



POLITISTIKO ERGASTIRI AYION OMOLOYITON



ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΟ ΕΡΓΑΣΤΗΡΙ
ΑΓΙΩΝ ΟΜΟΛΟΓΗΤΩΝ

**NEWSLETTER –
APRIL 2020**



"IMAGINING THE NEAR FUTURE...HOW DO YOU THINK IT WILL BE LIKE?"



All of us are having concerns on how life will be after the COVID-19 outbreak, how returning to the office or other workplaces will be reshaped, how volunteering and travelling will still be accessible to everyone worldwide and loads of more inquiries for which we anticipate a clear answer.

If we've learnt one thing from this pandemic, it's that life is precious. Fear should not put an end to our travel dreams and adventures, nor should it stop us from helping the people and places around the world that need it most. Hopefully, the rate of new coronavirus cases slows and effective treatments and a vaccine are developed. There has been much progress already and the countries and international health organizations have been working together on that. For many people, this is an opportunity to slow down, reflect and start making plans for the future. Optimistically, we will use this crisis to rebuild, produce something better and more humane for our lovely planet. Life experiences might look and feel different once the world begins to reopen, but people can still count on the positive impacts and find holistic methods for the commonwealth.

It is true that the lockdown is placing pressure on the global economy which tends to be even more fragile, especially the tourism field. The majority of the Southern European countries rely on tourism and it's the main source of income and revenue. In Greece, the country I'm coming from and where tourism accounts for 20% of GDP and provides one in five jobs, the economy is expected to suffer an immense blow. The government is beginning to formulate plans and new rules for hotels, new rules for beaches, new rules for pools, new rules for breakfast buffets, new rules for tour buses etc. They will try to open to holidaymakers in July, but still the overall travel experience won't feel the same from my point of view.

As for me, there is a light at the end of the tunnel – it's a sunset at a beach in Cyprus while I am swimming in the crystal clear waters. That's the first thing I would love to do, hopefully soon, and for sure it will be more enjoyable than ever before.

Address:

