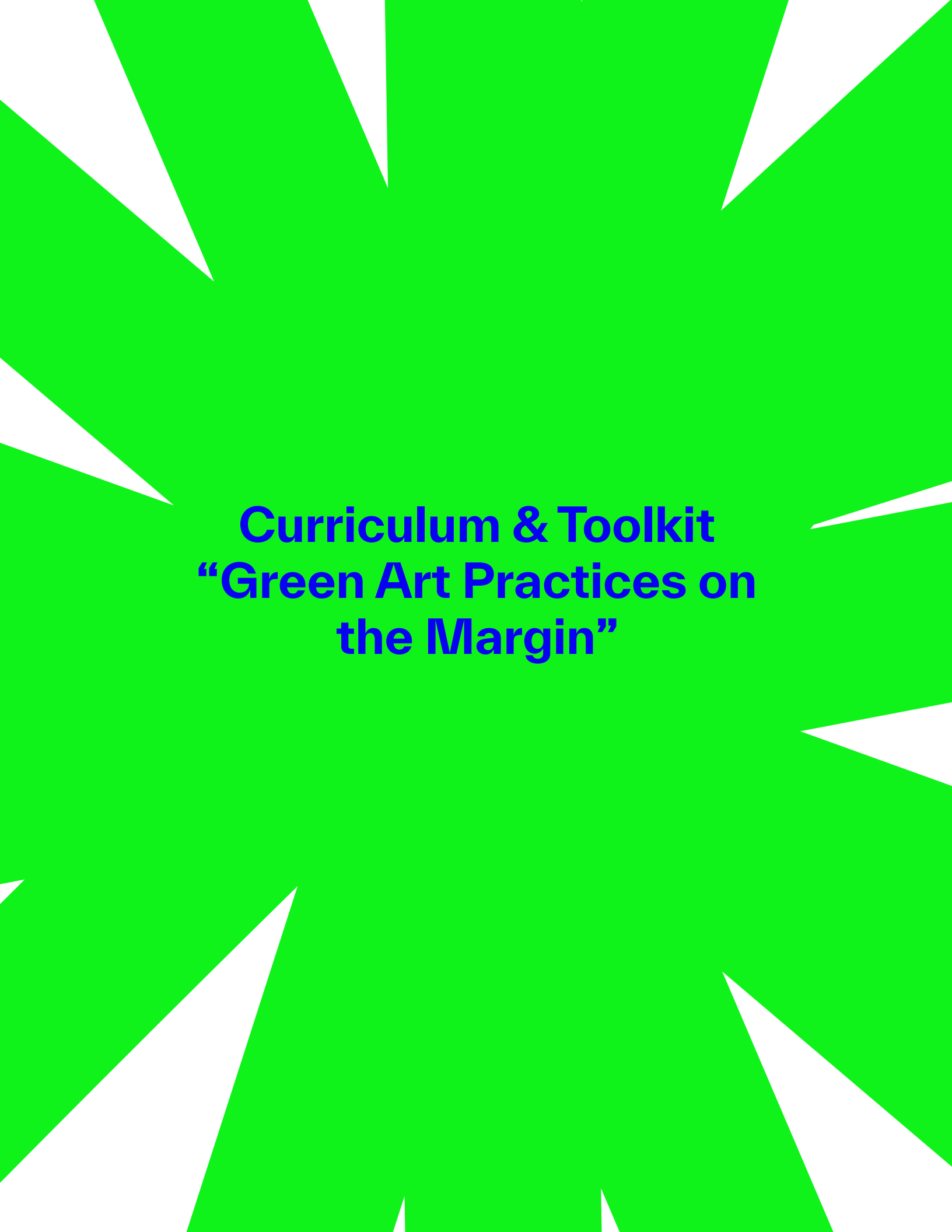


The background is a dynamic composition of overlapping green and white geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, creating a starburst or sunburst effect. The green is a vibrant, slightly muted shade, while the white provides a clean, high-contrast background for the text.

Curriculum & Toolkit

“Green Art Practices on the Margin”

INTRODUCTION

Green Art Practices on the Margin Curriculum and Toolkit were developed as part of a collective process of learning, experimentation, and exchange among cultural professionals from the Western Balkans and Central Europe within the *Re-Imagine Green Art Practices on the Margin Project*. The document aims to provide a practical and conceptual framework for integrating environmental sustainability into the performing arts, both as a field of artistic creation and as an organizational ecosystem.

The main goal of this publication is to support artists, producers, and cultural organizations in building capacities for green transformation. It offers tools, methodologies, and case studies that can be applied across various stages of creative and production processes from conceptualization and planning to implementation and touring. The materials are designed to be adaptable and replicable, encouraging each organization to shape its own sustainable path in line with its local context, scale, and available resources.

Curriculum provides a structured educational framework for cultural organizations, educators, and practitioners who aim to organize similar training programs, workshops, or residencies dedicated to green transformation in the performing arts. Developed collaboratively through the project's learning process, it combines theoretical grounding in sustainability and cultural management with hands-on pedagogical models tested in practice. The curriculum includes modules, learning outcomes, suggested methodologies, and examples of activities that support capacity building in the fields of ecology, culture, and performing arts. Its purpose is to inspire replication and adaptation of green education formats across the region, encouraging cultural professionals to become agents of change within their own communities and institutions.

Toolkit is designed as a practical guide for cultural organizations and professionals who wish to integrate environmental sustainability into their everyday work and artistic production. It gathers concrete tools, templates, and examples developed through the project's residencies, workshops, and mentoring sessions across the Western Balkans and Central Europe. Each section offers ready-to-use materials, from checklists and agreements to case studies and carbon tracking tools, to help organizations implement sustainable practices step by step, according to their specific context and capacity.

CURRICULUM

The background of the page is white and features several thin, bright green lines. These lines are oriented diagonally and form various geometric shapes, including long triangles and parallelograms, creating a modern, abstract pattern.

Re-Imagine Green Residencies Model

General Introduction & Methodology

The *Re-Imagine Green Residencies* model was developed to support the ecological transition of the performing arts field through a sequence of interconnected learning experiences. Each residency explored a distinct dimension of sustainability- ranging from climate literacy to green artistic practices, pre-production, and sustainable distribution- while maintaining a consistent participatory and practice-oriented approach.

The residencies were conceived as *living laboratories*, spaces for experimentation, reflection, and collaboration bringing together artists, producers, and cultural workers from different contexts. Their shared goal was to rethink the performing arts field through the lens of environmental, social, and cultural sustainability.

By combining theoretical frameworks with practical exercises, mentoring, and peer learning, the program enabled participants to translate ecological values into concrete practices, both at the organizational and artistic levels. The modular structure allows each residency to function autonomously while contributing to a broader educational continuum aimed at strengthening the sector's capacity for green transformation.

The methodological design of the residencies was based on several core principles that ensured relevance, inclusivity, and impact across diverse contexts:

a. Interdisciplinary Learning

Each residency integrated knowledge from multiple disciplines- arts, ecology, social sciences, and policy, encouraging participants to think across boundaries and recognize interconnections between creative and ecological systems.

b. Active and Experiential Learning

Rather than passive knowledge transfer, the residencies emphasized learning by doing: through workshops, applied exercises, and mentoring, participants developed strategies and prototypes grounded in their own professional realities.

c. Peer-to-Peer Exchange

Peer learning was central to the process. Through facilitated discussions, group projects, and reflection sessions, participants became both learners and contributors, shaping the content collectively and learning from each other's experiences.

d. *Contextual Adaptability*

The methodology was designed to be adaptable, responding to local environmental, cultural, and institutional conditions. Each residency incorporated site-specific content, case studies, and local stakeholders, ensuring contextual relevance and ownership.

e. *Integration of Reflection and Practice*

Every session balanced conceptual input with reflection connecting professional insights with personal values and ethical considerations. This dual focus strengthened the participants' understanding of sustainability as both a professional practice and a personal commitment.

f. *Collaborative Mentoring and Facilitation*

Mentors and facilitators acted not as instructors but as co-creators, guiding participants through open-ended questions, group analysis, and feedback sessions. The mentoring approach encouraged experimentation, critical thinking, and shared responsibility for learning outcomes

1. Climate literacy

1. Introduction

Climate literacy is a cornerstone for any meaningful cultural response to the ecological crisis. For professionals in the performing arts, this knowledge provides a foundation to understand the science behind climate change, its societal consequences, and the role culture can play in shaping responses. The Climate Literacy residency was designed to bridge scientific knowledge with artistic and cultural practice, enabling participants to critically explore the climate crisis not only as a scientific reality but also as a cultural, social, and ethical challenge.

The overall aim of the residency model is to create a shared language between scientists, cultural workers, and artists, making climate change tangible, contextual, and actionable within the cultural field.

2. Structure & Thematic Focus

The residency was structured around five thematic blocks. Together, they offer a comprehensive yet accessible approach to climate literacy, interweaving science, social dimensions, policies, and artistic perspectives:

1) Understanding the Climate Crisis

Participants were introduced to the basics of climate science: the greenhouse effect, greenhouse gases, climate feedback loops, and the observed impacts such as rising sea levels, melting ice, and extreme weather. Importantly, human-induced drivers (fossil fuels, deforestation, industrial processes) were discussed alongside the systemic links between emissions, production models, and everyday life.

2) Social Dimensions and Transformation

The residency emphasized that the climate crisis is inseparable from questions of justice. Sessions explored environmental inequalities, disproportionate impacts on marginalized groups, and concepts such as the Anthropocene and degrowth. This opened space for reflecting on how communities respond, how grassroots movements emerge, and how art can connect ecological issues with broader struggles for social change.

3) Policies and the Cultural Field

International frameworks (UNFCCC, Paris Agreement), the European Green Deal, and regional climate policies were examined not just as abstract documents but in terms of their implications for cultural organizations. Participants explored how green policies translate into cultural practice, from reducing the carbon footprint of productions to embedding ecological values into institutional strategies.

4) Multisectoral Eco-Shift

The residency highlighted the need to connect performing arts with other cultural and creative sectors. Case studies from museums, film festivals, and visual arts illustrated different pathways toward sustainability. Discussions addressed common challenges—such as waste reduction, mobility, and resource use—and the potential of collective action across sectors.

5) Theatre and the Climate Crisis

Theatre was explored both historically and contemporarily as a space where ecological questions can be staged. From eco-theatre practices to site-specific and immersive formats, participants reflected on how theatrical representation can evoke empathy, mobilize action, and expand public dialogue on climate change.

3. Key Learnings

Several key insights emerged from the residency format:

- Climate literacy must be **practical**. While scientific knowledge is crucial, its value lies in how it informs action, strategy, and cultural practice.
- The climate crisis is simultaneously **scientific, social, and cultural**. Understanding emissions data is not enough without acknowledging inequalities, systemic injustices, and the role of culture in shaping narratives.
- **Interdisciplinary language is essential**. Scientists, artists, and cultural workers must learn to “translate” concepts across fields to collaborate effectively.
- Culture has a unique role in transforming **abstract data into lived experience** by making climate change emotionally tangible, theatre and the arts can help societies connect knowledge to agency.

2. Sustainable Pre-Production

1. Introduction

Sustainable pre-production is the stage where intentions turn into strategies. It addresses how cultural and performing arts organizations can embed ecological principles into their organizational culture, long before the premiere or public event. This residency model is designed to support small and medium-sized organizations in planning their ecological transition, focusing on internal practices, strategic decision-making, and building capacity for their long-term sustainability.

The guiding idea is that ecological sustainability and organizational development are inseparable: going green strengthens both environmental impact and organizational resilience.

2. Structure & Thematic Focus

The residency was structured around five thematic units, each combining theoretical input with collaborative exercises, practical case studies, and peer-to-peer reflection:

1) Deciding to “Go Green” – Defining Strategy

Participants explored how ecological transformation can become a strategic part of organizational development. Through lectures, case studies, and group work, they mapped key areas for greening everyday operations and developed draft “green manifestos.” Emphasis was placed on inclusive processes: involving all members of the organization in defining ecological goals and translating them into concrete action plans.

2) Mapping Resources and Support

This unit introduced methods for organizational self-diagnosis and mapping external support. Participants analyzed their own resources, capacities, and potential partners, while also identifying relevant policies, networks, and funding opportunities. Workshops included SWOT analyses and planning for resource mobilization, reinforcing the idea that ecological transition is not just about ideas but about concrete support systems.

3) Exploring Climate Narratives: Ecofeminism and Organizational Values

This unit explored ecofeminism as a theoretical and practical framework for rethinking organizational values, structures, and leadership in the performing arts. Participants examined the interconnectedness between ecological degradation and systems of oppression, particularly gender-based inequalities, and discussed how ecofeminist perspectives can inspire more caring, inclusive, and sustainable work models.

