



ecogenia

Education Pilot Program Impact Report

CHANIA | SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2022

Leveraging the civic service model to activate communities for sustainable development education and climate action.

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Note from the Co-Founders



Lia Papazoglou



Erika Spagakou

Our work in Crete marks the launch of our second pilot program area, that of sustainability education. It also marks the successful completion of Ecogenia's first pilot year.

Mobilizing 10 young people to run an educational program was the opportunity for us as an organization to demonstrate how the civic service model can be applied both in a different geographic setting and thematic area.

Our first education pilot ran from September 19–November 27, 2022 in Chania. After 2 weeks of training, our cohort member team executed a 7-week after-school program for a group of 10 kids ages 7–13. The team also facilitated 12 in-classroom workshops and 3 customized events with local partner organizations and the Municipality of Chania, reaching a total of 523 kids. The program culminated in a two-day Climathon, which was the first to be held in Chania and the first-ever globally to be kid-friendly.

The backbone of this program was a unique curriculum that our staff developed, which we called **Local Green Heroes**. Wanting to honor and acknowledge the existing work and best practices from the field, the curriculum incorporated material from the Lambrakis Foundation's Νοιάζομαι και Δρω Program, In Action for a Better World, Planet Agents, and Climate Fresk. Local Green Heroes was delivered in after-school settings, and was adapted into a 2 hour program which cohort members ran in classrooms with permission from teachers and administrators, as well as in large and small scale weekend events with program partners.

We are proud to share with you the results and impact of this education pilot. As you read more about our program outputs and outcomes, we invite you to imagine what this program could look like if it was scaled across the country, to meet our ambition of becoming a national program and extending just a 10 week program to a full 6–10 month service term.

Handwritten signatures of Lia Papazoglou and Erika Spagakou in black ink.



VISION

Uniting a **generation** to create a resilient and equitable future.



MISSION

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



PURPOSE

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

Highlights

10

Cohort
Members

1,600

Hours
Served

90

Hours of
Training

523

Kids
Engaged

145+

Community
Members
Reached

6

Community
Stakeholders
Engaged



Long-term
Impact

The Power of Education in Chania

Our decision to test our educational model in Chania specifically was informed by three factors.

First, is the recognition that education and raising awareness are foundational to meaningfully address the climate crisis and implement practical solutions; and including children in this process is critical.

Second, is the demonstrated impact of mobilizing young people through a service term to effectively engage children in a meaningful way.

Finally, the unique dynamics at play in Crete and Chania specifically. As a tourist destination, making ecological awareness, and seeing that it be instilled in children from an early age is important. Addressing this through education was identified as a need and area with strong potential by our local partners and the Municipality.



Meet the Cohort

This group of ten is among the **first Greek youth** to say yes to civic service.
They are our **Green Heroes**.



Vera Gospodini, 23
Thessaloniki
Philosophy & Pedagogy



Nikitas Karadakis Agkathidis, 19
Thessaloniki
Production Engineering



Anna Bilida, 24
Patras
Biological Sciences



Stergiani Boura, 26
Poligiros
Biological Apps & Technologies



Antonis Psaris, 24
Athens
Health and Welfare Professions



Nikolaos Karathanos, 26
Katerini
Humanities Studies



Arete Vlachodimou, 29
Copenhagen
Agriculture and Climate Change



Anastasios Orestis Kekas, 18
Athens
Production Engineering



Magdalini Shoulidou, 29
Chania
Economy & Management



Efthymios Alexandris, 25
Chania
Environmental Engineering



Meet Chania Cohort



“The impact of the program on me as an individual, but also on the community, has been greater than I ever expected.
- **Anna Bilida**, Cohort Member

Cohort Impact

Overview

This program adopted the **train the trainer** model, whereby Ecogenia's education experts trained the 10 cohort members on curriculum delivery.