**Ierodiakonou Mansion 1,
1080 Lefkosia, Cyprus.**

**Phone: +357 22256782 Fax:
+357 222567823**

Website: <http://politistiko-ergastiri.org/index.php/en/home-3/>

Email: info@politistikoergastiri.org

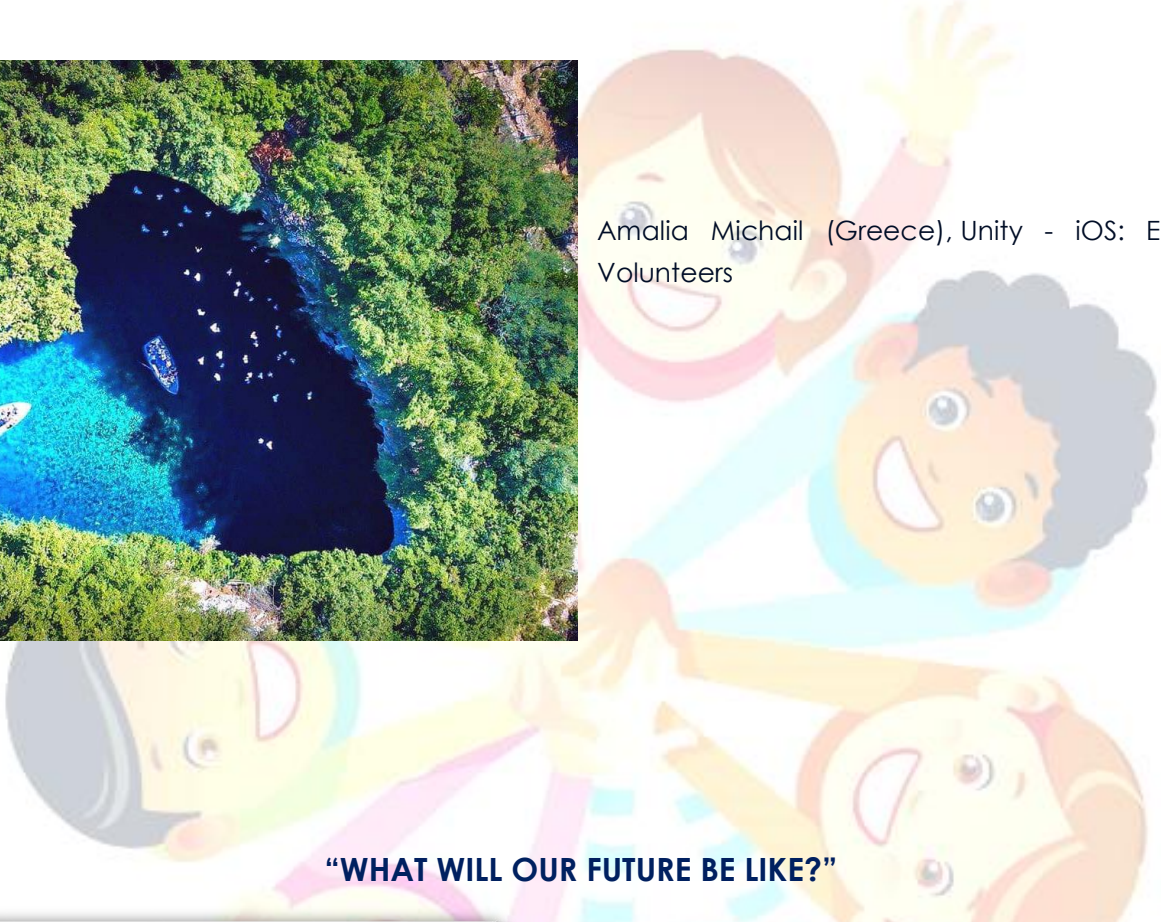


I'm also looking forward to participating in summer volunteer projects, if we will finally have the chance and spread the vibe of solidarity and hope to the local communities! Last but not least, since I'm passionate about travelling, I can't wait to be able to travel again. It will definitely be under new rules and restrictions, but I still keep my hopes high and I'm organizing in my mind my future trips.

Don't give up hope and choose to be happy. Better days are coming ♥



Amalia Michail (Greece), Unity - iOS: Education Volunteers



“WHAT WILL OUR FUTURE BE LIKE?”



In this period of difficulty and change it is almost spontaneous to ask oneself some questions. The first one in my opinion is "when will we return to normality?" and consequently "what will our normality be after this, will something have changed or will we take back our life as we left it?"

That's why I thought it would be interesting to hear and see more points of view. I asked four guys with different situations what their opinion was:

Emanuele, Carolina, Federica and Luca. And in fact, in some aspects I had conflicting thoughts, and for others I was in agreement, starting from Carolina, a pharmaceutical Biotechnology student, who answered the question **"how do you imagine the future and what our normality will be" in this way:**

- *I don't have a perception of reality anymore because I've been locked up at home since the quarantine was issued, but I can tell you that I expect a whole new world where people look at each other as "stunted". I don't know what 'normality' will be after this, but it will certainly have no place in our lives. In my opinion, even unconsciously, we will hesitate to hug someone we love, to kiss those we love and to pat those we want to console. It will be a reality in which we will have to learn to convey emotions only with our eyes (and hope that the glasses will not fog up with the mask), because if before a hug was worth more than a thousand words now we should try to learn to talk more and comfort ourselves less ... I know that, although our situation here is not at all comparable to that of other regions of Italy - we live in Sardinia, an island that has fortunately had few contagions - ... I will be the first to have that feeling of discomfort that I have never felt before.-*

In contrast to Carolina's thought, Emanuele, a student of Economics and Finance, answers the same questions in this way:

- *In my opinion, at the end of everything we'll pay a little more attention to the little things, at the beginning we'll be afraid of those around us and we'll want to hug again or have a closer contact with the people we used to date. At first we will try to get closer and closer to the people we haven't had the chance to see in this period, such as friends, boyfriends, family, etc... and the days outside will be much longer. There will be an explosion of social relationships and then we will gradually return to normal- Honestly, I can't fully recognize myself in either of those visions. While on the one hand I am convinced that relationships will initially be necessarily accompanied by fear of others, on the other hand distance has served to fortify/break relationships of any kind and the desire to see each other again is almost inevitable. It is not easy to understand what the future will be like... I think that initially we will appreciate things that were taken for granted before and then everything will return as before, but with a new awareness, which will lead us to appreciate every moment. I realize that my vision is a bit utopian, but I like to think that it will be like that!*

You can immediately notice the imprint of Federica, a student of Languages and Communication:

- *The future after all this will be the same again, slowly and I think it may take more than a year to get back to normal, comparing it with other periods with important diseases. Whether it is a pessimistic vision or not, man is guided by money and therefore it will necessarily return to normal. It will not end soon, but slowly people will forget about it. Certainly in quarantine, at least I have acquired a different perception of my time and I believe that at least in my small way my habits will change, they will not return as before. People have always kept their distance with strangers so from that point of view it will change little. Because of ignorance and stupidity, everyone is waiting to go out and I don't think you will be afraid of something you can't see.*

- Federica's disenchanted vision highlights the economic aspect that is predominant in everyone's life and that Emanuele and Carolina have not faced. In relation to this, Luca highlights a further aspect: the sense of civic duty and responsibility that every citizen should have towards his neighbor.