Through lecture and guided discussion, the group analyzed key ecofeminist concepts- care ethics, relationality, interdependence, and embodied knowledge- reflecting on how these ideas can reshape artistic and organizational practices. Case studies and examples of ecofeminist initiatives in the arts illustrated how power, responsibility, and collaboration can be redistributed within creative processes.

4) Leadership and Evaluation

Effective ecological transition requires leadership and accountability. Sessions focused on the role of environmentally conscious leaders, the formation of “green teams,” and the design of evaluation processes. Participants discussed practical tools for monitoring progress and explored methods of evidence-based management to measure the impact of ecological practices.

5) Workshops & Peer Exchange

A highlight of the residency was the case clinic workshop facilitated by mentors from Zusa. Using the Action- Analysis- Change methodology, participants presented real challenges from their organizations and projects they are developing and collaboratively explored solutions. This method proved to be an excellent tool for brainstorming, reflection, and peer learning, encouraging participants to shift perspectives and co-create actionable strategies. The case clinic process effectively bridged theory and practice, transforming abstract sustainability principles into tangible next steps tailored to each organization’s context.

3. Key Learnings

- **Sustainability starts from within:** Transforming internal practices and mindsets is a prerequisite for external impact.
- **Collaboration drives innovation:** Peer-to-peer exchange and case clinic sessions

sions generated the most impactful learning moments.

- **Strategic clarity matters:** Mapping resources and defining a clear ecological vision helps organizations act cohesively.
- **Narratives create change:** Framing sustainability within wider social values (equity, accessibility, justice) strengthens relevance and engagement.
- **Leadership sustains transformation:** Ecological transition requires ongoing evaluation, shared responsibility, and adaptive leadership.

3. Green Artistic Approach & Production

1. Introduction

This residency model explores how ecological principles can be integrated into artistic creation and production processes, reimagining sustainability as a creative force rather than a constraint. The focus is on helping artists, producers, and cultural workers develop ecological awareness through practice—rethinking materials, methods, aesthetics, and ethics.

Participants are guided to understand sustainability not only as a set of technical solutions but as a holistic mindset that connects creative decisions to environmental, social, and cultural responsibility. The residency encourages experimentation and reflection, where environmental consciousness becomes an integral part of artistic vision and everyday production practices.

2. Structure & Thematic Focus

The residency was structured as a collaborative, week-long program combining lectures, workshops, mentoring sessions, and field activities. Each thematic unit linked theoretical frameworks to practical exploration, highlighting how sustainable approaches can inform both the artistic and production aspects of performance-making:

1) Material Hierarchy and Green Design in Performing Arts

Participants explored how the principles of reuse, recycling, and circularity can be embedded into all phases of production. The sessions focused on sustainable set and costume design, resource management, and energy-efficient use of lighting and sound. Through practical exercises, participants developed an understanding of how material choices influence both ecological footprint and artistic meaning.

2) Green Code of Conduct: Working Conditions and Ethics

This unit examined the intersection between ecological and social sustainability. Participants discussed fair labor practices, inclusivity, and care ethics as part of the green transition in the cultural field. Working in small groups, they co-created a draft Green Code of Conduct for artistic and cultural organizations, integrating environmental awareness into professional ethics and working relations.

3) Art, Labour, and Precarity

Focusing on the systemic challenges within the independent cultural sector, this unit addressed precarious working conditions and their connection to broader ecological and economic crises. Through collective reflection and exchange, participants identified ways to promote fairer, more sustainable modes of collaboration and production.

4) New Approaches to Artistic Creation: Green as a Creative Challenge

This segment invited participants to view sustainability as a creative opportunity. Through case studies and open discussions, they explored how ecological awareness can shape dramaturgy, stage design, and artistic processes. Participants developed ideas for projects that integrate environmental and social dimensions into their artistic language.

5) Site-Specific and Spatial Practices

Participants explored the relationship between performance and place, focusing on site-specific and spatially responsive approaches. Practical exercises encouraged them to engage with the local environment, architecture, and urban ecology as integral elements of performance-making, fostering awareness of space as both medium and message in sustainable creation.

6) Partnerships and Policies

Through dialogue and collective mapping, participants identified strategies for building partnerships across the cultural, environmental, and civic sectors. The unit emphasized the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration, policy awareness, and community engagement in achieving a just and inclusive green transition.

7) Circular Crafting and Creative Reuse

A practical workshop introduced circular design principles through small-scale making exercises. Participants used leftover materials to create functional or artistic objects, learning how resource limitation can stimulate creative innovation and tangible awareness of sustainability in practice.

3. Key Learnings

- **Ecological principles fuel creativity:** Sustainability can inspire new forms of artistic expression rather than limit them.
- **Circular thinking transforms process:** Understanding material and energy cycles helps artists design productions with reduced impact.
- **Social and environmental justice are interconnected:** Fair working conditions are essential for a truly sustainable arts ecosystem.
- **Collaboration multiplies impact:** Interdisciplinary and peer-based exchange accelerates learning and innovation.
- **Context shapes meaning:** Working site-specifically fosters deeper ecological awareness and community connection.

4. Sustainable Distribution & Promotion

1. Introduction

Sustainable distribution and promotion address how performing arts can extend their reach responsibly- rethinking touring, audience engagement, and communication through ecological and ethical principles. This residency model focuses on transforming traditional distribution and promotional practices into sustainable, community-oriented, and resource-aware systems.

Participants are encouraged to critically reflect on how visibility, touring, and audience relations can evolve in ways that reduce environmental impact while deepening cultural exchange. The guiding idea is that sustainability and dissemination are not opposites—when approached strategically, green methods can amplify reach, impact, and integrity.

2. Structure & Thematic Focus

The residency was structured around five thematic units combining theoretical frameworks, group discussions, and applied exercises that translate sustainability into concrete strategies for distribution and promotion:

1) Mapping the Scene and Policies

Participants analyzed the current landscape of cultural mobility and performing arts distribution, mapping local, regional, and international ecosystems. The sessions explored how policy frameworks and institutional strategies shape sustainability in distribution and promotion. Through case studies, participants discussed how organizations can align their practices with climate policies, accessibility standards, and ethical touring principles.

2) Audience Commute and Mobility

This unit examined the environmental impact of audience travel and the ways performing arts organizations can encourage sustainable mobility. Participants explored data-driven approaches to measure audience commute emissions and brainstormed interventions—ranging from partnerships with public transport providers to incentive programs promoting carpooling, cycling, or walking. Group discussions focused on how communication strategies can inspire behavioral change among audiences.

3) Sustainable Communication and Promotion

Participants explored how communication can serve both artistic and environmental goals. The focus was on developing promotional strategies that reflect ecological values, integrating sustainability into branding, storytelling, and audience relations. Exercises included designing eco-conscious campaign concepts and identifying tools for digital, low-impact communication. The sessions encouraged a balance between visibility, authenticity, and responsibility in public messaging.

4) SMART Distribution and Touring

The SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) framework was applied to design efficient, low-impact touring strategies. Participants learned to assess environmental footprints, plan routes with minimized transport emissions, and adapt performances to local contexts. The unit emphasized that sustainable touring is both an artistic and logistical challenge requiring creativity, flexibility, and cooperation among partners and venues.

5) Developing a Green Rider

Participants collaborated to draft “green riders” for performing arts tours—practical agreements outlining environmental expectations between artists, venues, and partners. These included guidelines for travel, accommodation, energy use, and waste management. Through discussion and scenario-based exercises, participants reflected on how such tools can strengthen transparency, accountability, and shared responsibility across the touring network.

3. Key Learnings

- **Sustainability and visibility can coexist:** thoughtful planning and creative communication can reduce impact without limiting reach.
- **Mobility is a shared responsibility:** sustainable touring requires collaboration across artists, producers, venues, and audiences.
- **Policies matter:** understanding regulatory and funding frameworks helps integrate sustainability at an institutional level.
- **Green communication creates trust:** authentic, transparent narratives about sustainability enhance audience engagement.
- **Practical tools empower change:** green riders and mobility mapping translate abstract principles into actionable agreements.

Recommendations for Replication

Across all four residencies certain methodological principles have proven to be effective and replicable in diverse contexts. These shared learnings form the foundation of a modular, adaptable format that can be implemented by other organizations, networks, and training initiatives seeking to strengthen green transition capacities in the performing arts.

Center Collaboration and Peer Learning

Residencies function best as collaborative ecosystems. Prioritize group work, co-creation, and peer-to-peer exchange to ensure that participants not only absorb information but actively construct new knowledge together. The most transformative learning moments arise from collective problem-solving and sharing diverse perspectives.

Combine Theory and Practice

Each residency should balance conceptual understanding with experiential learning. Lectures and theoretical inputs provide essential context, but practical exercises — such as mapping resources, designing manifestos, drafting green riders, or conducting fieldwork — turn abstract principles into actionable tools.

Engage Interdisciplinary Expertise

Involve professionals from multiple sectors- arts, environmental science, design, policy, and education, to ensure a holistic understanding of sustainability. Guest experts and mentors enrich the process by linking creative practice with real-world systems, policies, and innovations.

Adapt to Local Contexts

Residencies should remain flexible and responsive to local environmental, cultural, and social conditions. Tailor examples, exercises, and discussions to the realities of the participants' regions while maintaining the broader framework of ecological transition and just practices.

Encourage Reflective Practice

Integrate regular reflection sessions that connect professional insights with personal values and lived experience. This practice strengthens awareness of how sustainability translates into everyday decision-making, ethics, and care within creative work.

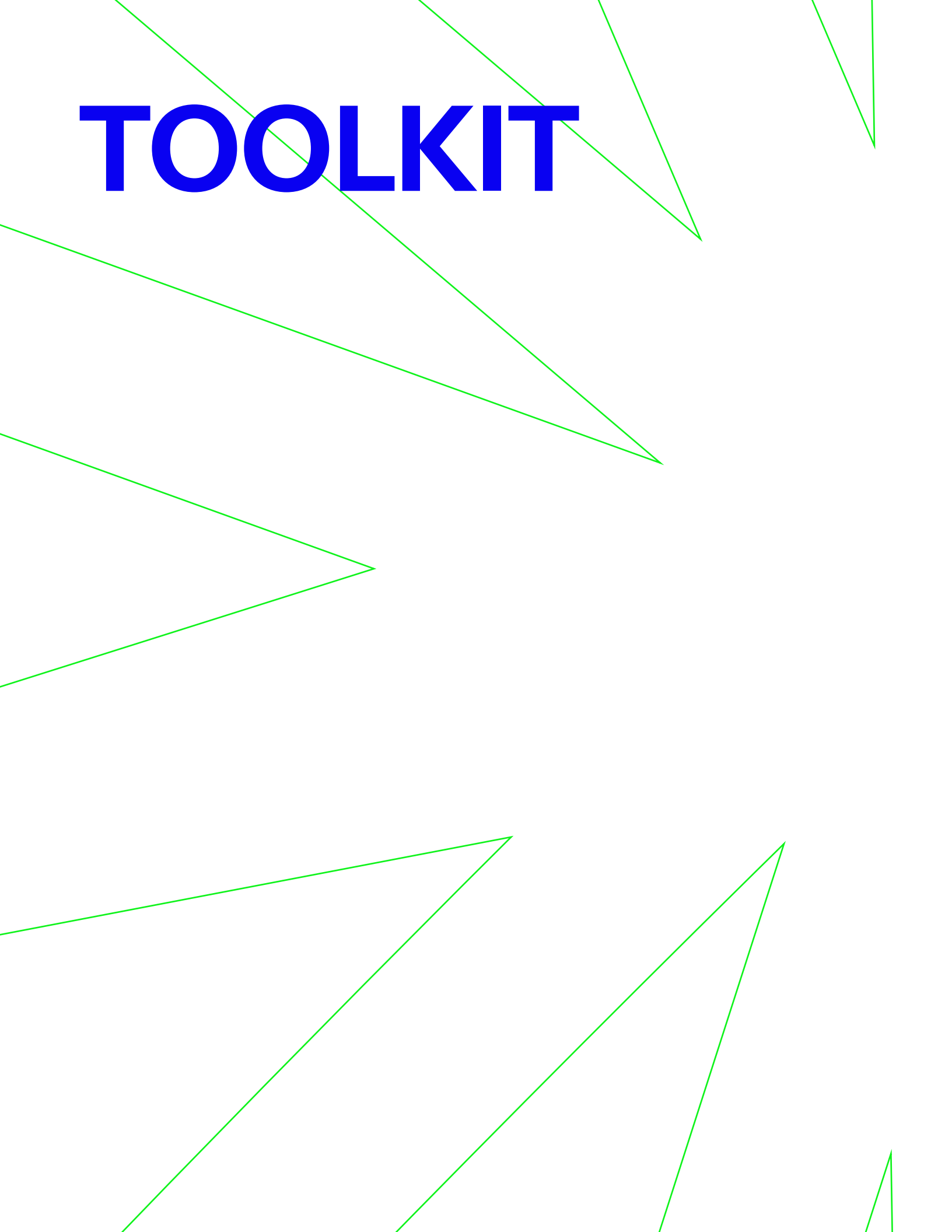
Focus on Tangible Outputs

Guide participants toward producing visible and applicable results — such as strategic plans, organizational manifestos, project prototypes, or collaborative actions. These outputs ensure that residencies generate both immediate impact and long-term momentum.

