

# #NEWME



## #NewME Magazine 1st Edition



LIFE PROJECT  
PROJEKT-MEDIA-EDUKACJA-FITNESS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

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# DEMOCRACY FROM THE GROUND

The Universities for Climate movement, founded in 2019, unites Czech students, academics, and staff in addressing climate change and advocating for social justice. Inspired by Fridays for Future, it focuses on non-violent actions like occupation strikes and campaigns. Decentralized across cities, each chapter upholds shared values like anti-discrimination and solidarity.

Highlights include the Anti-Fossil Spring campaign and advocating for plant-based meals in university cafeterias. This grassroots initiative challenges slow political responses, empowering collective action for needed systemic change.



Picture made by: Olga Wawracz



# PLATANENPOWER - FIGHTING FOR GREENERY

In 2018, the city of Münster announced a plan to cut down two tall trees next to an important street in the city. They claimed that this was necessary to create a temporary alternative road due to a construction site. Many citizens were not pleased with this decision and demanded an opportunity to voice their opinions and discuss alternative solutions. To organize a protest and promote their petition to preserve the plants they founded an initiative called “Platanenpower.”

We met with Doro and Winny, two of the organizers, who were able to give us some insights about their work.



**THE FULL VIDEO:**



# HOW DOES RECYCLING WORK IN NORTH MACEDONIA ?

In the following, we will explain how the North Macedonian recycling system works. The company “PAKOMAK” consists of the 11 leading production companies in North Macedonia. They are open to other companies that have the obligation to manage their packaging waste and are aware of their social responsibility to ensure a healthier environment. Its mission is to provide customers with responsible, efficient and cost-effective management of their packaging waste in accordance with their legal obligations.



“Sound of Green” is an eco-festival organised by them, where tickets can be obtained in exchange for three empty plastic bottles of any size. This entry mechanism aims to encourage young people to think about the environment and remind them that small changes in their habits can make a difference.



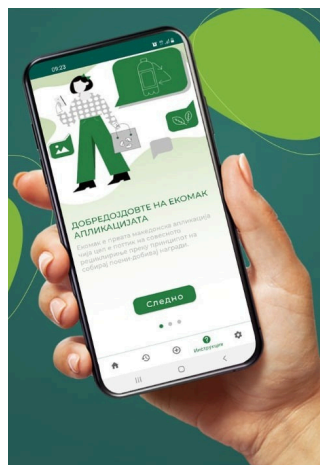
# THE NEW RECYCLING SYSTEM



Pakomak is the first Macedonian company to introduce the latest global trend in waste selection in the Republic of North Macedonia – reverse vending machines for the collection of plastic bottles and cans. With the new refundable vending machines, citizens will be able to dispose of packaging waste and in return receive “green points” for purchasing products. The main objective of these machines is to increase the possibility of selective waste disposal, especially in urban areas.



The app allows users to collect points and use them as vouchers in stores. It is part of a larger ecosystem where the user uses the app to authenticate with a vending machine and collect points for the bottle of waste. Citizens receive the real value of the material they choose, i.e. the market value. If the price of plastic and cans goes up, the point will also go up.



# JOURNEY OF A PLASTIC BOTTLE



We have long been aware of the problem of plastic pollution caused by the amount of single-use plastic bottles in circulation. Plastic bottles are an extremely convenient option, especially for storing water, but also for packaging cosmetics, medicines or cleaning products. The problem of plastic bottles is a very popular and well-known issue in the ecological world, but do we really know what the journey of our little plastic waste looks like after landing in a yellow bin or colloquially in the “grass?”

## WHAT DOES THE JOURNEY OF A BOTTLE LEFT IN THE “GRASS” LOOK LIKE?

A bottle takes around 1,000 years to decompose, depending on the size and thickness of the plastic. The biggest problem is microplastics, which are invisible in nature, especially in the ocean. They poison marine life and enter our bodies through the food chain, where they continue to do harm. They also damage coral reefs and cause animals to become entangled in or eat the waste.





## WHAT DOES THE BOTTLE'S JOURNEY THROUGH RECYCLING LOOK LIKE?

When you put the bottle in the yellow bin, it goes to a sorting plant, not to a landfill or into the natural environment. Such a bottle can be recycled and returned to store shelves as good as new. The plastic from such bottles first goes to the appropriate sorting plants, where it is sorted and properly shredded so that it can later give new life to other plastic products.