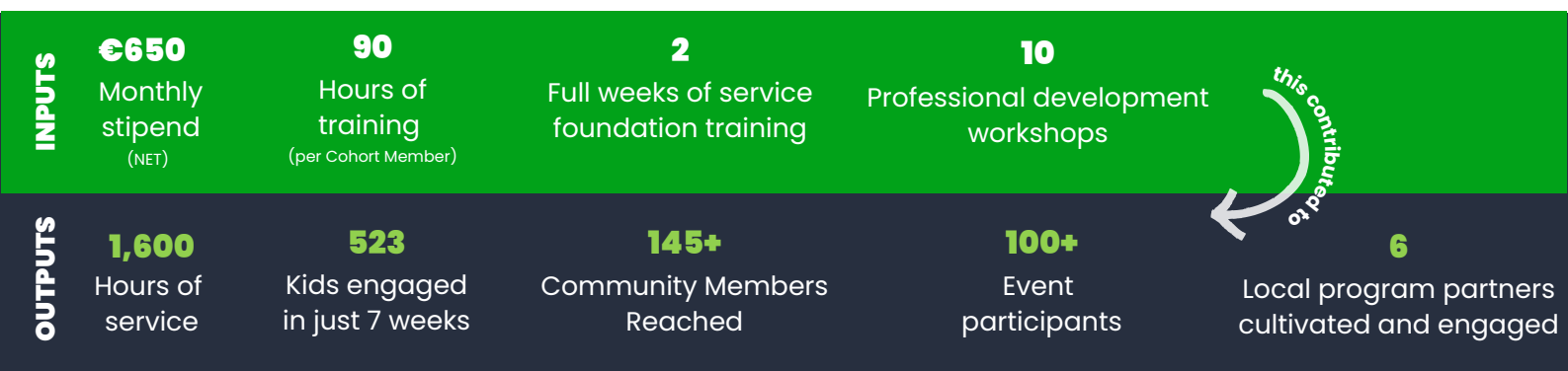
The cohort members then led an after-school enrichment program in addition to facilitating workshops with other partner organizations and in public school classrooms.

As a best practice, this model creates a stronger ripple effect and enables longer-lasting program impact. Equipping cohort members with new skills and exposing them to a diversity of trajectories and opportunities is a core part of Ecogenia's intended impact. How they then apply this knowledge is at the heart of the program.

In Chania, the focus was **education**.



Ecogenia Team & Chania Cohort during the 2022 Chania Climathon



During both weeks of training at the beginning of the program, **all cohort members** expressed that:

- The **goal** of the week was achieved **100%**
- They **learned** something new
- There was an overall **100% satisfaction rate**

Cohort members also saw a strong increase in their ability to:

- **Create a plan** to address a problem
- **Get other people** to care about a problem

As well as their **knowledge of sustainable development** and their **sense of feeling** informed about the ways they can contribute to the betterment of their community(ies).



Chania Cohort during nEUCitizenship Training Week

“Yes, I have started and will continue to live differently, more sustainably.”
 - **Anastasios Orestis Kekas**, Cohort Member

Children Impact

Overview

The main output and outcome of this civic service term was that the 10 cohort members used their knowledge, skills, and passion to lead workshops and an after-school program with kids.

The program sought to address the gaps that exist in environmental education. Through game-based activities and experiential learning, the kids learned about: volunteering, teamwork, active citizenship, sustainable development as well as the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



Local Green Heroes in action during Volunteer Day

Highlights

523

Children engaged in total

10

Children engaged in 7-week after-school program

304

Children engaged in one-time in classroom workshops

209

Children engaged in one-time events

Program Details

Focusing on environmental education as well as active citizenship, we developed a two-month training program with fun activities and experiential exercises. During the program, the children were thoroughly introduced to concepts such as: volunteering, teamwork, active citizenship, sustainable development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

For the success of the project, materials and structured exercises from different institutions (Lambrakis Foundation, Planet Agents, Climate Fresk and In Action For a Better World), were used. In addition to the after-school enrichment program, workshops were also held in schools on the following topics:

- Volunteering & Active Citizenship
- Meet the SDGs
- Save the sea from plastics

Local Green Hero



The visual concept of the program was focused on two Green Heroes – **E & Co** – in order to attract the attention of young students

I learned that to create a better future, we need to respect our blue and green planet.
– Workshop Student

100%

of participating children

- ... learned something new through the program
- ... had fun during the program
- ... would take part in a future project

Community Impact



13

Educators and administrators engaged

The support of local educators and administrators allowed our cohort members to facilitate workshops in select public school classrooms



3

Partner organizations

Municipality of Chania | Chania Scouts (1st & 2nd Troop) | Terra Creta



3

Public schools engaged

2o Gymnasio Chania | Elementary School of Vamvacopoulo | 14o Elementary School



22

Parents engaged

At least 22 parents consistently participated through special events, volunteer opportunities, etc.