Bridge Learning and Action

Ensure continuity beyond the residency: support participants in implementing the developed ideas and integrating them into their organizations, projects, and networks. Establishing follow-up mechanisms or alumni networks can help sustain engagement and encourage cross-regional cooperation.

TOOLKIT

The background of the slide is white and features several abstract geometric elements. These include thin green lines and the outlines of triangles of various sizes and orientations. Some lines are parallel, while others intersect to form triangular shapes. The overall effect is a modern, minimalist design.

Introduction

Climate change, as a long-term challenge faced by today's society, imposes the question of its comprehensive transformation, and thus the necessary changes in the field of arts and culture. The toolkit in front of you is oriented towards advocating the possible contributions of small to medium organizations in the field of performing arts in achieving global goals, the fulfillment of which is necessary to stop the further escalation of this problem. The toolkit also represents support for the integration of appropriate solutions in the context of facing and responding to negative consequences, as well as possible solutions in terms of minimizing the contribution of cultural production to the further degradation of the overall environment in which global society functions and on which it is unequivocally dependent.

The toolkit is developed within the *Re-Imagine Green Art Practices on the Margin project*, a two-year project supported through the Creative Europe fund, that aims to build capacities within organizations and professionals in the performing arts (with a focus on the independent scene), to achieve goals related to reducing CO2 emissions and achieving zero-waste production, among others. By fostering internal changes in working practices, the project also aspires to bring about a significant shift in the external actions of the performing arts sector, contributing to global efforts to combat climate change. Project consortium gathers organizations from Serbia, North Macedonia, Hungary and Bulgaria, which are among the pioneers in their countries regarding the promotion and implementation of green policies in culture and creative sectors and have now taken the leading role of advocates for environment-friendly and sustainable artistic production.

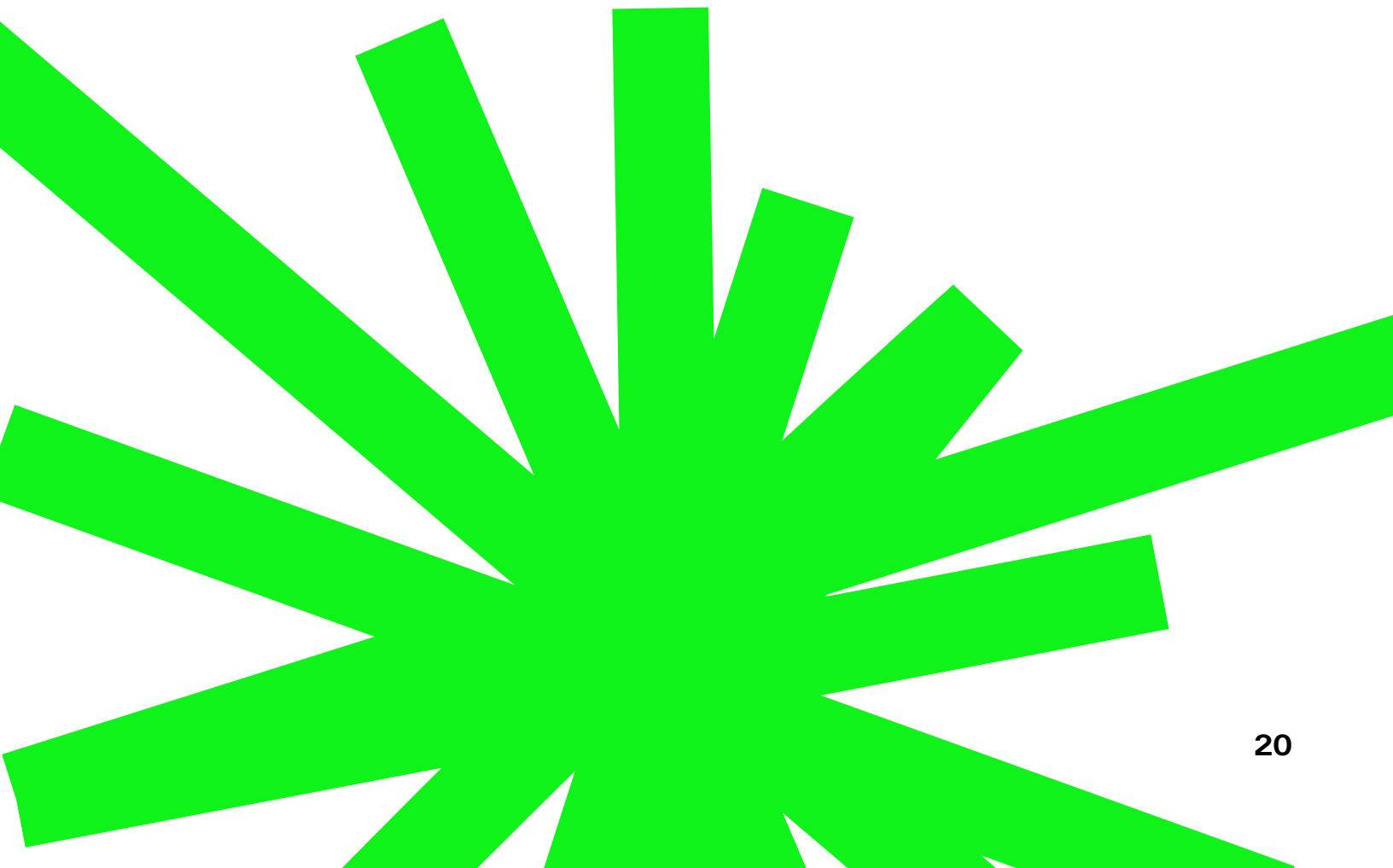
The goal of the toolkit is to contribute to the understanding of the necessity and real possibility of applying green transformation in work procedures, relying on current policies such as the adopted strategic documents on a regional level and European Union regulation, including international agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the Sofia Declaration, as well as to presents the experiences of successful European and non-European practices so far.

Through different phases and formats of action, the Re-Imagine project in an innovative and communicative way encourages the creation of a platform for the gathering of performing arts organizations, cultural operators, and artist initiatives that will respect the principles of a green and just transition. At the same time, the project pleads to raise the awareness of the wider audience about the importance of issues in the context of the climate crisis and provides strategic direction to the sector in the direction of its own more active involvement in these processes and ecological dialogue.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

The toolkit is designed to enable familiarization with the problem of the climate crisis, the ways in which it affects the performing arts sector, and the activities that theater organizations can and must undertake in that context. After the first two - introductory parts about the climate crisis and *green transformation* in the performing arts, concrete guidelines and instructions related to changes in the organizational culture and *general affairs* in PA organizations are shown (chapter 3), and changes that should lead to the transition to the production model of a *sustainable performance* (chapter 4). At the end of the manual, an address book of potential partners of PA organizations is offered, as well as an overview of important terms and concepts in this context.

We hope that you will find the toolkit practical and easy to use and that it will encourage your organization to a long-term and exciting process of green transformation. It certainly brings a lot of challenges and demands, but also new opportunities for innovation, creative action, cooperation, and establishing a stronger role of performing arts organizations in the community.



THE CONTENT

1. CLIMATE CRISIS

2. GREEN TRANSFORMATION IN PERFORMING ARTS

Towards sustainable PA organization

Principles of green transformation in PA

3. GREEN TRANSFORMATION OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND GENERAL WORKING PROCEDURES OF PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

Creating a green transformation plan

Formation of an action plan

Mapping resources and support

Tips for leaders

Practical activities - marketing, general affairs, daily life of the organization

Promotion, marketing and communication (greener press and advertising)

General practical activities

4. GREEN PRODUCTION – A SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE

What is green production?

Basic principles of a sustainable performance

Practical activities

Preparation and development of the play (guidelines for directors, producers, team members)

Scenography

Costume, hairstyle, mask

Light, sound, AV

Travels, hosting

Steps towards ecologically sustainable production

5. GREEN MOBILITY – SUSTAINABLE TOURING AND TRANSPORTATION IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

Key Principles of Green Mobility

Practical recommendations

Green Touring Checklist

REVIEW OF IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS

1. CLIMATE CRISIS

Since the beginning of the industrial revolution, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has increased by 50%¹. This increase is primarily driven by its uncontrolled emissions due to the burning of fossil fuels, coal, oil, and gas, as the primary energy sources of modern society. This change in the concentration of carbon dioxide led to the warming of the planet, which is currently, on average, 1.19°C warmer than in the second half of the nineteenth century². This seemingly insignificant warming has triggered a series of other changes in the Earth's climate system, which introduce modern society and the nature that surrounds us into a zone of increased risks. Risks are already, and will continue to be, obstacles to the smooth development of society in the future as well as to the normal functioning of natural systems. More and more frequent and stronger heat waves, floods, droughts, fires, degraded lands, and damaged ecosystems clearly indicate that as a society we are not going in the right direction. That is why we should not be surprised that we are increasingly talking about the climate crisis and not climate change.

This is also the reason for the gathering of all the world countries in Paris in 2015 when an agreement that was unique in many respects was signed. According to the Paris Agreement, the signatory countries undertook to limit the further increase in global temperature significantly below 2°C by reducing their emissions and making additional efforts to potentially keep it below 1.5°C. By setting this limit on global society, it is also imperative to completely abandon fossil fuels, and that our global emissions reach zero by the middle of this century. On the other hand, if the current trend continues, the limit of 1.5°C will be passed over already in 2034², which is why reducing emissions is an urgent task that should be incorporated into every aspect of society and individual life.

2. GREEN TRANSFORMATION IN PERFORMING ARTS

The generally present and intensively promoted idea is that art and culture can make a significant contribution to increasing visibility and better social understanding of the problems of the current climate and ecological crisis. Redefining the contemporary paradigm of culture and performing arts as a “powerful place for contemplating the climate crisis” requires strategic work on the implementation of the “eco-turn” of institutions and organizations in

¹ <https://keelingcurve.ucsd.edu/>

² <https://cds.climate.copernicus.eu/cdsapp#!/software/app-c3s-global-temperature-trend-monitor?tab=app>

this field which is why more and more green programming and production approaches are present on a global scale. However, regional cultural and artistic productions, in general, still record very modest experiences in this context, which unequivocally indicates the need for strengthening cultural actors in this direction.

Towards sustainable PA organization

The direction of movement toward sustainable theater can be identified in numerous innovative practices of organizations such as Julie's Bicycle, Creative Carbon Scotland, SiPA, Ecostage, etc. However, in the strategic planning of the process of green transformation of PA organization in Re-Imagine partner countries, the local socio-economic context, the market and the legal-regulatory framework that determine the rights, obligations and possibilities of eco-action of economic entities, ways of financing and organizing cultural and artistic production, and the place and role of the theater in society are of equal importance. It is also important to avoid the trap of excessive expectations because it is clear that the field of performing art cannot influence the final solution to the problems we are facing in the context of the climate crisis, but its contribution to the social understanding of this topic must not be underestimated, nor the fact that work on the establishment of ecologically sustainable practices is also a possible instrument for overcoming the increasingly certain economic unsustainability of these organizations.

5 REASONS FOR CHANGE

1. The green transformation of PA organization operations contributes to their better preparedness for future legal changes;
2. It implies saving in the long term;
3. It opens new perspectives in terms of collaborative creativity;
4. It influences the creation of stronger ties between the PA organization and the community, contributes to its better reputation and audience development processes;
5. It encourages creativity and innovation.

It is certain that numerous legal changes are ahead of us in the context of achieving an environmentally sustainable way of doing business, which is why it is important for performing arts organizations to recognize the risks that

these changes may have on their operations in time. At the same time, strategic activities in this direction, such as switching to a mode of reducing energy consumption, reuse and exchange of materials, etc., can lead to significant savings, as well as refocusing from the resources of one organization to the entire system, and initiating new forms of cooperation and collaboration. At the same time, with the green transformation of business operations, they realize the role of a mediator in raising awareness and initiating dialogue on the topic of the climate crisis (with which people usually do not fundamentally connect), thereby achieving a wider impact - raising its reputation, attracting new talents, and strengthening the cultural and social capital of the organization.