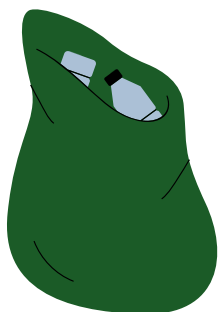
### WHAT CAN YOU CREATE FROM SUCH A BOTTLE?

- sportswear polyester
- plastic furniture, e.g. garden furniture
- elements for 3D printers
- household ornaments

## HOW CAN WE CHANGE SOMETHING?

The plastic problem won't be solved by sorting waste or recycling, but we can reduce the amount of plastic in our lives. Let's buy recycled plastic, separate our waste and use reusable bottles – small steps can make a big difference. We should also encourage companies to use green alternatives and lobby governments to introduce legislation for plant-based plastics or glass. To make a real difference, we need to

reduce the influence of big business. Education and outreach are crucial to raising awareness about plastic consumption. Schools and communities can promote initiatives such as beach clean-ups or plastic-free challenges to encourage responsible habits.



## **LIFE OF A PLASTIC BOTTLE AND OF A HUMAN**

Our action in reducing plastic waste and its consequences can encourage more people to make informed choices that are good for the environment. Reducing plastic pollution is a collective effort, and small changes at the individual level, along with changes in industry and policy, can lead to significant progress in protecting our planet.

Let's not forget that addressing the problem of plastic bottles and other single-use plastics requires both immediate action and long-term commitment.

By understanding the journey of a plastic bottle, whether left in nature or recycled, we become more aware of the impact of our choices. With this awareness and our actions, we can effectively reduce the plastic burden on our ecosystems and for future generations.



# MORE THAN HONEY: WHY BEES ARE IRREPLACEABLE

**AND HOW WE CAN HELP THEM**

Bees are nature's true heroes: they pollinate around 90% of all plants, ensuring not only their reproduction but also the balance of our ecosystems. Wild bees in particular play a central role, reaching many plant species that honeybees cannot. But their future is under threat from habitat loss, pesticides and climate change.

The video impressively shows how different cities (Brno, Czech Republic and Lviv, Ukraine) are already taking action to protect bees – such projects are encouraging and show how important it is to act together. The good news is that we can all help! By planting bee-friendly flowers, creating nesting aids or avoiding the use of chemicals, we can help protect the bee population. Without their help, much of our plant life, and therefore our food supply, would be under serious endangerment.

**PROTECT BEES, PROTECT NATURE!**

**FIND THE FULL VIDEO:**

**CLICK HERE**



## Democracy from the ground


**Creative Team:** #NewME Youth Board Czech team; Olga Wawracz


**Photos:** Univerzity za klima collective

## Platanenpower – Fighting for Greenery

**Creative Team:** #NewME Youth Board German team;

Kea Lünemann, Laurenz Pelster, Noah Weckenbrock



**Images:** NRWision – MNSTR.TV: “Platanenpower” –  
Nachbarschaftsinitiative in Münster (02.11.2020) 

**Music:** Gentle Breeze – 1st Contact 

## How does recycling work in North Macedonia



**Creative Team:** #NewME Youth Board Macedonian team;

Kristina Gashtarova, Nikola Kristijan Cenov, Simona Zlatanovska,  
Filip Davchev

**Sources:** Pakomak.com  Pakomak Reverse Vending Machines 

## Journey of a plastic bottle

**Creative Team:** #NewME Youth Board Polish team; Karolina Bober,  
Karolina Kafara, Maria Bielanicz, Adam Weimer, Stanisław Buszta


**Sources:** National Geographic, “One Bottle at a Time”  Food Print,  
“A New Report Details the Climate, Health and Human Rights Impacts  
of a Plastic Bottle” 

## More than honey: Why bees are irreplaceable

**Creative Team:** #NewME Youth Board Ukrainian team;

Maria Abramchuk, Iryna Konchak

**Voiceover:** Oleksandra Korzh

**Music:** The Harrysons – Harry E  
dvino, Epidemic Sound 



# #NEWME MAGAZINE



This publication has received funding from the European Commission under Grant Agreement no. 2021-1-DE04-KA220-YOU-000028739, ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership, “#NewME: New Media for Green Citizenship.” Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Published in January 2025.

Content by: #NewME European Youth Editorial Board

Design: Made with Canva

Editing by: Antonia Liebich and Holly Dagnan



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