

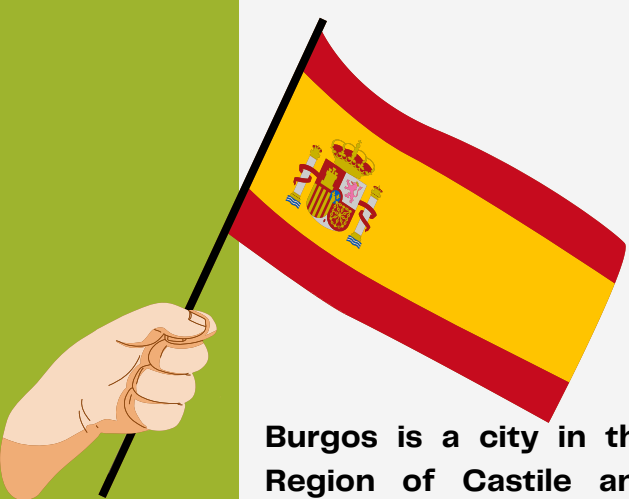
Now or Never

2021



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Spain



Burgos is a city in the Region of Castile and Leon in northwest Spain. Burgos is traditionally considered the center of Castile.

Burgos was established in northern Spain, in the middle of the Iberian Peninsula, at an altitude of 856 m, away from the sea. It is 244 km from Madrid, the Spanish capital.

The city of Burgos

In the opinion of Ecologists in Action that the Burgos-1 station (to measure pollution) does not reflect actual urban pollution data as it is located in a semi-pedestrian space. Ecologists in Action has called on the Government of Castilla y León to relocate this measuring station in order to get correct information about the quality of the air it breathes and therefore, implement appropriate measures to reduce the presence of pollutants affecting their health.

There is little participation by the citizens of Burgos in sustainable mobility.

Projects in the wind farms "Marmica" and "Fuerga" (would include 49 large mills, as well as their evacuation infrastructure -high voltage overhead electricity line to 220,000 V) which Ecologists in Action in Burgos oppose by demonstrating the unacceptable dangers they pose to the environmental, landscape and cultural values of the areas concerned.

The refusal of the Department of Mobility to celebrate the Day Without Cars shows the little interest in restricting traffic when it comes to showing the advantages of streets closed to the car

The need to promote Safe School Roads and to restrict traffic in school environments at least during check-in and check-out times, in order to ensure that the school population is in a safer and healthier space.

Exists the need to define Low Emission Zones not only in the city center, but also in other neighborhoods and, of course, in school environments. Also improve the measurement of urban air quality, relocating the measurement station of the regional board to another place that provides a more real measurement. We also have the need to expand pedestrian zones, not only in the city center, but also in other neighborhoods.


We must improve the connection by public transport of the city and its surroundings, so that the need to use the car is reduced. There is also a need for the creation of cycle paths that will safely connect the surroundings municipalities with the city and safe roads for pedestrians.



The region of Castilla y Leon

With the entry into force of Law 38/1972 of December 22, on the protection of the atmospheric environment, whose objective is to prevent, monitor and correct atmospheric pollution situations, the Atmospheric Pollution Surveillance and Control Network was born in Spain. The objectives of the Pollution Surveillance Network are:

- Know the general state of air quality
- Compliance with air quality regulations and evaluation of control strategies.
- Risk assessment for human health, other living beings and materials.
- Have information on the background concentration.
- Determine the highest concentrations expected in an area.
- Implementation of emergency measures to avoid episodes.
- Carry out specific monitoring of certain emissions or certain pollutants.
- Determine the impact of a source: Anthropogenic, Natural.
- Provide criteria for land use
- Validation of dispersion models.



Environmental problems in Spain

Spain generates around 1.6 million tons of plastic packaging waste each year. Spain recycles slightly less than half of his trash. From this data, 126 tons of plastic are thrown into the sea every day and most of these plastics are throwaway objects. 76% of the trash on the beaches are pieces of plastic, disposable objects such as cotton buds, straws, cutlery or bottles. The future waste law aims to cut out single-use utensils by banning some and forcing people to pay for others. Although that law is already in place, there is still a lot of garbage on the beaches.

