

## **Developing Creative Recycling Training Programs for Adults**

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Our first creative recycling workshop for adults was launched in December 2015 by the Solid Waste Management Association of Crete (ESDAK) offering the participants ideas for decoration and gifts on the occasion of Christmas. The 20 participants have enjoyed the event so much that they persistently asked us to repeat it regularly and frequently. The workshops appear to meet the need of many of our fellow citizens to spend creative their time, while the use of “waste” materials enables them to create zero-cost gifts for family and friends

Recognizing that such workshops own a dynamic for increasing public awareness towards the conservation and reuse of materials, we have planned to organize two open and free of charge workshops every month through the year 2016.

The call for subscription to the workshops has been released through the local publication media, as well as through email lists and personal contacts. As a result about 60 persons subscribed to the program and an average of 40 persons attended the workshop each month divided in two groups limited by the space capacity.

The participants have been asked to fill a questionnaire after completing the workshop. They had to answer questions concerning their profile (age, occupation, attitude and motivation), their opinion about the workshop as a process (techniques, ideas, organization) as well as their estimation for its impact on their attitude.

The subject of this presentation is

- a) Workshops description (number and profile of participants, program, techniques and crafted objects, photos)
- b) Evaluation of the workshops

The most important aspects and conclusions from the experience we have gained are summarized in the following.

The publicity of the program has been more effective through personal contacts, including personal emails, rather than round letters through the press and mail lists. However a very effective channel of promotion proved to be through the Direction Offices of Primary and Secondary Education.

About 40% of the participants are teachers in primary and secondary schools who are interested in transferring techniques and ideas into their classes. Almost all the participants, about 92%, keep stuff and are interested in finding ways to reuse it. However they have learned something interesting from our workshop since 68% of them declare that after it they will change their attitude concerning reusing of things.

We have chosen paper as the main material of our first workshops so that no special tools are required. Origami and weaving techniques were amongst the ones we have instructed in order to craft decorative eggs and Easter baskets.

It is worth to mention that the workshops offered us the opportunity to discuss about waste management and especially reusing and recycling, as well as present the achievements and projects of our institution before starting the main crafting session.

In the meantime the idea of the workshop has been spread around and many applications have come from schools and other institutions inviting us to make a presentation for their members. The interest in artistic recycling seems to grow in our society but the question has to be answered, if this can be a part of sustainable waste management or just a trend with limited existence.