Kids Day with Terra Creta



100%

of the parents/teachers

- ... believe that their child is more responsible towards the environment after the end of the program/had a positive influence
- ... would sign their children up for a future program of Ecogenia
- ... would recommend the program to others
- ... were totally satisfied with the program and with Ecogenia's cohort members and staff

Well done to all of you, who with so much love and teamwork have done your part to help my children protect the environment more and think about how to make everyone's life better through sustainable sources of development.
- Parent of Workshop Participant

Global Day of Action Volunteer Day

On Saturday, November 12th, also known as the COP27 Coalition's Global Day of Action, **49 volunteers** revitalized the playground, painted a mural, removed graffiti and planted a garden.

A cornerstone to Ecogenia's programming is training the cohort members to plan and execute a volunteer day, so that we demonstrate the power of paying it forward, and inspire cohort members to do the same, beyond their service term.

Our Education pilot cohort members planned, managed and executed a volunteer day to benefit our valued program partner, **the 2nd High School of Chania**.

They also secured local sponsorships for the supply costs for the day.



Our Local Green Heroes during the Open Volunteer Day

Nikos and kid volunteers in action

“Ecogenia helped me to understand the magnitude of the need for volunteers and so it is very likely that I will participate in volunteer activities again!”

- Nikos Karathanos, Cohort Member



A Climathon friendly for children

In partnership with (UN SDSN and Climate KIC), Ecogenia and our cohort team executed the **first-ever kids-friendly Climathon** event! In Chania, participants ranging from 7-30 years old and families gathered for two days to come up with practical solutions to the challenge: *How can the city of Chania become more sustainable?*

Co-Organized by Ecogenia, Ecogenia's cohort members, and Youthmakers Hub, under the auspices of EIT Climate-Kic and the Municipality of Chania, the two-day ideathon welcomed over 30 participants and consisted of 9 workshops, 14 hours of activities, and 7 teams in 3 different ages brackets - including 2 families!

Participants pitched solutions for a sustainable Chania in the three areas of:

Transportation, Waste Management, Sustainable Tourism



The Climathon event would not have been possible without the input and expertise of the workshop leaders:

- Natassa Triantafillidou of V Group,
- Zoi Novak of the Soil Food Web School,
- Stella Apostolaki of the American College of Greece
- TIUC Eco Racing team.

A very big thank you to our event sponsors and in-kind donors who enabled this first-of-its kind event: **Latsis Foundation, V Group, Planet Agents**; and local sponsors who provided prizes and in-kind support: **Jacobs, Popi's Bookstore, Samaria, Ntounia Farm.**



Our Local Green Heroes receiving their Climathon prizes

“The Ecogenia after-school program was successful this year and we hope that next year it will be even bigger. That is to say that the primary and secondary educational community will embrace it, as it really offers an important opportunity for many children to experience essential environmental education.

- **Anna Nempavlaki**, Special Advisor of Education at the Municipality of Chania

Moving Forward

Post-service trajectory

Most of the Chania 2022 cohort will continue with their studies, and one will go on to do his military service. Ecogenia is currently working on developing an **alumni network for all 2022 pilot cohort teams** to unite and continue engaging with our collective vision on climate action and civic service.



Chania Cohort after the certification ceremony

Long-term Impact

Children are the leaders of tomorrow and have an innate ability to work across generations and inspire change in their peers, families, and broader communities. Reaching kids beyond the typical classroom setting and engaging them through different learning methods also sparks a different kind of motivation and interest.

Through our pilot in Chania we sought to demonstrate this potential, as well as the added benefit of mobilizing youth to administer curricula in non-formal educational settings. This benefits the community by creating an inter-generational dialogue, in addition to organizations who lack capacity and/or resources to engage students in this way.

The rationale behind our pilot phase and model is to test and adapt our offering. Much like in our first ecotourism program, this program in Chania was a valuable learning opportunity for us; adapting our initial plan ultimately enabled us to surpass our expected impact metrics, and to test our model and curriculum in different formulations. And this is what a pilot is for - to test, adapt and refine.

Future Steps

Our vision is to unite a generation to build a resilient and **equitable future for Greece**. This is a long-term and gradual process. Creating alliances and gaining supporters will be beneficial not only to our vision, but also for the **youth of this country**. Our two pilot programs are only the beginning of what we hope to achieve. If you are interested in our work and want to be a part of our journey, **we invite you to join us as we work to inspire and mobilize active citizens from an early age**.

This impact would not be **possible** without the **generous support** from:



HELIDONI
FOUNDATION



Κοινοφελές Ίδρυμα
Ιωάννη Σ. Λάιτον

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21 / 10 / 2022

κοινωνία

αγάπη

ενθουσιασμός

αγάπη