Beside these figures are very worrying, Spain is in sixth position in the European ranking of packaging recycling. At the same time, spanish people are the most likely to recycle at home with 89% compared to 63% in the UK and 59% in the US.

The European Union's Life program has approved financial aid for this year amounting to 64.7 million euros for 32 projects and actions to be carried out in the next four years in Spain aimed at protecting nature, the environment and climate change.

In the European Union as a whole, the Life program has approved, in this year's resolution, aid valued at 243 million euros for the development of 142 projects, which in total, with contributions from each state, will involve investments worth 430.7 million euros.

Concepts



UPCYCLING

Upcycling the Oceans Spain was born in September 2015 by the ECOALF Foundation as a pilot project in which 9 fishing ports participated. A year later, it joined the ECOEMBES project to expand it throughout the Spanish coast and guarantee the correct management of all recovered waste.

RECYCLING

According to Eurostat data, Spain recycles approximately 34.7% of its urban waste; a correct figure, but far from the countries that lead this list – Germany (66.7%), Slovenia (59.2%) and Austria (58.2%) – and even more than 10 points below the European average, 47.7%.

CRITICAL CONSUMPTION

The growing awareness of collective responsibility towards the environment and society as a whole has already been transferred to the consumption habits of Spanish citizens. In fact, as revealed by a new study by the Organization of Consumers and Users (OCU) and the NESI Global Forum (Forum of the New Economy and Social Innovation), 73.5% of Spaniards base their purchase decisions and style of life in relation to ethical and sustainability principles, and 62% affirm that they believe in the great capacity of their responsible consumption method to improve the system. Specifically, this percentage said they consider consumption as a "very powerful tool to change the world and the social economy."

"Almost three-quarters of Spaniards make consumption decisions for ethical or sustainability reasons to some degree, either to avoid certain products and services (21.6%), to prefer them (29.5%) or for both options (22.4%)"

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

"Spain Circular 2030", the Spanish Strategy for Circular Economy, has been approved by the Council of Ministers, laying the foundations to promote a new model of production and consumption in which the value of products, materials and resources are maintained in the economy during the longest possible time, in which the generation of waste is reduced to a minimum and those that cannot be avoided are used to the greatest extent possible.

SUSTANABILITY

The 2021 Sustainable Development Report of the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) places Spain in 20th place in the world. The document also concludes that the COVID-19 pandemic affects the achievement of the global sustainability goals set by the United Nations 2030 Agenda. Regarding the analysis by objectives, Spain is making good progress, according to the report, in the fight against poverty, health and well-being, quality education, affordable and clean energy, infrastructure and innovation and in sustainable cities. Of course, we have to improve at the national level in sections such as underwater life, carbon dioxide emissions, the protection of terrestrial ecosystems, food and also in terms of social equality.

ECO-CONCEPTION

The ecological trend is not something new in our country, in fact it has been gradually introduced and even slower than desired. But the step taken in the last 2 or 3 years is worth mentioning since it is creating an entire economy that is consolidating and is gaining strength with opportunities for new entrepreneurs without the fear of a few years ago.

In Barcelona the “Eco” phenomenon is sweeping away. Not only because of the number of stores that sell a wide range of these products, but also because of the diversification and the opening of new concepts that offer new consumer interpretations.

Now or never learning outcomes

To be honest, we can't describe our happiness to be part of this exchange programme, that was such a good experience where we knew many people from different countries around the world and we discovered the east of Turkey which we admire the view, peoples, food the city and the lake.

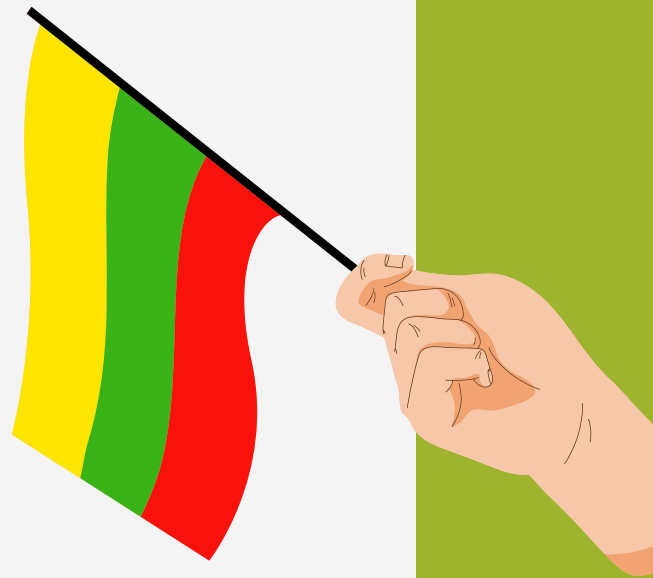
During the project we felt really the meaning of the environment (recycling,eco system,..). The atmosphere was 100% ecologic and without thinking to much you will find yourself used to be more conscient about the awareness of plastic and toxic production. Our visit to the center of recycling was so fantastic we saw a great team who works on this with the latest technology. I advice you to be part of every exchange programme you won't regret, but you will learn and you will improve you skills and knowledge.



