

Sustainable
Development

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

IRIS is dedicated to environmental protection and environmental improvements which will strengthen sustainable future and lead towards social and economic improvements of the social communities at the national, regional, and European levels. In order to achieve this, we strongly believe in the power of **youths**.

Young people are the wheel of change and **education** is the 'fuel' for turning the wheel towards the right direction. For this reason, we aim at educational programs which can provide youths with useful tools in order to make a step forward.

Environmental sustainability has gained significant importance over time. It inculcates the scarcity of resources and minimizes environmental damages. It pertains to the choices which will affect all living beings, natural resources, and climate. However, there are numerous factors that directly or indirectly affect the environmental sustainability of countries, including governance, income inequality, property rights, social inclusiveness, and women empowerment. For this reason, we should never forget the interconnection of **social, economic, and environmental sustainability**.

Naturally, we are committed to working with a range of stakeholders to foster cooperation and joint work for the purpose of achieving sustainable goals and strong transmission of the **Swedish good practices**.

ANNA PAPAIOANNOU

President

ABOUT IRIS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

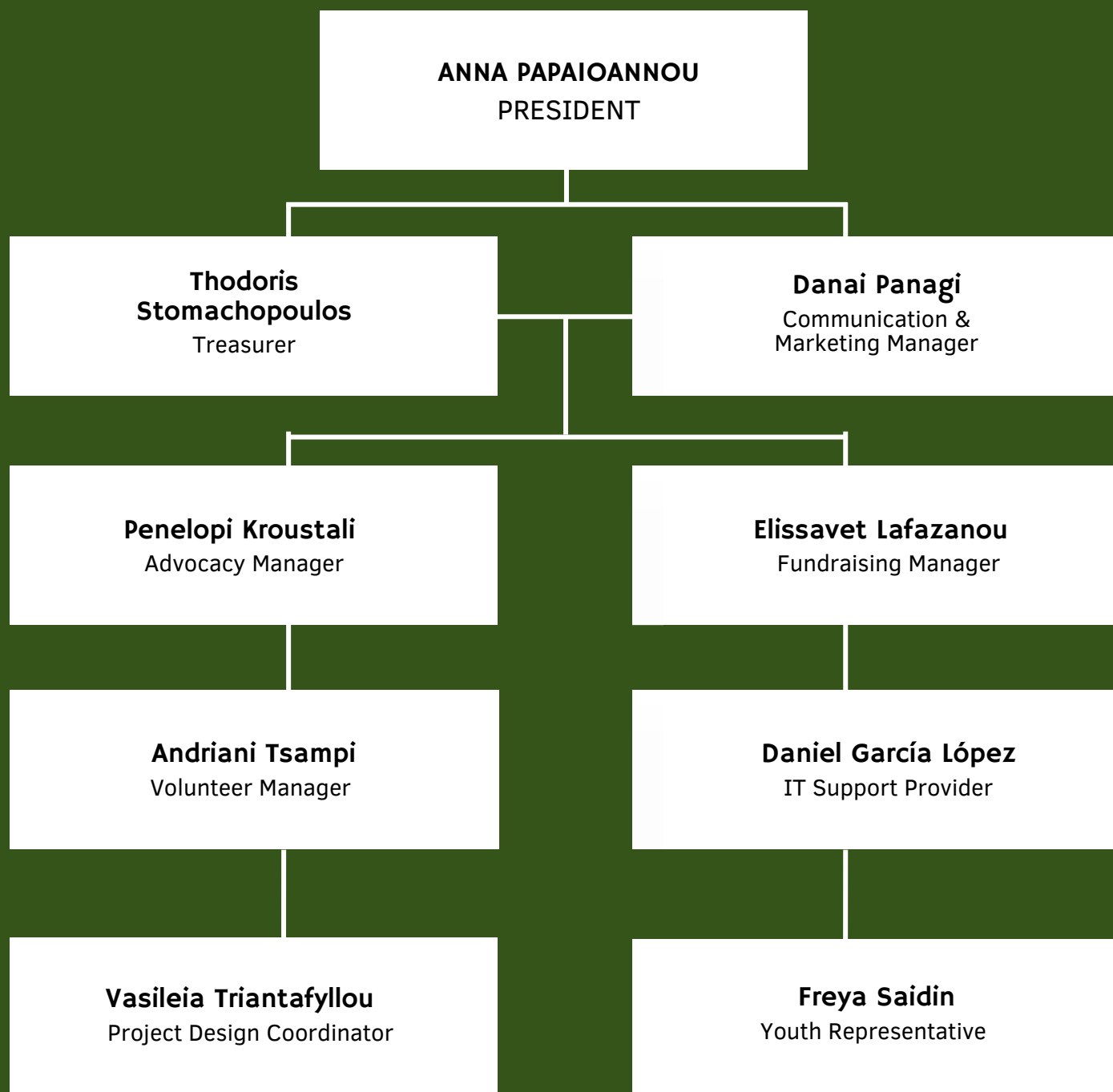
IRIS is a Swedish NGO and a UN SDSN Youth Member, founded by a group of people with a common vision; to build greener, healthier, and more sustainable communities. We provide non-formal and intercultural learning experiences in order to enhance sustainable development and encourage young people to become active and transformational agents of their communities.