The climate crisis is not only a challenge that needs to be overcome, because changing the parameters by which the performing arts organizations (currently) function is also an exciting creative opportunity. Thus, the period of adaptation to the new work model should not be understood as years of restriction, but years of dynamic and creative changes filled with opportunities for the development of the program and its activities (e.g. development of the summer season, planning of outdoor events, collaborative projects, etc.).

In the direction of accepting the climate crisis as a creative challenge, it is important to underline that the sustainable creation of a play does not imply the dictates of stage minimalism, does not condition how the play should look, nor does it set the limits of its depth and meaning, but imposes new frameworks for creators, new - green principles in accordance with which the existing mission and vision of the organization are realized.

Principles of green transformation of PA organization

This process of green transformation of the performing arts organizations needs to be systematically planned and implemented, starting from determining the risks and their implications (immediate and secondary), and then planning strategic activities and detecting the challenges of their implementation. Practically, this implies different types of activities that can avoid risk, transform it into an opportunity, or minimize its consequences, planned within all segments of the PA organization's work - in the preparation, performance, marketing activities, practices in the context of building/space/ technology, collaboration and daily activities of employees. Among the planned activities, it is necessary to make priorities and assess what is feasible within the framework of the organization, and what is within the wider network; for each activity, there must be a detailed implementation and evaluation plan.

Basic guidelines for designing sustainable work procedures in PA organization:

1. Every creative process must contain an aspect of sustainability, which is why - from the beginning of project preparation - green concepts must be incorporated in the director's explanation and the vision of the author's team regarding the design of the project.

2. The results of the success of the green transformation largely depend on the way of cooperation and communication within the team.

3. Conceptualizing the budget must enable the cooperation of the teams on the sustainable development of the project (anticipate additional time and resources to find sustainable alternatives and solutions).

4. Acceptance of green concepts in the process of production of decor and costumes requires modifications in the existing manners of working and, the use of new materials and tools.

5. In the entire production process, it is necessary to take care of the consistent and continuous application of the concepts of reuse of materials and equipment, recycling, and/or repurposing.

6. When planning the procurement process and visiting audience, it is necessary to take into account the choice of the mode of transportation, from the aspect of different amounts of emissions produced by various options.

3. GREEN TRANSFORMATION OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND GENERAL WORKING PROCEDURES OF THE PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATION

Creating a green transformation plan

In order to make the goals and the course of the green transformation process of the organization clear to all employees, it is desirable to create an official plan/document on this topic. **The audience, partners, and the general public** should also be informed about the existence of the eco strategy of the performing arts company by posting it on the website and social networks, public notices about the initiated process, etc. In addition, it is necessary not

only to inform **external collaborators about the introduction of changes in the operation of the organization but also to encourage them to take similar actions, which is why it is desirable that the contracts with them contain the so-called green clauses.**

The green transformation plan is a **strategic document** that includes:

- **manifesto** - explicit determination towards an eco-turn with clearly stated objectives; and
- climate change adaptation and mitigation **action plan with mapped partners** (organizations, networks, and platforms dealing with environmental issues) and **support instruments** (such as available courses, online carbon calculators, manuals, etc.).

Formation of an action plan

In the formation of the action plan, the primary thing is to **determine risks (I)**, whereby: immediate risks refer to the current and future activities of the organization (daily work, plans, artistic program, existing and future roles in the community); and the poor to the problem that may arise due to wider social and economic changes caused by the climate crisis (eg, if the majority of funds from public funds is distributed environmental projects, will this threaten the financing of the cultural sector?).

The next step is **to contemplate the possible implications (II)** by the organization, and then by the community in which it operates. Accordingly, **ways to overcome the identified challenges are planned (III)**, which includes practical interventions/actions (such as creating more greenery around the building, repairing woodwork, replacing light bulbs, etc.) or managerial interventions (such as communicating with employees on this topic, training, etc.).

Planned activities can be designed in such a way that: 1.) risk is avoided by preventing a situation that may occur (the selection of the venue for the performance/preparation of the performance in the context of possible climatic disasters); 2.) reduces the scope of risk by minimizing its consequences (reducing the scope of printing in the office and other jobs, etc.); or 3) transforms the risk into an opportunity (eg. transition to digital form of advertising and development of social networks and website).

The green transformation plan includes **an objective assessment of the organization's capabilities**, which, among other things, means that depending on its size, resources, and capacity, it may be possible to do only a few small,

concrete things, while the larger and more complex goals will be feasible only within a wider network. Also, taking into account the capacities, among the planned actions, it is necessary **to prioritize** what is realistic to do and what will result in the most benefits. Activities and goals should be planned as short-term (3-6 months), medium-term (6-12 months), or long-term (in the upcoming years), bearing in mind that taking on too many new tasks can burden the organization too much, but also that planning “in the long term” stick” can make it not react on time, and the process “stretches out” too much.

For each activity or group of activities, there must be a **responsible person (although in smaller teams, such as are characteristic of organizations from the independent scene, it is common for one person to be responsible for several things), established methods of evaluation, and dates** for considering how far the implementation of the plan has come.

Mapping resources and support

Identified problems of theater organizations from the aspect of implementing the green transformation process are mostly related to: the lack of time, lack of employees, lack of concrete knowledge and information, financial obstacles, and lack of adequate incentives for business entities to act ecologically sustainable.

Lack of time - In implementing the transformation plan, one of the objectively biggest obstacles is the lack of time, because this is a new field of work, is important for everyone, but most often it is not anyone's specific responsibility. That is why it is important to determine the team member who will be the bearers of the planned activities and to incorporate the related responsibilities into their job descriptions.

Lack of money - Introducing changes (such as reducing the consumption of electricity, reducing the volume of printed materials, reusing resources, etc.) will certainly contribute to savings in the regular operation of the organization, but it may also entail additional initial costs (for improvements to the space, replacement of outdated equipment, etc.). However, it is important to understand that this brings financial benefits in the long term, ie. that work on establishing ecological sustainability contributes to better economic and market sustainability of the organization. In this regard, it is common practice to fund-raise the process of green transformation, by requesting funds from public and private funds. Competing for the increasingly numerous public calls in the con-

text of the social eco-turn, by the adopted and transparent eco-strategy, PA organizations can even solve long-standing, existing infrastructural problems.

Lack of expertise and lack of employees - For the success of the green transformation process, employees and joint work are of key importance. In this sense, all team member (internal as well as external) must be informed about the new, ecological orientation of the organization, and familiarized with the manifesto and action plan for its green transformation. It is vital to encourage associates to find more sustainable alternatives in their work, to inspire them to think more deeply about this topic and to provide adequate education and a constant flow of information. This includes the engagement of external experts for help, the identification of numerous online courses and guides, as well as various events, platforms, programs, and projects dedicated to the response of PA organizations and the field of art as a whole to the problem of the climate crisis.

Lack of support - Finally, introducing changes in this context also implies active work on networking with cultural, educational, scientific, etc. organizations for joint action to establish a better socio-economic and political framework for the implementation of the green transformation process. The rights and obligations of economic entities regarding environmental action are changing intensively, and it is expected that shortly, it will be mandatory for them to introduce changes to existing practices in this sense, so it is good that PA field become an actor of systemic changes in time, representing the interests of the profession "firsthand".

Tips for leaders

- Start by identifying what needs to change in order to achieve maximum results. There are various professional organizations and platforms in this domain that offer free help and advice, relevant research findings, and even carbon dioxide and waste calculators produced by one organization, on the basis of which it is possible to clearly identify risks, determine priorities in the transformation process and plan the most effective reductions.
- Formulate a precise action plan.
- Involve team members and associates in the transformation process, organize conversations and training that will build capacities to revise existing practices (including the most basic ones like turning off lights, disposing of waste and recycling, controlling heating/cooling systems, etc.)

- Designate individuals among team members who will have specific responsibilities in the context of adopting green concepts.
- Track energy consumption, compare monthly consumption
- Plan your savings and investments in this context. Find support programs and competitions focused on encouraging green initiatives.
- Include green clauses in your agreements with external partners and associates. Inspire them to adopt sustainable business models (inform them about your manifesto and activities, contracts you have signed with waste disposal companies, and information you have collected on this topic).
- Initiate new and join existing networks that act in the direction of advocating for legislative changes aimed at achieving a more effective societal response to the climate crisis.

Practical activities - marketing, general affairs, daily life of the organization

The transition of the PA organizations towards sustainable, green concepts implies, therefore, a series of changes/activities, some of which are narrowly specific for certain segments of the their work, while others are more generally applicable in the practices of different segment of work and work profiles: reducing the amount of printed material and choosing more environmentally sustainable options (eg: printing on both sides, using recycled paper, vegetable ink, digital presentation of ideas, etc.); using the services of local companies in order to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide; using a bicycle or public transport whenever possible (for delivery, procurement, getting to work); savings in terms of electricity consumption (turning off lights and devices that are not in use, using energy-saving equipment); behavior in accordance with Zero Waist regulations (if they exist); carrying out activities in well-insulated rooms; cooperation with partners who operate ecologically and implementation of green policy in e-mail correspondence, documents, contracts.³

³ In connection with the general recommendations to theaters, it is important to mention those related to environmentally responsible action in particularly crisis conditions, such as the Covid-19 virus pandemic. Planning the operation of the theater in such conditions is also an opportunity to integrate ecological options into new protocols, i.e. an opportunity to identify and respond to new challenges. Thus, due to the increased use of personal protective equipment produced for single use, and the indirect generation of large amounts of waste, a more ecological option is proposed, which includes the provision of double-layer masks that can be washed and reused, procured from local entrepreneurs, and potentially branded with the name of the theater or the title performances. Furthermore, the emphasized obligation to maintain personal and space hygiene, as a recommended response, has the use of certified eco products, provision of contactless sanitizers, use of 100% recycled paper accessories, use of odorless soap, procurement of large packages of maintenance and personal hygiene products, etc.

Promotion, marketing, and communication (greener promotion and advertising)

- Reduce the amount of printed materials
- Choose more environmentally sustainable options – eg: printing on both sides, using recycled paper, plant-based inks, print options listed as eco-friendly, etc.
- Use the services of local printers to reduce carbon emissions
- Be economical in the distribution of promotional materials - for example: instead of a program, direct the audience to use QR codes displayed in key places, a link on your website or social networks with the necessary information, create digital e-flyers for the media, partners and the audience
- Use recycled and recyclable material for marketing purposes
- Alternatively, instead of printed materials, use social media, a website, video materials, etc.
- Advertise the company's eco-orientation. Make information on the topic part of your campaigns and advertising - eg. use pre- and post-performance announcements, design a sustainable mode of transport to/from the event venue and inform the audience about it, mark where the waste separation points are, talk about your activities in this context when appearing in the media, etc.

General practical activities

- Make sure that the heating devices in one room and the cooling devices in the other do not work simultaneously; turn off the heating system in summer; avoid "small" electric reheating devices; take care to regularly check the air-flow in the ventilation system, regularly check and adjust the thermostats, service the boilers, check the water taps.
- Pay attention to the efficiency of electrical equipment, switch to energy-saving light bulbs, and turn off the lighting of the building and the foyer in daylight.
- Optimize photocopiers to economical mode, turn off the equipment at the end of the day, and close the windows if you turn on the air conditioners.
- Use recycled materials, eco paper haberdashery, means for maintaining hygiene and spaces with an eco-label.
- Make sure to separate the waste and recycle it afterward
- Use the services of local entrepreneurs to purchase things
- Encourage members of your organization to use public transport

4. GREEN PRODUCTION – A SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE

The response to the climate crisis, i.e. green transformation, can be understood as a process of changes oriented towards achieving three parallel goals: 1.) **establishment of sustainable work procedures**, 2.) **sustainable performances**. Sustainable work procedures were discussed in the previous chapter; in this, we are dealing with a sustainable performance, i.e. green theater production. It is necessary for the organization to accept the necessity of the transition to sustainable business, incorporate it into its daily work, create new sustainable production frameworks, and publicly communicate about these activities and in other words, it is crucial to understand that the green transformation of the PA organization aims for a long-term and definitive change in the way of working and a change in the consciousness of the community, employees and artists, which can only be achieved through continuous, in-depth work on the implementation of green ideas and principles in the everyday life of the organization.

What is green production?

Green production implies a cycle of activities from the preparation of the play to its shutting down, conceived in such a way as to strive for the application of alternative ways of working that will minimize emissions, i.e. reduce adverse ecological impact on the environment. In this sense, it:

- starts from green standards and clear environmental goals defined at the level of the organization;
- implies the formation of a collaborative team, budget, and time frame of activities in accordance with ecologically sustainable principles; and
- requires the provision of adequate tools, skills, and knowledge in all sectors.