6 Lithuania

The capital city of Lithuania is Vilnius. It is located in the southeast of the country.

The exact date, when Vilnius was founded is unknown. There is a legend explaining its origin called the Iron Wolf Legend. The name of the city of Vilnius comes from the river Vilnelė flowing through it.



The city of Vilnius

These days, many new projects are being developed in Vilnius for sustainability, renewable energy, etc. related topics. For example, municipal waste used for energy recovery in Vilnius. Construction of a waste-to-energy plant in Lithuania's capital Vilnius will help cut the use of landfill for the disposal of municipal waste by making it possible to use it as a source of energy. The plant will treat up to 160,000 tonnes a year of waste identified as non-recyclable and non-reusable following sorting, mainly at mechanical biological treatment facilities. This waste will be incinerated for the simultaneous recovery of heat and production of electricity – a process known as cogeneration.

Vilnius also started to introduce LED based technologies in the system of street lighting. There was installed about 42000 new street lights that will lead to the saving of above the 70 % of energy from 24 million MW annual consumption.

In 2012 there was introduced the electronic ticket. Separate single-use tickets for buses and trolleybuses were replaced by days electronic tickets that are really helping in reducing paper waste. A year later in Vilnius were installed approximately 30 km of public transportation lanes and there was also introduced an express bus network.



NOW OR NEVER



Environmental problems

- v One of the problems in Lithuania is that factories emit a lot of harmful gases, but we don't feel the air pollution a lot, because our cities are full of nature.
- v The old generation hardly admires new perspective eco activities, like recycling.



Recycling

- v Approximately 76% of Lithuanians recycle.
- v There are recycling bins in schools and in universities too.
- v When we buy plastic or glass bottles, metal cans, we have to pay extra 10 cents per bottle. If you return it, you get your money back.

Sustainability

- v Shops still have single-use plastic bags.
- v Plastic straws are banned, so most cafes and restaurants use paper ones.
- v A lot of people buy second-hand clothes instead of new ones
- v If you don't want to wear your clothes anymore, but they are still good to use, you can throw them in special clothes bins or sell them on the internet.



NOW OR NEVER

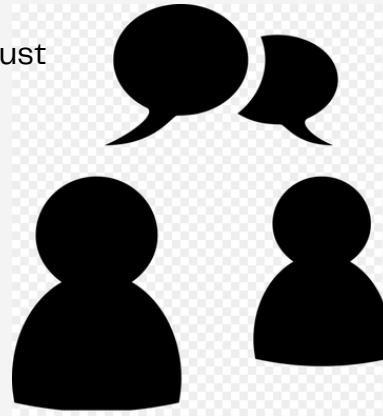
Critical consumption

- v A lot of people in Lithuania buy things without thinking if they really need it.
- v Shops don't waste food which expire date is close to the actual date. Its donate it to charity.
- v Restaurants and cafes waste a lot of food



Advice for young people:

- Everytime before buying something think if you really need it
- Recycle
- Try to use public transport, ride a bike or just walk instead of using a car
- Plant trees in your city
- Try to eat less meat or no meat at all
- Be aware of the environmental problems



Now or never learning outcomes

During this project we got to know a lot about problems that the environment is facing nowadays. We became more aware of how to deal with these problems