MISSION & VISION

Our mission: To raise public awareness of issues, problems, opportunities, and solutions related to environmental, economic, and social sustainability.

Our vision: To support initiatives that boost the process of environmental transition within the EU, through social inclusion, actions on sustainability, and youth empowerment.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



SUMMARY ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

IRIS has created three core projects: **Act Responsible**, **Stop Eco-anxiety**, and **Inner City Our Life**. In the context of these projects, IRIS has organized workshops, webinars, seminars, digital talks, online classes, and activities, encouraging youths to dive into sustainability. The main focus is to bring out the importance of ethical living and respect to the environment, via their interconnection with disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, art, geopolitics, and others.

IRIS is also designing projects in the **Erasmus+** context. So far, IRIS has designed three Erasmus+ KA1 projects -both youth exchanges and training courses-, while it has been a partner in Erasmus+ KA2 and KA3 projects with NGOs/NPOs and Youth Associations across Europe. An intensive **training to 8 youths** for the promotion of diversity, inclusion, and solidarity, via formal education, was organized by IRIS in the context of the KA3 project SOLIDinEDU.

IRIS has also created a **green guide**, mapping retail shops which prioritize eco-friendly practices. Via this way, a retail shops network has been created spreading the importance of sustainability across the city.

Moreover, IRIS organized a **webinar series**, engaging experts with different backgrounds for sharing multiple perspectives and opinions on the topic of eco-anxiety. Two **pranayama and yoga classes** were also held by IRIS aiming at reconnecting with nature and dealing with eco-anxiety.

Lastly, IRIS ran three **clay workshops** for inspiring and motivating youths in arts-based sustainability projects, as well as raising awareness of climate change via art. Additionally, IRIS is about to complete an **e-journal** with step by step instructions for making **raised garden beds by recyclable pallets**. **DIY workshops** have been also organized by IRIS training 25 people so far on how to make their own **cosmetics**, using only natural ingredients.

The biggest achievement of IRIS so far is its acceptance in the Membership Program of **United Nations SDSN Youth**, the world's largest youth-focused network working on the SDGs.

SDSN Youth is a program of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network - an initiative launched by UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, in 2012 to mobilize global expertise around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This membership is focused on capacity building and collaboration in order to accelerate IRIS's organization's mission to educate and empower young people towards a more sustainable future.



ACT RESPONSIBLE

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This program aims to:

- Raise young people's interest in sustainability; environmental sustainability and the circular economy, environmentally friendly and ethical fashion, food waste, and responsible food consumption.
- Foster partnership and collaboration between NGOs involved in promoting the value of sustainability at the European level and within the Erasmus+ context
- Raise awareness of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (UN)

ATHENS GREEN GUIDE

Athens Green Guide is an incentive-based on the triptych of Recycle, Reuse, Reduce and aims to include businesses that prioritize sustainability practices and zero-waste philosophy.