The basic elements of green production are **communication/collaboration directed towards a common goal** and **sustainable management of resources**. Based on dynamic communication and joint work, it contributes to the improvement of the company's overall organizational culture, and relations between all team members. Also, the intensification of collaborative work in the direction of achieving common goals, within the organization but also with external collaborators, enables the discovery of new talents and influences the creation of stronger connections between the theater and the community. On the other hand, sustainable management of resources establishes a new work model which reduces costs, at the level of individual productions, but also of the overall operation.

Basic principles of a sustainable performance

The basic principles of sustainable performance imply the application of certain practices, which do not disrupt the momentum of creativity and innovation, but place them in the context of environmentally responsible action. The dominantly discussed challenge in this sense refers to **the problem of accumulating waste** originating from discarded parts of costumes, decor, scenography, broken electrical appliances, batteries, light bulbs, etc., which must be disposed of in an ecologically correct manner and reduced to a minimum. The answer to this challenge is **reduction, reuse, and recycling**⁴, i.e. application of **material hierarchy practice**. In the process of creating a play, this means that the first step by design is to reduce the amount of materials needed for scenery, costumes, and props, and then find already used components and recycled materials - ideally locally, to avoid transport. If this is not possible, the next option is to choose materials that are procured from a sustainable source, and only the last option, which must be minimized, is the procurement of materials from unsustainable sources that harm the planet.

There are also hierarchical alternative ways of disposing of things and materials that are no longer needed, and it is ideal to reuse them in new productions or donate them, and then - if this is not possible - recycle them in the prescribed manner. In other words, the pursuit of production sustainability does not end at the premiere or the last performance but also includes sustainable protocols and a delay system. In addition to cooperation with relevant operators for waste collection and recycling (attachment), this may also mean establishing cooperation with second-hand stores, shelters, local theaters, prop shops, etc. Alternative solutions include renting or sharing funds with other PA organizations and providing costumes, decor, etc. performers and audiences at charity events or through various online platforms.

⁵ The carbon footprint calculator is a tool that enables the calculation of the amount of CO2 emissions that is realized through all processes and work procedures applied in the organization. By entering simple information, such as the type and quantity of materials that will be used in the preparation and realization of the production, it is possible to see the extent of harmful emissions, which can affect decision-making processes in the context of the ecologically sustainable standard established by the organization. Monitoring emissions data will help establish a database, which will be used in future projects and activities. Examples and links to existing carbon footprint calculators:

www.juliesbicycle.com/faqs/faq-carbonfootprint/
www.creativecarbonscotland.com/carbon-management/tools-and-resources/
www.gabi-software.com/international/index/

The next important aspect of creating a sustainable play refers to **the detailed monitoring of the sustainability of the materials used**, that is, the assessment of the degree of harm that a production achieves. In this connection, it is suggested to use online versions of the carbon calculator, which calculates the emissions resulting from one production in relation to certain quantitative parameters. Another, simpler, possibility is the introduction of **a detailed list of materials**, which contains data on what is needed, in what quantity, and of what material; whether it was previously used, procured from a sustainable source, and whether some form of transport was used for procurement; and whether it will be used in the future, where it will be stored and what kind of transport it entails. By keeping records of this kind, the ecological standard of the performance and each of its segments can be determined quite clearly, while the continuous application of this practice embeds the idea of ecological aspects in the context of the sector's work into individual and organizational consciousness.

The last, and already mentioned, principle of creating a sustainable performance is the constant and dynamic **communication of team members on the topic of environmental sustainability of the joint project**. Already during the first call to the team members, it is essential to define sustainability standards and sign *the Green Production Agreement*, while contracts with external partners should contain the same protocols.

From the beginning of work on the show, through design presentations, later rehearsals, and previews, all members of the production must constantly consider how well the design corresponds to the established standards, i.e. The Green Book, what are the obstacles in achieving this, what can be improved, etc. Producers have an important role here in terms of informing the team about different options what things can be procured locally, whether and how different productions of the same organization/artistic tema/vanue can share necessary stage elements, jointly participate in procurement, etc. It is important to share experiences and educate people, but to plan longer terms - for procurement, agreements, and searching for ecological alternatives. In this regard, as opposed to additional time, it is important in the form of savings made on the procurement side (the use of existing elements does not cost or cost significantly less than the production of new ones).

In order to facilitate the application of the principles of green transformation, PA organization should gradually create and continuously update a compendium of information related to:

- Funds and storage areas - list of items and photos.
- Contact of local sources of sustainable materials and supplies.
- Previously used elements of scenography and costumes, technical equipment, and accessories.
- Local manufacturers of special props, set elements, costumes, wigs, masks etc.
- Local (theatre) funds, second hand shops, markets, etc.

Practical activities

Preparation and development of the play (guidelines for directors, producers, team members)

- Define green book standards and clear environmental production goals.
- Conceptualize green contracts by which team members commit themselves to achieving defined environmental goals of production and organization. Incorporate green clauses into contracts with external partners.
- Include questions about the application of green practices in the creative design process of the project, from the first team meeting.
- Proactively address the project's environmental sustainability at all regular meetings. Agree on the green design of the production, with the active participation of the director, set designer, and costume designer as well as other collaborators. This represents an opportunity to respect the ecological mission of the production and organization, but also to work on the development of the team's skills in new conditions, tolerance, understanding and constructive dialogue.
- Keep in mind that environmentally sustainable practices in theater take time, both in conceptualization and design as well as in the implementation process. Provide the necessary time in the activity plan.
- When designing the budget, keep in mind the additional time needed to harmonize all sectors in terms of ecologically sustainable options, as well as the savings opportunities that the application of green practices in production provides.
- Support team members in creating an environment and atmosphere that is flexible enough that the green transformation implementation model is possible.

- Communicate the orientation towards ecologically sustainable design of the project - from its modeling to the premiere - internally, but also to the audience and the general public.

EXAMPLE OF A GREEN CONTRACT

Title of the production:

Organization:

Premiere date:

We undertake to contribute to the implementation of the principles stated in the manifesto and book of eco-sustainable standards in PA fields _____. We will participate in the design and conceptualization of eco-sustainable production in all phases of work on the _____ project.

I have read the principles outlined in the Green Book of Standards, as well as how the standards are applied in the production process. In order to achieve the stated standards with the entire team that participates in the implementation, I will cooperate by representing collaborative approaches with mutual appreciation and respect.

TEAM MEMBERS _____ (all sign)

Manager

Operations Assistant Director

Technical assistant to the director

Director

Scenographer

Costume designer

Lighting designer

Sound designer

Producer of the play

Head of workshops (adapt according to systematization)

Green supervisor

Date:

Scenography

- The main goal of designing and creating ecologically sustainable scenography is to reduce raw materials and transport and build scenic elements without or with minimal harm to the environment.
- Respect the principle of material hierarchy. By design, reduce the amount of material needed and find already used stage elements (furniture, backdrops) or recycled materials (planks, metal structures, textile surpluses from previous productions) - ideally locally, in the immediate vicinity, in order to avoid transport (second-hand stores, funds of other theaters, etc.). If this is not possible, choose materials that are obtained from sustainable sources, and avoid or minimize the option of purchasing raw materials from unsustainable sources that harm the planet. Purchase new products and materials from domestic producers.
- In the design of scenography, steel, softwood, sheet metal, or PVC are mainly used, the production of which has an impact on the environment. Try to find substitutes in the form of eco-sustainable materials and options
- Materials such as polystyrene, PVC, non-recycled steel, and tropical hardwood should be completely excluded from use because they belong to a group of particularly harmful materials. This also applies to the usage of styrofoam, glue, and paints containing harmful chemicals.
- Environmental sustainability of the scenography must be planned from the beginning of work on the play and included in the design process. Discuss this at the first team meeting; organize a presentation of the ecological sustainability of the design, to the team that will participate in its realization, as well as to other members of the production.
- Consult within the team and external collaborators about possible sustainable sources of supply.
- When preparing the performance, consider the fulfillment of the set environmental goals. Discuss challenges and opportunities for improvement in this context throughout the entire production process.
- Apply the practices of a detailed inventory of materials: write down the materials used, and keep records of their acquisition, use, and disposal (attachment)
- Whenever possible, apply a modular design that will allow multiple later uses of the created stage elements.

Work to introduce sustainable options and practices in workshops

Costume, hairstyle, mask

- Environmentally sustainable design and costume creation (hair and make-up) strives to eliminate non-sustainable and inorganic materials.
- Adopt the practice of material hierarchy. Whenever possible, costumes should be made from things that have already been used (from available fund, second-hand shops, from the market, etc.). If there are no suitable elements among the existing (unused) costumes, tear them apart, disassemble them, and use them as material for accessories, details, etc.
- If it is necessary to acquire new materials, use: recycled materials, organic cotton, organic dyed materials, etc. The materials used should be machine washable, in order to avoid dry cleaning. When purchasing materials, pay attention to whether they have an eco certificate.
- Use eco-certified, non-sticky paints, glues, glitter, and eco-certified makeup.
- In order to avoid ordering and purchasing costume elements at the last minute (which, in addition to the lack of control over the sustainability of the purchased items, also implies additional transport, delivery, etc.), it is important to plan precisely what is needed in this context from the beginning.
- Anticipate a longer time to negotiate and procure environmentally sustainable options; consult within the team on alternative sustainable sources.
- Use the services of local shops and workshops.
- Communicate about the environmental sustainability of the costume from the beginning of the production process and the first team meeting. During the entire process of preparing the play, discuss, from the perspective of costumes, the extent to which the environmental goals of the project have been achieved.
- Take care of the consistent and continuous listing of used materials. Record the method of acquisition, treatment, and disposal. Share your experiences with others.
- Disposing of costumes for a particular performance usually involves the use of numerous bags and disposable plastic covers on the clothing. Use reusable pull-on bags instead; store and reuse bags for procurement, transport, and disposal.
- In the process of maintaining the costume, it is recommended to wash the clothes at 30 degrees. If possible, do not put in dryers, but dry in the air. Send costumes to dry cleaning only when necessary.

- Costume elements that are no longer used (as well as textile and other excess) should not be thrown away, but put aside for reuse. Bigger organizations which have funds can consider renting costumes or sharing their funds with other organizations so that the accumulated clothes, shoes, and accessories can be used as much as possible.
- Donate your surplus to other companies, schools or shelters. Think about the possibility of selling costumes to performers, audiences and the general public through various actions and/or through online platforms.
- Send things that can no longer be used for recycling.

6 KEY TIPS FOR STAGE AND COSTUME DESIGNERS

1. Less is more.
2. Use already used and recycled materials.
3. If you are getting a new one, think about its origin.
4. Reduce transportation.
5. Make sure everything is easily applicable for reuse.
6. Consult with the team

Light, sound, and AV

- When starting work, it is important to present the standards and goals of ecologically sustainable production to all members in charge of technical affairs.
- The director's concept and the author's design must take into account the understanding of the problem of emission of light bodies and, where possible reduce their use, as well as the large number of changes of light images. That is why it is important to include members of the technical sector in charge of light, sound, and AV production elements in the earliest stage of conceptualizing the aesthetics of the performance.
- Encourage technical associates to: take care of the regular maintenance of the equipment in order to affect its extended service life. Repurpose, donate, or send for recycling equipment that is no longer in use. Rationalize consumption in relation to ecological standards.
- Replace cable ties and PVC tape wherever possible with alternatives such as cloth ties, hinged fasteners, and reusable clamps.
- Take care of the rationalization of transport.

Travels, hosting

- When planning a tour, use a train or bus if possible (avoid air transport if it is not necessary, as this is the most polluting type of transport); if you must book a direct flight.
- Share transportation with another organization - identify existing and initiate the creation of new groups on social networks that serve deals of this type.
- Minimize the amount of decorations and costumes you wear, consult with the organization where you are staying about the alternatives they can offer you.
- Find out about the Zero Waste regulations of the country you are visiting and act in accordance with them

5. GREEN MOBILITY – SUSTAINABLE TOURING AND TRANSPORTATION IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

Mobility lies at the very heart of the performing arts. Artists, technicians, and productions constantly travel between cities, festivals, and countries—connecting communities and sharing artistic practices. Yet this movement also represents one of the largest sources of environmental impact in the sector, particularly in regions where travel infrastructure is underdeveloped and public transport options remain limited.

In the Western Balkans and Central Europe, mobility has a dual meaning. It is a necessity often the only way for independent artists and small organizations to reach audiences beyond their immediate localities, and a form of resilience in a fragmented cultural landscape. However, frequent travel, cross-border transport of scenography, and short-term engagements also make performing arts touring highly resource-intensive. Addressing the ecological footprint of this mobility, therefore, requires systemic thinking that balances artistic freedom, accessibility, and environmental responsibility.

Green mobility does not imply restricting artistic exchange. Rather, it promotes smarter, more cooperative, and better planned movement. It calls for strategies that reduce unnecessary travel, promote low-carbon modes of transport, and encourage long-term collaborations that allow for slower, deeper touring instead of constant circulation.

