



# Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

SAVE THE EARTH RECYCLE ALL  
Erasmus+ project

Learning, teaching and training activity  
Meeting in Estonia, Gaia school  
November 17-22, 2019

Estonian meeting was the fourth project meeting and the main objective was to introduce partner schools the Gaia way of teaching and learning at school, Gaia school environment and approach towards teaching, how to become a green school and create the guidelines for green lifestyle for project partners.

First day of the meeting - November 18th

All participants gathered to Gaia school. They were welcomed by the group of Gaia school children and teachers who had prepared games and information about countries for the purpose of getting to know the people who had come to the meeting. Together they also created name tags. Each participant made their own name tag and also painted their names on the illustration on the wall. Gaia school children took the teams to the school tour where they showed the environment of everyday school life. We had a discussion about how Gaia school differs from normal state schools in Estonia and what are the main guidelines used in teaching and learning.



After lunch we discussed the week ahead and made sure that we all have the same idea and understanding of tasks during this week. Afternoon was spent in the old town of Tallinn. We participated in Tallinn Legends show, got a glimpse inside the history of Tallinn and Estonia, walked on the streets of old town and had lovely dinner.

Second day of the meeting - November 19th

Every partner school had prepared their own workshop for the day. The purpose was to show the good practice of recycling or reusing materials. Gaia school new in advance what kind of materials were needed, so we had enough time to gather them.

Estonian workshop - making paper. Gaia school teacher Kristel Saage has long experience of making recycled paper and now she was showing it to all participants. School environment is producing great amounts of paper which can be used in several ways. This kind of recycled paper was also used for making name tags and greeting cards for the guests. Every participant went practically through all stages of making paper and took the piece with them.



Spanish workshop - making spinners. This was very fun way of making a toy which the children really like. Spanish children explained Gaia school kids the process of creating spinners and that was one of the highlights of the day. Estonian kids were sure that next project week few of them would like to conduct similar workshop for the rest of Gaia kids.



Turkish workshop - making a scarf. The scarf making process is actually time consuming but the Turkish team did a great job showing the technique used for that so that every participant could take the task with them and continue when they like. Collecting the materials for that workshop was not easy because although we all eat ice cream a lot, we don't tend to collect the wooden sticks, we just throw them away. This was great practice for kids, to really see that something this ordinary as ice cream wooden stick, can be used making something nice and useful. Lot of Gaia school kids continued scarf making throughout several days whenever they had free time. And yet again they decided that the experience is worth sharing with other children during the project week.



Italian workshop - composting. Italian children had prepared very illustrative and clear presentation about what is the correct way of composting waste and what to do to get good soil. They also used material we gathered together from the school yard, to go through practical stages of making compost. This was very good knowledge, both theoretical and practical. Gaia school has a compost box in their school yard, so the mixes we made during workshop were all taken to the compost box. In spring we can use the soil for planting seeds and plants.



Afternoon was for the tour again. This time Gaia school children took the guests to the school surroundings. They showed Kadriorg park, places Gaia school has outdoor lessons and can observe nature, the oak tree square where Gaia school starts and ends their school year (because they don't do it inside the school house) and also specific Japanese garden, which is good for learning different plants that don't normally grow in parks. The guests could also see the presidential palace of Estonia and beautiful Katharienthal Castle which nowadays serves as a national art museum.

Third day of the meeting - November 20th

The beginning of the day was a field trip. We visited Estonian open air museum. The guests could observe how Estonian people used to live in old days, how they cooperated with nature and what were the materials used for building houses. After walking around the museum grounds, we gathered together in large classroom and participated in the lesson which introduced one of the important Estonian folk traditions - St. Catharina's Day. Participating children could practically go through some activities connected to this celebration and they learned a lot about the reasons why we need to celebrate. Lot of recycled materials can be used in preparations for this tradition.



Afternoon was project work at Gaia school. We talked about what kind of guidelines we should create for ourselves in order to follow green lifestyle and build sustainable life environment for ourselves. Gaia school kids had prepared a big wheel and now it was time to fill it with good ideas. Every team was eager to work and the end result was amazing.

