season. Only Alpochori has functioning guest houses, and Zoriano has a school the community is hoping to restore. The network of trails we are revitalizing used to serve as the community's lifeline.



Ecogenia's First Cohort

Meet the **trailblazers**.

This group of seven is the **first of their generation** to say yes to civic service.



<p>Philip Biology & Environmental Studies, Athens</p>	<p>Filothei Geography & Environment Studies, Athens</p>	<p>Vaggelis Barber & Volunteer Firefighter, Nafpaktos</p>	<p>Pelagia Dance & Physics, Sparta</p>	<p>Alexandra Photography & Audio Visuals, Ioannina</p>	<p>Panagiota Psychology & Research, Ioannina</p>	<p>Barbara Business & Sustainability, Athens</p>
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€458
Monthly Stipend
(Accommodation Provided)

10
Customized Trainings

7
Professional Development Days

16
Guest Speakers

Cohorts learned something new during the professional development days at a rate of **80%**

Knowledge Gained

- Engaging with people of different backgrounds, age groups, political beliefs
- Experience of communal living
- Working on a team
- Hard-skills: trails building and marking, tool use and maintenance, first aid, wilderness safety
- Soft-skills: time management, public speaking, compromise, patience, responsibility
- Communications: conducting surveys and interviews, running social media, and preparing data reports
- Event organization and execution
- Knowledge of SDGs, civic engagement, and ecotourism (with certificate)

Topics Covered

- Ecotourism
- First Aid & Tools Safety
- Trail Building
- nEU Citizenship: Civic Engagement
- Project Management & Execution
- Planning a Volunteer Day Workshop
- Sustainable Development and ESG in Greece
- Data for Good: Climate Science, Metrics & Analysis
- Cultural Heritage: Practices and Methods for Community Preservation
- Career Development: Conducting Informational Interviews, CVs, LinkedIn

"Every moment we spend here, we are learning something new. It changes us somehow." - Panagiota

100%
of cohort members

- ... believe Ecogenia positively impacted them personally and as citizens
- ... will become active for issues that positively impact society after this program
- ... felt they learned a significant amount about the SDGs and ecotourism
- ... felt informed of the ways they could positively contribute to their communities

"This program takes action to another level. The end result exceeded all my expectations!" - Barbara

Paving the Way for Ecotourism

Restoring a trail network of 60 kms and revitalizing ecotourism and economic activity has been a priority for the community of Dorida for decades. The challenge has been in garnering the resources and capacity to do so. With these needs identified, our work served to address the requests, and take the first steps to actualize the locals' vision for their region.

7 Trails	2 Footbridges Rebuilt
5.5 km Revitalized	50 Community Members Served
1 Stream Redirected & Cleaned	1 Volunteer Day for Park Restoration



"The Ecogenia team left an incredible impression and brought life to our village." - Takis Broumas, local taverna owner

100%
of community members

... expressed a change of opinion on how engaged the younger generation is for their community
... are excited for Ecogenia to return with a new cohort next year

Community & Environmental Impact



Beyond the direct metrics highlighted above, we reached an additional 150 people and were integrated into the community outside the work accomplished by the cohorts. Community members joined in the trail building and participated in ecotourism and cultural heritage trainings.

The cohorts gave back in others ways too, and proactively:

- ➔ Revitalized the Guest House
- ➔ Led ongoing trash clean up through the village
- ➔ Learned about the region through visits to other villages botanical gardens

"Ecogenia's presence reenergized the region, and brought us back in time by reopening the historic trails that were once our livelihood." - Giorgos Nikolopoulos, Community Representative

On their own initiative, our cohort organized a volunteer day, which they led on one of their days off. Locals joined, and the team secured an in-kind donation for snacks.

- ➔ Revitalized public square that was historically significant for the community
- ➔ Painted and refurbished the public benches and gazebo
- ➔ Cleaned the square water fountain and re-installed swings



"I came here expecting to just be building trails, but soon realized the impact is more than we could have anticipated. The taverna owner told us it had been so many years since he heard laughter in the village outside of holiday times, and I am proud to be a part of these efforts." - Philip, Cohort Member

"Ecogenia is showing us the path to follow." - Makis Iliopoulos, Local taverna owner

The Path Ahead

100%

of cohort members

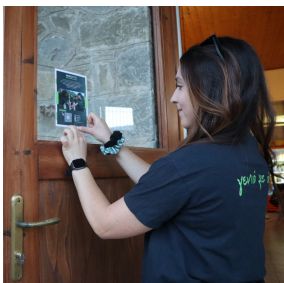
- ... are happy to have completed a term with Ecogenia
- ... would participate in another Ecogenia service term
- ... would recommend Ecogenia to a friend
- ... would like to see an Ecogenia program in their community



Post-service trajectories

- One** is working in the tourism sector in the Dorida region
- One** is completing an internship in data analytics with one of our partners
- One** is returning to work, and will seek environmentally-focused and localized opportunities
- Four** are continuing their studies, 2 of which are beginning higher degrees in sustainability

Our Commitment to Dorida



Hike our Trails!



This year's pilot is just the beginning. We posted flyers around the region for visitors to access the trail maps and learn about our work and Ecogenia will be represented at the region's Sustainability Conference in August 2022.

To maintain the momentum, and lay the foundation for long-term engagement, we will be returning to Dorida in Spring 2023 for our second pilot. We will be bringing another group of 10 diverse young Greeks to the mountains for 10 weeks, to revitalize another part of the trail network. After applying the lessons from these 2 pilots, we will scale in 2024 to run a 4 month program with 10 -20 cohort members. This year's cohorts have identified ecotourism projects that will enable us to engage with the community for years to come.

We are already partnering with specialists for next year's ecotourism and cultural heritage training, as well as with nationally recognized trail building organizations. We have also been asked by three neighboring villages in the region to run our program.

Be a part of our journey to build Greece's climate corps.
Join us for the next 100 km.

This impact would not be possible without the generous support from



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FOUNDATION



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-  /ecogenia.org
-  /ecogenia
-  www.ecogenia.org
-  info@ecogenia.org