Key Principles of Green Mobility

1. Tour rationalization and route optimization

A sustainable touring model starts with careful planning. The route of a performance or artistic exchange should be designed to minimize total travel distance and avoid repeated long trips or back-and-forth travel.

- Cluster performances geographically and group them into multi-stop routes, rather than organizing isolated events in distant locations.
 - Coordinate calendars among partner festivals, venues, and residencies in neighboring countries to reduce unnecessary movement.
 - Where possible, use online coordination tools and digital meetings instead of physical travel for planning, rehearsals, or project management.
- Such rationalization not only lowers carbon emissions but also reduces costs and logistical stress for independent organizations.

2. Transport mode hierarchy

The choice of transport has a significant influence on emissions. A clear hierarchy can guide decision-making:

- Prioritize low-carbon modes such as **trains, coaches, and shared vans**.
- Minimize the use of air travel, especially for short distances where rail or bus connections exist.
- For regional tours, coordinate **shared transport** between multiple organizations or productions. Jointly renting vehicles or consolidating technical equipment can drastically reduce the number of trips.
- Encourage sustainable “last-mile” mobility—walking, cycling, or using local public transport for artists, crew, and audiences.

While infrastructural limitations in the Western Balkans sometimes restrict these options, regional cooperation can help pool resources and negotiate collective mobility solutions.

3. Green riders and venue coordination

Sustainability should be embedded in contracts and production agreements:

- Include **green rider clauses** in contracts with venues and partners, outlining expectations for sustainable logistics, energy efficiency, and transport coordination.

- Request information about venues' accessibility by public transport, energy sources, and technical infrastructure before booking.
- Collaborate with local partners to align show schedules with public transit timetables or to organize shuttle services and shared equipment storage. This approach encourages venues to adopt environmental standards and creates transparency throughout the production chain.

4. Measurement and transparency

Measuring travel impact builds awareness and supports long-term change:

- Maintain simple **travel logs** recording distances, modes of transport, number of travelers, and type of vehicles used.
 - Use available **carbon calculators** to estimate emissions from travel and freight, or adapt simplified regional tools.
 - Share results publicly in project reports or through digital storytelling to foster collective learning within the sector.
- Even when data is incomplete, transparency promotes accountability and inspires others to improve their practices.

5. Audience and community engagement

Sustainable mobility extends beyond artists—it includes audiences and local communities:

- Encourage audiences to attend events by public transport, walking, or cycling.
- Provide information on sustainable travel options and consider incentives such as discounts for low-carbon arrival modes.
- Choose accessible venues that do not require extensive travel or create performances in public spaces that integrate local participation.
- Communicate openly about sustainable touring choices through program notes, social media, and post-show discussions.

By sharing these narratives, the performing arts can transform touring from a logistical act into a tool for environmental education.

6. Innovation, technology, and alternative touring models

Sustainability in mobility also involves creativity and experimentation:

- Use hybrid formats, digital performances, or residencies that connect artists remotely, reducing the need for repeated travel.
- Develop “**slow touring**” models—fewer destinations, longer stays, deeper engagement with local communities.
- Design modular, lightweight scenography and costumes that can be easily transported or adapted locally.
- Exchange expertise and equipment across partner organizations to reduce duplication.

These models are already emerging in regional cooperation networks and EU-funded projects, demonstrating how sustainable practices can also foster artistic innovation.

7. Institutional and policy alignment

Long-term change requires alignment between artists, funders, and policymakers.

- Ministries, municipalities, and cultural foundations can integrate environmental criteria into travel grants, residencies, and co-production schemes.
- Introduce **co-financing incentives** for green transport (train tickets, shared touring logistics, electric vehicle rental).
- Encourage “**green reporting**” within funded projects, where travel and transport are assessed alongside financial and artistic results.

Regional cultural cooperation programs could play a major role by establishing shared mobility frameworks across the Western Balkans and Central Europe, recognizing sustainable touring as a priority area of investment.

Practical Recommendations

Stage	Key Actions
Pre-tour planning	Map clusters of performances; coordinate with regional partners; limit long-distance travel.
Transport choice	Prioritize collective and low-carbon transport; reduce air travel; share equipment and vehicles.
Contracting	Include sustainability clauses and mobility expectations in all production agreements.

Implementation	Track distances and modes of travel; align schedules with public transport; engage audiences.
Evaluation	Record travel data, estimate emissions, and share findings to inform future tours.

Green Touring Checklist

A practical guide for sustainable planning, implementation, and evaluation of touring performances:

1. Before Touring – Planning and Preparation

Strategic Design

- Map all planned destinations and identify geographic clusters to reduce back-and-forth travel.
- Combine multiple engagements (performances, workshops, meetings) within one region or trip.
- Consider “slow touring”: fewer destinations, longer stays, and deeper engagement with local partners.

Transport and Logistics

- Prioritize low-carbon modes of transport: trains, buses, and shared vans.
- If air travel is unavoidable, combine trips and explore compensation or offset actions.
- Share vehicles and consolidate loads with partner organizations.
- Schedule rest periods to avoid unnecessary return trips.

Material Management

- Opt for modular, lightweight, and reusable scenography and costumes.
- Source materials locally at tour destinations whenever possible.
- Plan storage, repairs, and reuse between performances.

Budgeting and Contracts

- Include sustainability goals and green clauses in all team and partner agreements.
- Allocate funds for green transport options (e.g., train tickets, equipment sharing).

- Communicate environmental commitments clearly to funders and partners.
- Internal Preparation
- Organize a pre-tour briefing on sustainability practices for all team members.
 - Assign a “Green Mobility Coordinator” responsible for monitoring travel and reporting data.
 - Prepare a simple carbon log (Excel or online form) to record distances, transport types, and group sizes.

2. During Touring – Implementation and Monitoring

Travel Practices

- Use collective travel wherever possible; avoid single-passenger car trips.
- Choose accommodations close to venues or accessible by public transport.
- Encourage walking or cycling for short local trips.

Technical and Operational Efficiency

- Reduce unnecessary freight by storing materials between performances.
- Use rechargeable batteries and energy-efficient lighting on tour.
- Coordinate load-ins with local teams to avoid repeated transport of heavy equipment.

Communication and Engagement

- Inform audiences about sustainable transport options (public buses, bike routes).
- Highlight the project’s sustainability goals in program notes, social media, and discussions.
- Collaborate with local environmental organizations for outreach or side events.

Data Collection

- Track all travel data daily or weekly.
- Record observations about challenges, solutions, and unexpected impacts.
- Photograph or document good practices for reporting and sharing.

3. After Touring – Evaluation and Reflection

Data and Reporting

- Summarize total distances traveled, modes used, and estimated emissions.
- Reflect on avoided trips, shared routes, and material reuse outcomes.
- Compare results with previous tours to identify improvement areas.

Knowledge Sharing

- Compile a short “Green Mobility Report” (1–2 pages) with main findings.
- Share lessons learned with partners, funders, and peers through websites or presentations.
- Contribute to regional databases or initiatives promoting sustainable touring.

Next Steps

- Reuse scenography, costumes, or technical elements in future projects.
- Maintain partnerships with local hosts for future low-impact collaborations.
- Update the organization’s internal mobility policy with new insights.

REVIEW OF IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The greenhouse effect is the process by which the air near the Earth's surface is "relatively warm". The Earth's atmosphere is heated predominantly by the substrate, which is heated by the sun's rays, and not directly by the sun's rays. The gases that make up the air almost do not absorb the energy coming from the Sun at all, however, certain gases in the atmosphere, which we call gases with the greenhouse effect (or greenhouse gases for short), are "good" absorbers of the energy emitted by the substrate, which is previously warmed by solar radiation. Gases that have this property are water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, gases containing fluorine (HFC, PFC, SF), ozone and nitrogen suboxide, and the dominant role in the effect is played by water vapor and carbon dioxide. If there were no such gases in the atmosphere, the temperature on the surface of the planet would be about 30 degrees lower than it is, that is, it would be about -18 °C. In this sense, these gases essentially contribute to the fact that there is life on Earth. In the last 150 years, anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions have contributed to an increase in its concentration in the

atmosphere by 50%, so the Earth is 1.2 °C warmer today compared to the period 150 years ago. If the concentration of this gas continues to increase in the future, the planet will continue to heat up.

Climate change is the change attributed to direct or indirect human activities that result in changing the composition of the atmosphere, and which are in addition to the natural variability of the climate and which have been recorded over comparable longer periods of time⁶. ([LINK](#))

The Paris Agreement (fr. Accord de Paris) is an international agreement on climate change, adopted in 2015 in Paris at the UN conference on climate change. The agreement entered into force in 2016, and to date, of the 197 members of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (eng. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change UNFCCC) that signed the agreement, only 4 did not subsequently ratify the agreement at the national level. The main long-term goal of the agreement refers to limiting the further increase in the average global temperature well below 2 °C compared to the pre-industrial period, emphasizing that the preferred limit would be 1.5 °C. Stopping the rise in temperature would significantly reduce the negative effects of climate change, and in order to achieve the goals, global emissions of greenhouse gases (Greenhouse Gases GHG) should be reduced as soon as possible and reach zero value by the middle of the 21st century. [[agreement](#)]

Nationally determined contributions (NDCs) are the plans of each country individually to reduce its GHG emissions and adapt to the negative impacts of climate change, following the broader goals of the Paris Agreement. In this sense, each country that signed the agreement is obliged to adopt its plans on the elimination of emissions by the middle of the 21st century, and present these plans to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. [[more](#)]

European Green Deal or Green Deal is a set of policies adopted by the European Commission whose overarching goal is for the European Union to become climate neutral, that is, to reduce its GHG emissions to zero by 2050, which is the long-term goal of the Paris Agreement. The short-term goal of the policy is to reduce GHG by 50-55% by 2030 compared to 1990 values. Adopted policies include the review of all existing laws, in terms of their alignment with these

⁶ This definition of climate change was adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), within which negotiations of the international community on solving this problem are underway. A broader definition, which includes not only changes that have occurred in recent decades, due to human activities, but also those in the distant past that occurred predominantly due to natural processes can be found in [the dictionary](#) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

goals, but also the introduction of new ones on the circular economy, renovation of buildings, biodiversity, agriculture and innovation. The European Green Deal should not be confused with the Green New Deal initiative, which had similar goals and existed in the United States of America, but which has not yet been formally implemented. [\[more\]](#)

The Sofia Declaration on the "Green Agenda" for the Western Balkans, or the Sofia Declaration for short, was adopted by the leaders of the countries of the Western Balkans in November 2020. With this declaration, the countries of the region undertook to implement measures in the field of climate change and pollution prevention, energy transformation, preservation of biodiversity, development of mobility and circular economy, sustainable agriculture and food production, in order to establish a framework for harmonizing the policies of these countries with the European Green Deal. [\[Link\]](#)

Carbon footprint is the total emission of GHG that occurred as a consequence of the respective activities of individuals, events, organizations, services or product creation processes. It is often not possible to determine the exact value of the carbon footprint, but despite this shortcoming, the concept has remained one of the most popular for tracking distinct contributions to climate change. Many consider it a controversial concept, especially since 2005, when the concept was popularized in a campaign by British Petroleum, and in particular, the personal carbon footprint, which was interpreted as an attempt to defocus responsibility from companies to individuals. However, due to its general popularity, today there are a large number of different so-called carbon footprint calculators, the complexity of which ranges from simple preliminary estimates to thematically defined ones, such as calculators for [events](#) or tours.

An energy passport is a certificate on the energy properties of a building issued by an authorized organization. It contains quantitative information that includes the calculation of the required energy for heating, i.e. the energy class of the property, but also qualitative information about the materials used, comfort conditions in the building and recommendations for improving comfort and reducing energy consumption.

Energy audit (review) is a process that is carried out for the purpose of undertaking activities to reduce energy consumption or savings in reducing energy losses. The review itself may also contain a report indicating the proposed energy saving measures, with an estimate of the savings and an estimate of

the required investment. The review is usually done by a consulting firm or a company that provides this type of specialized service.

Guarantees of origin (for renewable energy sources) is an electronic document that has the sole function of giving the end customer, i.e. to the energy consumer, prove that a certain amount of electricity delivered to him was produced from renewable sources, i.e. that it is "green". This document is first issued to the producer of "green" electricity, and then the end customer can purchase a guarantee from the supplier, which proves that part of the consumed energy was produced from renewable sources. The mechanism was designed as an incentive for the production of energy from renewable sources, but also as a way to indirectly raise awareness of the importance of environmental protection and climate change. An increasing number of organizations and companies in the world decide to purchase these guarantees on an annual basis for the entire estimated annual consumption.