Luca, a student of Medicine, was carrying out the Erasmus project in France and was forced to return home. I also asked him if in his opinion the pandemic would have negatively influenced projects like Erasmus or ESC, in relation to the fear of travelling:

- *My personal opinion is that the moment the threat is totally or almost completely eradicated, people will go out and live their lives as before. I do not have the feeling that our way of life was wrong, at least from the point of view of contacts, travel and social life. Of course there could be fear, but more than telling you what will happen I can tell you how I would live it. In this I can tell you that we should all be better at a civic level. If we guys had actually had a minimum sense of self-denial at the beginning and we had all stayed at home, even far away (I can't talk about situations like stays abroad because there are different mechanics involved) then it would have been solved like in China:*

a bad regional epidemic. Instead there was the race to second homes, the race to mothers, promoted by parents and children, which brought the virus everywhere. And I certainly don't think (or more than anything else I hope) that this experience takes away the desire to know the new from young people, and therefore removes initiatives like Erasmus or similar. Among my colleagues there is no fear of leaving, only the frustration of not being able to do so theoretically next year. ...I think we young people should be a little more responsible and critical and not simply let our parents' guide us away from uncomfortable situations. We're considered adults too late, when we're actually the real world now. It's right to criticize and educate others too if we want to change something, and have the courage to say to yourself and others "no mom I'm here because it's right" – In relation to these last two speeches, I can recognize two fundamental issues that should be addressed. The first is the sense of duty that each of us should have, but unfortunately often lacks, which is the dominant theme of Luca's article. The second is a point touched on by Federica, and it is the continuous search by the man for money that often unfortunately overwhelms the sense of civic duty and the behaviors that should be followed, described in a very clear and fair way by Luca. So let's go back to the main question, what will normality be for me? Normality will certainly not be the same as it was two months ago, each of us is constantly changing and on every occasion, time is passing and people are moving on. What I want to believe is that change happens positively and that you will be able to really appreciate what you have and create new values, both moral and civic. But nobody is perfect... and of course not everyone will be perfect or only partly perfect, and if even one part changes, it will be a start!

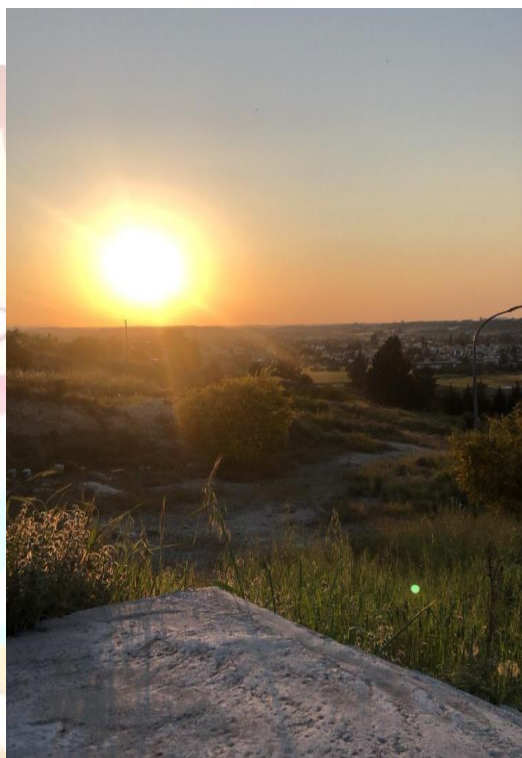


Sara Costaglioli (Italy), Unity - iOS: Education Volunteers

APRIL 2020 – “A MONTH TO REMEMBER”

Already more than a month has passed since the lockdown in Cyprus started. At first all this did not seem real to me. It was weird to watch the country becoming quiet and empty. Especially in Nicosia, you could notice a big difference. The streets became empty and you could barely see people outside in the centre of the city. We had no other choice than to adapt to this new and unknown situation. We volunteers have no longer the possibility to work in schools and we have to stay as much as possible at home. We have already spent a very long time in our homes and are still trying to keep ourselves busy. Slowly we can see an improvement and some countries recover from the virus. The same in my country, Austria. Measures are going to be step by step cancelled and life should go back to normality. But is this really possible? I think we will all have to face a lot of difficulties after this outbreak, especially third-world-countries. It is difficult to say what the future will bring and if the virus will affect the people and economy even more in the following months or years. I am very worried that the life of humans will get more and more controlled.

Before the virus, we may have felt free and independent, but now we can see how much power is above us. Particularly the freedom of travel is unfortunately very limited. Since my fear of this virus is not that great I am not afraid to start travelling again, if it should be possible. Of course I will try to avoid using public transportations, especially flying and will try to stay very cautious. But I cannot wait to start exploring this country again. Especially now when the summer is coming closer, my desire to go to the beaches is getting even bigger. My hopes are still very high and I wish that we can at least enjoy the summer. My thoughts are more focused on the present and I am always curious what the next day will bring.



Aila Cavkic (Austria), Unity - iOS: Education Volunteers