Specifically, it includes retail businesses according to five main categories: **a.** vegan or vegetarian restaurants and food-related services, **b.** second-hand shops, thrift shops or kilo-shops, **c.** products made by recyclable, biodegradable, or non-plastic materials, **d.** zero waste products, and **e.** fair-trade and ethical products.



ATHENS GREEN GUIDE

POTENTIAL DELIVERABLES

1

200 retail shops in Athens to be included in the guide and partnered with IRIS Sustainable Development

2

1 mobile application that contributes to the easier navigation of the user in the guide, the mapmaking of the businesses' site and handy access for tourists is Athens

3

1 retail shops network which pioneers with supporting the first Green Guide in the city of Athens

4

with all the retail shops of Athens which follow sustainability and zero-waste practices

DIGITAL TALKS

GOOD PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

talking about
the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) - Agenda 2030

curated by
Fatti d'Arte Association,
People Of 2050 and IRIS ONG

On the 24th of January 2021, along with our partners Fatti d'Arte - Associazione culturale and People Of 2050, and in the context of the project museOpen, we ran a digital talk about Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

Scraps that become unique pieces, more precious than before. It's the miracle of Up-Cycling, a spontaneous movement of artisans, designers and artists that can create everyday-objects made out of waste and scraps, getting back to the most etymological sense of the word "Reuse".

On the 22nd of April 2021, IRIS, museOpen, Repunto Artigianato & Design, and Materiale Centrale, offered a chance to discover this topic with a close eye on ecodesign.

FROM FAST TO FAIR

the upcycling approach a creative opportunity

curated by Fatti d'Arte Association,
IRIS ONG, RePunto,
Materiale Centralen

STOP ECO-ANXIETY

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This program aims to:

- Raise awareness regarding the climate change effects on people's mental health
- Eliminate climate change effects on people's mental health
- Help people deal with eco-anxiety via informative sessions, workshops and group activities

FREE PRANAYAMA CLASSES

IRIS Sustainable Development is offering Free Pranayama Classes on monthly bases collaborating with Mara Lugeni, a yoga instructor based in Belgium. Our classes are conducted via zoom in order to be available globally. We are planning to provide pranayama classes in-person during the summer season in Stockholm and Orebro. We have already held two sessions with **45** recipients.

Pranayama or the yoga of breath is a proper way to deal with anxiety and especially eco-anxiety. Our recipients are strongly encouraged to have this class in nature in order to have a deep reconnection experience. In case that they are not enable to do it during the session, they are learning this breathing techniques in order to use it in the future.

This action aims to:

- Assist the reconnection of our recipients with nature
- Provide them pranayama skills in order to eliminate eco-anxiety rates
- Make eco-anxiety therapy available to those in need offering free services


Stop eco-anxiety



Free Pranayama Class
with Mara Lugeni

When: 10.09.21, 10:00 (GMT +2)
Where: Zoom

Pranayama or the yoga of breath is a proper way to eliminate anxiety and specifically eco-anxiety. You are strongly encouraged to have this class in nature.



Sustainable Development

WEBINAR SERIES



IRIS Sustainable Development is implementing webinars about eco-anxiety. Our first webinar “Eco-anxiety: The connection between the climate crisis and mental health” aimed to raise awareness regarding eco-anxiety and to motivate our **35** attendees to be active against the climate change.

The speakers were:

- Anouchka Grose (Psychoanalyst & Writer): She spoke about the different psychological effects of climate crisis on people's mental health.
- Jennifer Baker (Vice President of Sierra Club Canada Foundation): She spoke about some of the unintended projections of eco anxiety and other land based mental illnesses within organizations, and how we might harness our feelings to create stronger communities and take care of ourselves better.
- Aditya S. Sahadevan (TedxSpeaker and Climate Justice Activist) who shared his own story about turning eco anxiety into eco action.