NOW OR NEVER



Croatia

1



The city of PULA

Due to the fact that Pula is located on the sea side part of Croatia the big problem is the waste that ends up in the sea. People are throwing all kinds of trash in the sea including plastic, car tires, electronic devices and much worse. The reason for that is the fact that we don't have a good pick up garbage system and people don't feel like paying additional money to garbage system to collect their waste. So it's easier for them to just throw it into the sea. Other big problem is the garbage picking up system by itself. People are separating their waste in 4 different waste bins (plastic and metal, paper, glass, trash that can't be recycled) and the garbage people come and put it all together in the same garbage truck. Government is also not doing enough. Croatia does not have good, clear and functional laws that would be beneficial and functional in everyday practices. They also don't emphasize enough the importance of protecting nature and are always making excuses and blaming someone or something else for the problems.

Croatia



Good Practices about waste management

A waste water treatment plant is being rebuilt and extended in order to increase its capacity to be able to treat the amount of waste water that would normally be produced by a population of approximately 127 000 people. The plant will also be equipped to carry out tertiary treatment, the final cleaning process that improves the quality of waste water before it is reused, recycled or discharged into the environment.

Sludge from all of the waste water treatment plants throughout Varaždin county will be taken to the extended plant for the purpose of anaerobic digestion. This is the process by which organic matter is broken down in a sealed, oxygen-free tank called an anaerobic digester. It will then be used for the production of biogas, which is a source of renewable energy.

6



Turkey



The city of Van

Van is a city located in the eastern Anatolia region of Turkey. Having hosted many great civilizations such as the Urartians in history, Van also contains many existing cultures.

Besides, it has many untouched natural beauties. With this feature, it hosts many tourists from different countries and regions every year. Lake Van, Turkey's largest lake, is in a depression in the middle of high mountains. Although the surrounding of Lake Van and the valleys are covered with rich vegetation, the mountains are generally treeless. The lands of the province present a steppe landscape.

With the increasing population of Van, pollution has reached great proportions. There is a province, 6 districts, 136 villages and factories around Lake Van, which is a closed basin with 450 kilometres of coast and 3,570 square kilometres of water surface. The domestic wastes of approximately one million people living in the Van Lake basin are discharged directly into the lake without any treatment. The pollution created by the wastes in the lake as a result of the water level falling to the normal level this year has now become visible. In the Van Lake basin, there are treatment plants belonging to the Van Municipality and Yüzüncü Yıl University, but it has been learned that these facilities are in a non-functional condition.

Turkey

Environmental problems

Van obtains most of its energy needs from non-recyclable sources such as natural gas, coal, etc., which we call fossil fuels. As we mentioned above, fossil fuels are non-recyclable fuels.

environmental pollution causes problems in many issues such as health. These problems are clearly visible in Van, which has a large population. As the amount of use of fossil fuels in heating, factories, etc. increases, this also increases.

The effect causes enormous levels of air pollution. The recent increase in respiratory diseases also shows this in a better way. Although the city of Van has the potential to meet its energy needs from natural resources, that is, from resources that can be recycled, with certain exceptions, advanced solutions (such as electricity generation from recycling, wind panels) are available.

It does not seem possible to say that it has been implemented. Obtaining the necessary energy need from fossil fuels causes many social problems as well as environmental problems. With the implementation of sustainable energy into daily life, many of these social problems have been solved by themselves.

will be. Because each country will be able to meet its own energy needs from natural resources in accordance with its own geographical conditions.



The Possible Solutions

Solution offers

1-) First of all, we must make this problem, which harms all living things all over the world and threatens its existential continuity, a matter of priority.

In this context, it is not possible for us to say that such a priority exists in the city and country we live in. The practices that individuals can do individually should be explained through structures such as education, social media, etc. For example, with smart home projects, individuals

In order to obtain their own energy needs from natural resources, to prevent air pollution, vehicles such as public transportation vehicles or bicycles that do not harm the environment and make it possible to be healthy should be encouraged. In this sense, awareness

In order to increase the number of students, projects should be organized and students at all education levels should be encouraged to these issues.

2-) In addition to the individual actions we have mentioned above, large projects that will meet the energy needs of the city in general need to be implemented. For example, in addition to the recently installed wind panels, the energy need should be met from other existing natural sources (sun, Lake Van).

In summary, the solution to this problem is possible with individual awareness and the creation of natural energy systems that will meet the energy needs of the city.