Buyer-producer (prosumer) is a concept in which individuals as well as institutions can realize the status of both producer and consumer of electricity and is defined in detail by the new Law on Energy and the corresponding regulation. The customer-producer differs from the ordinary customer of electricity in that he has connected his own renewable energy source (eg solar panels) to the internal installations, whereby the produced electricity is used to supply his own consumption, and the excess of the produced electricity is delivered to the transmission system. Depending on the ratio of production and consumption, the buyer-producer can pay extra for part of the energy he used and which he did not produce himself, but also sell the surplus if he produced more than he consumed.

Green public procurement is a process in which the public sector/clients seek to procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle, compared to goods, services and works that would otherwise be procured, which have the same primary function . With this approach, it is possible to achieve significant savings, reduced negative impacts on the environment and positive impact on society.

Circular economy represents a regenerative economic system in which production resources, waste, waste emission and energy outflow are significantly reduced by slowing down, rounding off and extending energy and material cycles (life cycles) in production. This is achieved primarily by designing and creating products in such a way as to maximize their life span, but also by maintenance, servicing and recycling.

CULTURAL POLICIES AND GREEN TRANSFORMATION IN RE-IMAGINE PROJECT PARTNER COUNTRIES

This section offers an overview of the cultural policy frameworks and environmental governance systems across the partner countries participating in the *Re-Imagine Green Art Practices on the Margin* project. It examines how national and local cultural policies influence the potential for green transformation in the performing arts including funding structures, institutional priorities, and the position of the independent scene.

By comparing policy environments in Serbia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and North Macedonia, the analysis highlights both structural challenges and emerging opportunities for integrating sustainability into cultural practice. It also identifies how artistic and civic actors are developing alternative, bottom-up approaches to sustainability where policy support remains limited.

The accompanying case studies present projects developed within the Re-Imagine Green Residency program. These initiatives exemplify how artists and cultural organizations from the region translate ecological principles into practice through sustainable production, green mobility, community engagement, and innovative artistic methods.

Together, the policy overviews and case studies provide a contextual framework for understanding how regional cooperation and creative experimentation can advance the green transformation of the performing arts sector in Central and Southeastern Europe.

BULGARIA

Bulgaria has come a long way in its democratic development since the fall of the communist regime in 1989, transforming major social areas like economic life and free trade, healthcare, education, yet the cultural domain has barely changed its governance structure. The Ministry of Culture (MoC) is the major agent of cultural policies and programs. albeit an official strategy for culture has not been issued yet.

Bulgaria's key cultural legislation is the Protection and Development of Culture Act (1999, with amendments through 2024), which sets principles, governance, and financing instruments for culture. A complementary framework is the Cultural Heritage Act (2009; amended through 2023/2024), which governs

heritage protection. These acts are binding law rather than policy strategies; while cultural strategy documents appear intermittently, the Acts remain the foundation. An English reference to the Culture Act is available through UNESCO country resources.

The MoC is the main funder for a vast and unreformed network of public cultural institutes – state and municipal theatres, operas, galleries, museums, etc. The gradual reduction of annual public spending on culture (less than 1% GDP), along with delays in annual state budget adoption in the past 4 years, has put pressure on the sustainability of many cultural institutions.

In the last 10 years, responsibilities have increasingly been shifted to the local level, yet only the capital of Sofia and 3-4 other major cities have established funds for culture beyond their annual cultural calendars.

Since the 1990s, the independent scene of arts and culture in Bulgaria has been developing as if in a parallel universe, relying on international grants and exchanges, some scarce grants within the country and the curiosity and loyalty of its audiences. Independent operators usually register as non-profit legal entities (associations or foundations) under the Non-Profit Legal Entities framework. The major barriers for the independent scene include administrative burden, fragmented and unsteady funding, and reliance on short-term projects. The gravest one ensues from the profound lack of understanding in politicians of the difference between private (commercial) and independent arts and culture initiatives and that the former need structural support to dare artistic innovation and experiment without the strain to be self-sustainable of its commercial success.

The legal acts recognise multiple organisational forms, with the Ministry of Culture (MoC) and arm's-length bodies implementing support. The National Culture Fund (NCF) runs competitive programmes covering performing arts, visual arts, literature, mobility, translation, and more (around 4 mln. euro for 2025). Municipalities (e.g., Sofia Municipality) operate annual culture programmes that are important to independent operators. In film, the National Film Center (NFC) is the dedicated funding body.

Internationally, Creative Europe remains a major source for cooperation and mobility. Other available grants are the EEA grants, the INTERREG grants and some private donors like Allianz

The National Trust EcoFund (NTEF) is Bulgaria's primary green financing body, funding climate and energy-efficiency projects, including public cultural buildings through municipalities. The LIFE programme is active in Bulgaria, as an EU member state. The EEA & Norway Grants in Bulgaria also support environment and culture separately, with potential for cross-sector initiatives. Some public cultural operators access EU green-transition or city-level funds for sustainable upgrades.

Creative Europe (2021–2027) identifies environmental sustainability as a cross-cutting priority, requiring applicants to outline eco-measures (e.g., green touring, digital alternatives). At the national level, explicit sustainability criteria are not standard in all cultural funding calls. Guidelines increasingly mention responsibility in production and travel without giving any specific instructions or awarding points for explicit green sustainability practices.

Despite its multitude amendments, the core legislation on culture does not impose environmental requirements on cultural operators, but EU Green Deal objectives influence project funding. The environmental sustainability is mainly driven by EU and national climate policies. Heritage conservation frameworks intersect with sustainability through material standards.

While Bulgaria lacks a central “green arts” programme, cultural operators tap into EU schemes such as Creative Europe and Perform Europe. The National Trust EcoFund occasionally supports public cultural venues through municipal ownership or partnerships. Capacity-building initiatives funded by NTEF also include climate education.

EU guidance (Creative Europe's priority) serves as the baseline for applicants, who are encouraged to demonstrate eco-responsible planning. National ministries do not issue a comprehensive sustainability manual, but recommendations are sometimes mentioned in funding guidelines and FAQs. Municipalities occasionally reference sustainable production in programme guidelines.

Cross-sector collaboration

- NTEF collaborates with municipalities and public institutions (schools, cultural venues) on energy-efficiency projects.
- EEA & Norway Grants and European Climate Initiative (EUKI) projects in Bulgaria foster cooperation between environmental and cultural/educational actors.

- The National Film Center cooperates with European audiovisual bodies (Eurimages, European Audiovisual Observatory), where sustainability is being mainstreamed.
- Local festivals and venues implement green actions with support from municipal or EU funds.

NORTH MACEDONIA

North Macedonia is a parliamentary republic with a centralised governance system, where most competencies in the field of culture are concentrated at the national level under the Ministry of Culture, which in 2024 was restructured into the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Ministry drafts strategies, prepares and implements annual calls for funding, and manages the work of national cultural institutions. Local municipalities also finance cultural programs, but their capacities remain modest, inconsistent, and highly uneven. Transparency is lacking both in local-level planning and in decisions on funding support; even when cultural strategies or development plans are adopted, most remain declarative and are not implemented.

While the Ministry of Culture formally remains the central policy actor, civil society organizations (CSOs) are rarely or never involved in drafting strategies, laws, instruments, or other cultural plans. Consultative processes are often nominal: discussions may be opened, but proposals are seldom revised or meaningfully integrated. Collaboration between CSOs and the Ministry varies depending on the minister in office, which only reinforces the centralization of decision-making and the partisanship of the cultural sphere.

The main legal framework is the Law on Culture (1998, last amended in 2025)⁷ which defines the principles of cultural development and the roles of institutions and actors. However, the law does not integrate explicit provisions for environmental sustainability or green transition in the cultural field. The National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018–2022 has expired without renewal (there was a new proposal of a National Strategy 2023–2027 including environmental issues and culture, but was never adopted), leaving a policy vacuum. Current priorities are instead set annually through ministerial calls for programs and political decisions, with a strong emphasis on heritage protection and very limited support for contemporary, experimental, educational or research prac-

⁷ <https://dejure.mk/zakon/zakon-za-kulturata>

tices, or for intersectional and transdisciplinary approaches in arts and culture. As a result, interdisciplinary and intersectional practices, largely carried by the independent scene, remain marginalised. The only state instrument that once supported interdisciplinary approaches in arts and culture was later abolished due to the recommendation of auditory actions; however, no other instruments are proposed. Today, institutional programming is created with criteria dominated by traditional perspectives, formats and models, which rarely incorporate intersectional perspectives linking environmental issues, gender politics, human rights, or other urgent socio-political concerns.

The independent scene in culture is primarily organised through civil associations, which remain structurally fragile due to unstable funding, lack of infrastructure, and precarious labor conditions. Annual public calls by the Ministry of Culture are the main source of support, yet allocations for civil society organizations rarely exceed 4–5% of the total cultural budget. In addition:

- In 2021, only 4% of CSO revenue came from the central state budget.⁸
- CSO state funding contributes approx. 3% of total CSO income in some years.⁹
- State policy (Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2022-2024) had an aim that state funding cover 30% of CSO turnover by 2024, but that goal was not met and not institutionalised in budget practice.¹⁰

Dedicated public funds for sustainability and ecological transition in culture do not exist. Unlike some EU countries, North Macedonia is not covered in the Western Balkans Green Agenda with culture as a field of action. Cultural policy documents contain no references to green transition. The rare institutional initiatives connecting culture and climate have been a UNESCO capacity-building workshop (Ohrid, 2022)¹¹, which focused narrowly on cultural heritage and disaster risk management, not on contemporary cultural production. At the broader policy level, the country has adopted environmental and climate frameworks, such as the Long-Term Strategy on Climate Action and

⁸ <https://civicamobilitas.mk/en/civica-news/infographics-state-funding-for-civil-society-organization-in-2021/>

⁹ https://balkanicsd.net/novo/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Country_Report_for_2023_MM_in_North_Macedonia.pdf

¹⁰ <https://rcgo.mk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/report-macedonia.pdf>

¹¹ UNESCO training-workshop "Building a future resistant to climate change: development of capacities for adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management in selected UNESCO sites in South-Eastern Europe", 17 - 21.10.2022, Ohrid, 17/10/2022- As part of the broader "Greening Education Partnership" initiative, the event focused on strengthening the capacity for climate action at selected UNESCO sites in South-Eastern Europe.

https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-training-building-climate-resilient-future-capacity-development-climate-change-adaptation-and?hub=68184&fbclid=IwY2xjawM1A85leHRuA2FibQlxMABicmlkETF4aEVRQU43NUI3Sn-QyYkxOAR4E9icJrvlWIE88dQC4F-cV1xJAf8K024HwTMMGDRBLrOK34cjOpXS_3THm2w_aem_k-tl9Rcz7VF-6498HwfgpiQ

Action Plan, and the National Development Strategy 2024-2044¹², which includes green transition, transformation and agenda. However, culture and cultural institutions and the CSOs as part of the independent cultural sector are excluded from those frameworks beyond very general mentions. Institutional guidance for integrating green practices in culture is still missing.

In such a context—where cultural policy do not have an intersectional approach (in the remaining, old documents which are in power) and where environmental strategies remain weakly enforced, or never related with culture in the developmental documents, where the official institutions neglect sustainability, - the role of civil society and the independent cultural sector becomes pivotal. Through festivals, performances, artistic researches, and curatorial projects, independent actors have been introducing diverse intersectional perspectives, such green production, experimental green dramaturgies, and community-based ecological practices among others. The performing arts, in particular, provide a space to articulate ecological urgencies, experiment with sustainable practices, and mobilize communities around questions of justice, solidarity, and care. This is precisely where the Re-Imagine project in the country gains its significance. By piloting models of learning, and thus, working, producing, creating, and curating, within the independent performing arts scene, it not only fills institutional gaps but also demonstrates how cultural actors can lead ecological transition from below. We believe that these practices need to be also transferred in education system of arts and culture, thus, can have larger effects.

HUNGARY

Hungary operates as a parliamentary democracy with a highly centralized governance structure. Cultural policy is managed under the **Ministry of Culture and Innovation**, which was established in 2022, while the **National Cultural Fund (NKA)** serves as the main public financing mechanism for cultural and artistic projects. Over the past decade, Hungary has undergone extensive re-centralization in public administration, leading to a significant reduction of municipal and regional competences, including those in culture.

The **Act on the Support of Performing Arts Organizations** (2008) provides the main legal framework for the theatre sector, but amendments adopted in

¹² <https://www.mchamber.mk/Upload/Documents/%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%B-D%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%98%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0%202024%202044.pdf>

2018 fundamentally changed its financial logic by abolishing the corporate tax incentive system (the TAO scheme). The replacement mechanism introduced direct government allocation instead of automatic rebates, resulting in a more discretionary and less transparent funding environment. Consequently, state and municipally funded theatres have maintained relative stability, while **independent performing-arts organizations** have faced increasing financial precarity and reduced access to structural support.