The next webinar will be conducted in March,2022.

NATIONAL REPORTS ABOUT ECO-ANXIETY

The purpose of this action is to:

- create an international overview of eco-anxiety rates with more than 60000 in 20 countries
- contribute to the growing body of knowledge around how the climate crisis affects mental health identifying possible differentiation on eco-anxiety determinants
- raise awareness on the impact of climate crisis on mental health

We are currently working for the creation of 20 national reports that we be interpreted at the end of 2022 at an international report to highlight the possible variabilities across the world. It is the **first time** that an NGO is conducting in-depth research on this topic at national and international level with such an audience.

In this context, we will conduct quantitative research via surveys as well as qualitative field investigations by interviews and observation as methodology.



INNER CITY OUTER LIFE

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This program aims to:

- Suggest practices in daily life that lead to activities promoting sustainability
- Create a link between thoughts, beliefs, feelings and the surrounding environment
- Navigate the multiple possibilities around us in both pragmatic and personal ways

CLAY WORKSHOPS

Outside of cultural movements, artists across the globe have taken on the idea of sustainable art in different ways. Some works, like John Sabraw's Toxic Sludge paintings, use actual pieces of polluted earth as their media.

The creative sector is playing an increasingly significant role in raising awareness of climate change and encouraging sustainable social, economic, and environmental practices worldwide.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was created by the United Nations in 2015 and outlines seventeen core goals across a variety of categories to help the world become a more environmentally friendly, peaceful, and prosperous place. Most resonant with the art world is #sdg12 .

IRIS Sustainable Development ran three clay workshops for inspiring and motivating youths in arts-based sustainability projects.



DIY COSMETICS WORKSHOPS

IRIS created a series of Do It In Your Own Workshops to present ideas on how we can produce our own natural products:

-We have ran several DIY Cosmetics Workshops, on how to make our own conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste and other using sustainable packaging and only natural ingredients, training 25 people so far.

E-JOURNAL: RAISED GARDEN BEDS

We created raised garden beds from pallets, that can be found in cities, balconies, terraces. These raised garden beds with vegetables and herbs can beautifully decorate every urban environment.

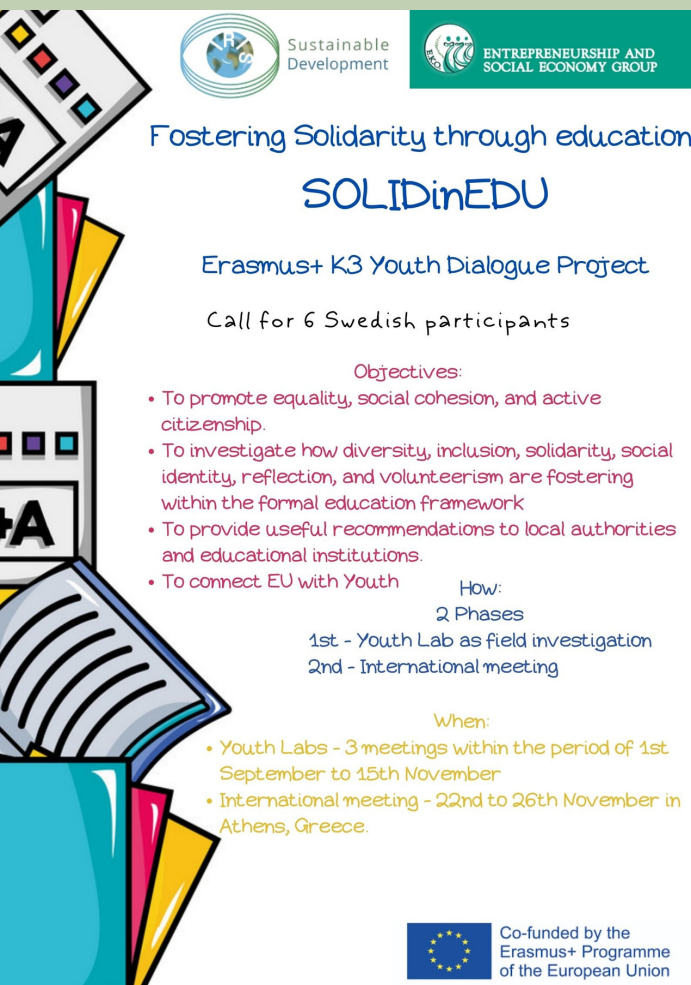
A web guide in the form of an e-magazine with step by step guidance on how to make them at home will be published. by IRIS soon..