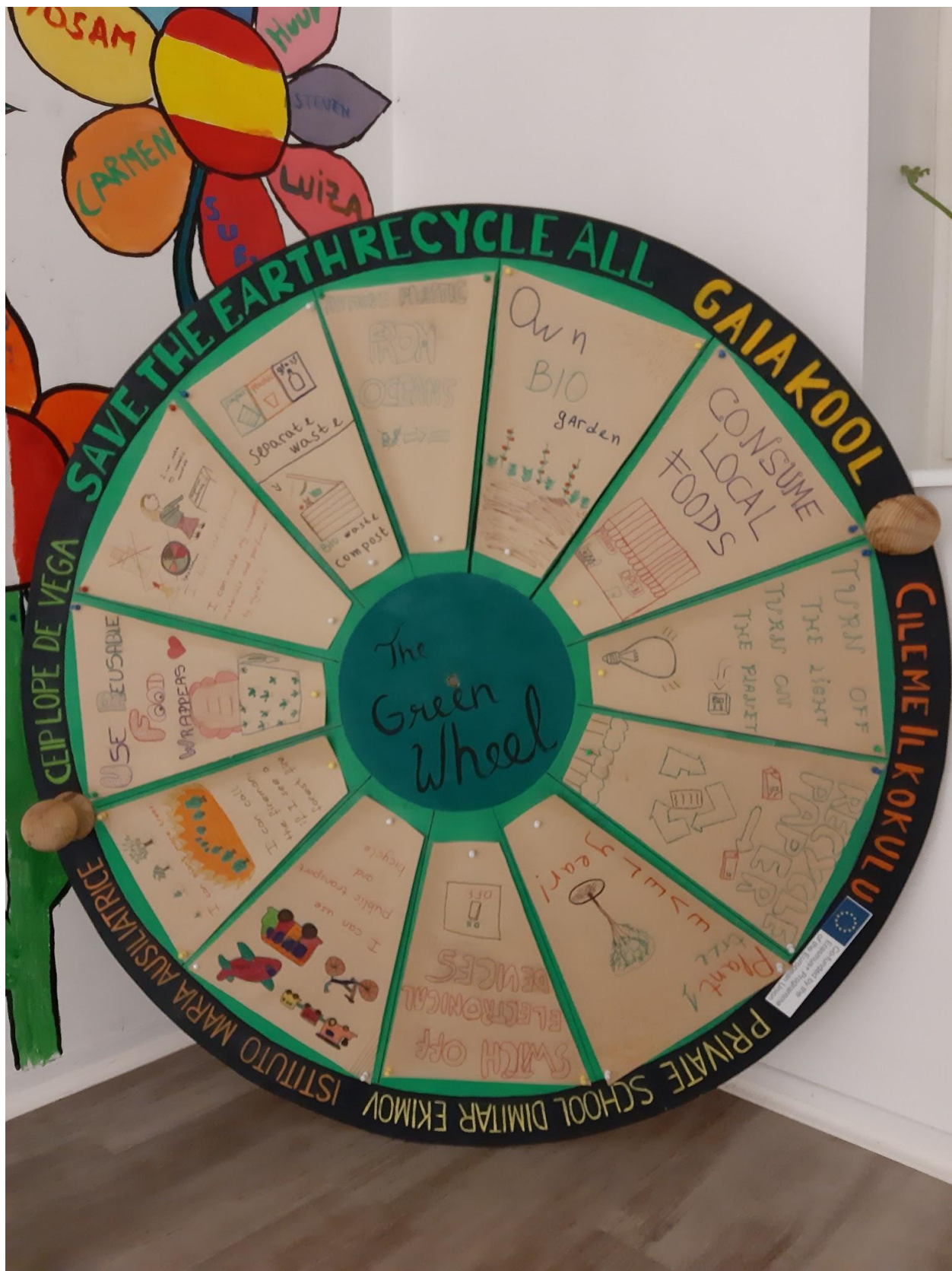


Our guidelines for green living:

Own bio garden; remove plastic from oceans; separate waste; make bio waste compost; make cosmetics and perfumes myself; use reusable food wrappers; planting more trees; use public transport and bicycle; switch off electrical devices; recycle paper; turn off the lights; consume local foods.

All those great guidelines were artistically put inside our Green Wheel which stays on the wall of Gaia school and reminds us all the time about green lifestyle and sustainable living.





Fourth day of the meeting - November 21st

This was the day of celebrations. First we all gathered together with the whole Gaia school and went on a parade. We celebrated St. Catherine's Day, walked around the block and sang traditional songs. They are such songs where leading singer sings a phrase and then everybody repeats the same phrase. It is easy even if you don't know the language. We also wished a lot of good luck to everybody by throwing seeds on the ground. Later on, the local birds will be very happy.



After getting back to school house, we gathered together on the 3rd floor to celebrate further. This time with traditional dances. Gaia school kids had learned and prepared some dances and they showed them to everybody and asked the guests to join in. This was great practice and fun. Traditional dances are easy to remember and children as well as teachers enjoyed this interaction very much.

After lunch we gathered together in circle again. During this meeting, one of the main practices of Gaia philosophy - the circle - was constantly used in every possible occasion. We started and ended the day with it. This time we had to evaluate and reflect the meeting. Every person could say what they learned and enjoyed during the meeting. The electronic version of the evaluation was filled also. After saying thanks and distributing certificates and gifts it was time for the traditional farewell dinner. This time the dinner was prepared by considering traditional food available in Estonia. During the whole meeting we tried to consume local food and prepared everything ourselves. No plastic or disposable tableware was used, we washed dishes ourselves and cleaned after ourselves. We have strongly decided that green guidelines are here to stay and we will live by them.