Our goal via this action is to teach people on how they can be self sufficient via cultivating their own vegetables and herbs in their own place, either in a small village or in the center of a big city.



EU Funded Projects

SOLIDinEDU KA3 Erasmus+



The poster for the SOLIDinEDU project features a colorful illustration on the left showing a calculator, folders, and books. The text is as follows:

Sustainable Development **ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SOCIAL ECONOMY GROUP**

Fostering Solidarity through education

SOLIDinEDU

Erasmus+ K3 Youth Dialogue Project

Call for 6 Swedish participants

Objectives:

- To promote equality, social cohesion, and active citizenship.
- To investigate how diversity, inclusion, solidarity, social identity, reflection, and volunteerism are fostering within the formal education framework
- To provide useful recommendations to local authorities and educational institutions.
- To connect EU with Youth

How:
2 Phases

1st - Youth Lab as field investigation
2nd - International meeting

When:

- Youth Labs - 3 meetings within the period of 1st September to 15th November
- International meeting - 22nd to 26th November in Athens, Greece.

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

Youths from 6 different countries (Sweden, Greece, Egypt, Turkey, Netherlands, Bulgaria) had the opportunity to explore how **diversity, inclusion, and solidarity** are promoted via formal education.

A **field investigation**, including 50 questionnaires to education receivers and interviews with education providers, was conducted by the participants for boosting the validity, reliability, and credibility of the final conclusions.

Three Youth Labs were also organized for the training of six participants and two group leaders. Upon the completion of the training, the participants attended a **transnational meeting** in Athens, Greece and presented the results of the field investigation dedicated to the Swedish Educational System.

The results were used in creating a **booklet** presented to local and European stakeholders.

OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

We use our social media in order to:

- raise awareness about vital issues regarding environmental sustainability
- engage youths with our action
- promote our actions and dissemination activities
- So far, we have **3029** followers in Instagram and **711** followers in Facebook



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[@irissustainabledevelopment](https://www.linkedin.com/company/irissustainabledevelopment)



[@irissustainabledevelopment](https://www.facebook.com/irissustainabledevelopment)



[@irissustainabledevelopment](https://www.instagram.com/irissustainabledevelopment)



ÖREBRO GREEN GUIDE

Upon the completion of the Athens Green Guide we will focus our efforts on creating Örebro Green Guide, aiming at a retail shops network with business which adopt the zero waste philosophy in the city. Our vision is to create a number of guides including several 'green' cities.



ANXIETY ELIMINATION SESSIONS

This action of the Eco-anxiety program aims to eliminate anxiety rates through reconnecting with nature. Our recipients will be corporations that they concerned about the wellbeing of their staff and we will provide weekly or montly sessions that will assist anxiety reduction as well as team bonding.



ART & SUSTAINABILITY

This project is organized in 2 main modules aiming to navigate: a. Creative Writing Calendar - weekly material navigating concepts, ideas, stories related to sustainability, and interactive creative writing exercises. b. workshops: a series of workshops with step to step guidance on how to produce our own products and art & crafts from reusable and recyclable materials will take place.



WOMEN4CLIMATE

This program aims to raise awareness regarding the connection between gender equality and climate crisis through webinars as well as to provide practical solutions, such as trainings about entrepreneurship for women in rural areas.

A grasshopper is perched on a green plant stem. The background is filled with soft, out-of-focus yellow flowers and green foliage, creating a natural and serene atmosphere.

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