The independent performing-arts scene, represented by the **Association of Independent Performing Arts Organizations (FESZ)**, consists of small, project-based entities that depend largely on competitive grants from the NKA, municipal programs (particularly in Budapest), and international cooperation projects, such as those funded through **Creative Europe**. The majority of independent organizations are registered as civil associations or non-profit companies, which limits their eligibility for long-term institutional funding. Outside Budapest, the ecology of independent performing arts remains underdeveloped due to weaker local cultural infrastructure and limited municipal resources.

While Hungary has adopted several key environmental policy instruments—such as the **National Energy and Climate Plan (2019)**, the **Climate and Nature Protection Plan (2020)**, and the **Climate Protection Act (2020)**—these frameworks do not explicitly integrate culture or the performing arts as areas of intervention. Climate policy remains primarily within the competence of the **Ministry of Energy** and the **Ministry of Innovation and Technology**, focusing on emission reduction, renewable energy, and industrial transformation. As a result, **there is no formal policy linkage between cultural and environmental governance**, nor any state-led initiative promoting sustainable production or touring models in the performing arts.

Within the cultural sector, **no national program or regulatory framework** exists to support ecological transition. There are no defined standards for low-impact cultural production, energy efficiency in venues, or mobility-related carbon tracking. However, a small number of independent and city-level initiatives have begun to introduce sustainability into cultural practice. Institutions such as **SÍN Arts Centre** have pioneered participatory funding models and community-based approaches to resource management, while other independent organizations have experimented with circular scenography, energy-efficient touring, and awareness-raising performances addressing environmental themes. Budapest remains the central hub for such innovation, due to its concentration of professional networks, audiences, and potential partners. In contrast, small-

er towns and rural regions offer limited institutional support and infrastructure for independent artistic work. The uneven spatial distribution of resources reinforces dependence on the capital city and international partners for artistic and financial sustainability.

In sum, Hungary presents a context in which **national climate commitments exist in isolation from cultural policy, and independent performing arts organizations act as the main drivers of ecological awareness and experimentation**. Their efforts are primarily enabled through EU-funded projects, transnational networks, and local collaborations rather than domestic cultural-policy instruments. The independent scene thus functions as a testing ground for sustainable practices developing low-impact production methodologies, alternative touring approaches, and civic engagement strategies in the absence of systemic national support.

SERBIA

Serbia is a parliamentary republic with a centralized governance structure, where most competencies in the field of culture are vested in the national level, under the authority of the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry drafts strategies, issues calls for cultural funding, and oversees national cultural institutions, while the provincial secretariat (in Vojvodina) and local municipalities manage additional cultural programs and competitions. National cultural policy follows government strategies, though the independent cultural sector is often weakly recognized and remains structurally fragile. The legal status of independent organizations is usually based on the model of civil associations, which face limited access to stable financing and infrastructure.

In terms of cultural policy, the *Law on Culture*¹³ (2009, last amended in 2023) provides the general framework, but it does not include explicit references to environmental sustainability or green practices. Although the *Strategy for the Development of Culture 2020–2029*¹⁴ was adopted by the Government of Serbia, it has not yet been confirmed by the Parliament, which leaves its implementation incomplete and politically ambiguous. Instead, cultural policy priorities are currently framed through the document *Strategic Priorities for the Development of Culture* (Ministry of Culture, 2020)¹⁵, but sustainability is not yet formulated as a cross-cutting priority. Additionally, a persistent problem

¹³ https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_kulturi.html

¹⁴ <https://kultura.gov.rs/extfile/sr/4476/strategija-razvoja-kulture-od-2020--do-2029--godine.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://kultura.gov.rs/extfile/sr/6132/Strate%C5%A1ki%20prioriteti%20razvoja%20kulture.pdf>

is the lack of transparency in both drafting of such strategic documents and in the management of public calls for cultural funding. Moreover, within the current socio-political climate and under the ruling regime, cultural policy is strongly oriented towards building the narrative of “national culture and values” and heritage protection, while contemporary creation and independent production remain marginalized. This ideological bias further constrains the operating space of independent cultural organizations, particularly those engaging in critical or innovative practices.

The independent scene relies primarily on competitive grants from the Ministry of Culture, the provincial secretariat, and local governments. However, these schemes are modest in scope: in 2024, for example, the national budget for culture in Serbia amounted to only **0.68% of the total state budget**, and just **2.97% of the Ministry of Culture’s overall budget** was allocated to civil society organizations in culture¹⁶. These figures come from the long-term monitoring of public funding competitions conducted by NKSS – the Association of the Independent Cultural Scene of Serbia, which since 2015 has analyzed the distribution of funds across republican, provincial, and local levels. Beyond the limited amounts themselves, the research highlights a series of structural problems: lack of transparency in competition procedures, disproportionately small budgets for contemporary cultural production and international cooperation, and the discretionary allocation of funds by the Minister of Culture outside of public calls. Significant resources continue to be directed to questionable or “predatory” organizations, leaving only marginal support for the broader independent scene. Access to European funds through Creative Europe Desk Serbia has become an important lifeline, yet co-financing requirements pose serious challenges for underfunded organizations. Unlike some EU member states, Serbia does not have dedicated green cultural funds, and sustainability criteria, while increasingly present in Creative Europe calls, are not systematically included in national ones.

When it comes to environmental protection, although Serbia has adopted the Law on Climate Change (2021)¹⁷ and the Low-Carbon Development Strategy 2023–2030¹⁸, which set clear emission reduction targets and establish frameworks for a low-carbon transition, their impact remains limited in practice. According to the Coalition 27 Shadow Report (2024)¹⁹, the implementation of

¹⁶ <https://nezavisnakultura.net/analiza-konkursa>

¹⁷ <https://pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2021/26/1/reg>

¹⁸ <https://pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2023/46/1/reg>

¹⁹ <https://www.koalicija27.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Izvestaj-iz-senke-2024.pdf>

climate and environmental policies is consistently undermined by systemic shortcomings: delays in adopting strategic documents, reliance on outdated data, weak local capacities, chronic underfunding, and a lack of transparency in governance and funding procedures.

This lack of effective enforcement is mirrored in the cultural field, where no official guidelines for sustainable practices in cultural institutions exist, nor has the Ministry of Culture developed programs comparable to “climate-ready culture” schemes in other countries. Instead, ecological concerns in culture are most visibly advanced by grassroots initiatives and civil society actors. In parallel, the wave of ecological protests taking place all over Serbia from 2021 to 2024 demonstrated strong civic engagement that has indirectly influenced cultural actors to address environmental issues and experiment with greener practices.

In such a context, where ambitious legal frameworks remain poorly enforced and institutional cultural policies neglect sustainability, the role of civil society and the independent cultural sector becomes even more crucial. The performing arts provide a space to raise awareness, mobilize communities, and test alternative ecological practices that institutions fail to prioritize. This is precisely where the *Re-Imagine Green Art Practices on the Margin* project gains importance: by piloting sustainable practices in the independent performing arts scene, it not only compensates for institutional gaps but also demonstrates practical, bottom-up models of ecological transition. Grounded in creativity, solidarity, and care, as well as community participation, these practices can help shift public discourse and generate evidence to push both cultural and climate policies towards genuine implementation.

CASE STUDIES: RE-IMAGINE PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

The following section presents twelve case studies developed within the Re-Imagine Green Residency program- a series of educational, capacity-building residencies organized in Bulgaria, Hungary, North Macedonia and Serbia. Each residency gathered local and regional artists, cultural workers, and independent organizations to explore the intersection of ecology and performing arts.

The projects featured here were developed during the span of a year-long program, reflecting diverse approaches to sustainable creation from green production and eco-scenography to community engagement and environmentally conscious touring models. Together, they illustrate how the principles of green transformation can be reinterpreted and applied across different social, cultural, and geographic contexts of the region.

1) R_EVA – Threepenny Theatre (Serbia)

Tri groša (Threepenny) is an independent art collective founded in 2015, active in the field of performing arts, education, and research. The collective has produced over 30 programs locally and internationally, with a strong focus on experimentation in form, participatory formats, and audience development. Without its own venue and operating with limited resources, Tri groša has long relied on practices of recycling, digital tools, and low-waste approaches, often creating hybrid live-online performances with minimal physical footprint.. Its artists, such as Ana Pinter, have developed a body of work at the intersection of art, science, and ecology, often addressing climate change, commons theory, and sustainability.

During the Re-Imagine Green residency program, Tri groša developed the project R_EVA, a site-specific storytelling soundscape set in the natural oasis of Bara Reva on the outskirts of Belgrade. Bara Reva is a unique wetland ecosystem rich in biodiversity, but also highly endangered by illegal dumping, urban expansion, and the lack of urban planning. As one of the last swamp ecosystems within Belgrade's urban area, it has become both a symbol of ecological fragility and a site of civic resistance. Local activists organized under the name Bela Čaplja have been actively protecting Reva, protesting against its destruction and advocating for its preservation. The project takes this context as its starting point, weaving together ecological knowledge, artistic interpretation, and community activism.

R_EVA is conceived as an audio walk that positions humans as listeners and observers within the fragile ecosystem, decentering human experience in favor of nonhuman actors. Through locative sound and storytelling, the project highlights the role of wetlands as natural carbon sinks and vital elements of planetary balance. The production is intentionally zero-waste: participants use their own devices and headphones, while the content is delivered digitally through the open-source platform Roundware. This choice reflects the collective's commitment to resource efficiency, open technology, and peer-to-peer exchange.

The dramaturgy of the piece evolved in close collaboration between artists, sound designers, and activists from Bela Čaplja, who brought in first-hand knowledge of Reva's ecosystem. The process balanced scientific input from geology, microbiology, and climate studies with artistic imagination, creating a narrative that intertwines ecological facts with sensorial and affective experiences. The work resonates with eco-political perspectives, echoing ecofeminist thinkers such as Donna Haraway and Karen Barad, while also situating itself within local struggles over commons and environmental justice.

The project's anticipated impact lies in raising awareness about the ecological value of wetlands and mobilizing citizens to see themselves as part of a larger network of interdependence. It also builds organizational capacity within Tri groša by advancing their use of open-source locative technologies and deepening their collaborative ties with environmental movements. Challenges included securing financial resources, ensuring sustainability of the digital infrastructure, and avoiding unintended "digital waste." Yet the collaboration with activists and the mentoring received through Re-Imagine proved crucial for grounding the project and sharpening its focus.

R_EVA thus demonstrates how independent performing arts can intervene in urgent ecological debates by combining creativity, technology, and community activism. It embodies a bottom-up model of green transformation, showing how artistic practices rooted in care, solidarity, and imagination can strengthen civic engagement and provide inspiration for both cultural and environmental stakeholders.

2) Jeremi Pulls Himself Together – KultBazaar (Hungary)

KultBazaar Association is an organization that focuses on creating socially engaged art, particularly addressing contemporary issues through theater. Its mission is to produce thought-provoking performances that resonate with

young audiences. The independent theater scene in Hungary faces challenges such as underfunding and limited institutional support, which can hinder the adoption of sustainable production practices. However, there is growing interest in addressing pressing issues like mental health, environmental responsibility, and the impact of technology on the younger generation.

The socio-economic conditions in Hungary create challenges for independent cultural organizations, especially when trying to integrate green practices. Despite the challenges, the focus on youth issues, such as online addiction and self-identity, offers a unique opportunity to engage the younger generation in crucial conversations about sustainability and personal growth.

Jeremi Pulls Himself Together is a theater production aimed at Generation Alpha (ages 13-14), addressing themes of computer addiction, parent-child relationships, and emotional growth. The play highlights the difficulties young people face when navigating friendships, online identity, and communication. The performance aims to provide a space for self-reflection and dialogue about the challenges of growing up in an increasingly digital world. The primary challenge of the project was integrating sustainable practices into the production while maintaining high artistic standards. There were also challenges in making the performance both relatable and educational for young audiences, particularly given the sensitive issues it addresses.

To integrate sustainable practices, the production team focused on creating minimal sets, using second-hand costumes, and reusing materials. The green production plan aimed to reduce waste and energy consumption throughout the rehearsal and performance phases. The team also used eco-friendly materials for any necessary props or set pieces. The interactive nature of the performance was a key strategy in engaging the young audience. The Theater in Education (T.I.E.) format allowed students to actively participate in the workshop after the performance, processing the themes in a collaborative environment. This participatory approach helped ensure that the themes of online addiction, self-identity, and relationships were explored in a way that resonated with the audience.

The anticipated outcomes of the project included raising awareness among young people about the dangers of excessive screen time, the importance of real communication, and how to navigate difficult relationships. The impact of the production was measured by how well it facilitated conversations around mental health and self-identity, providing an accessible way for young people to process these topics. The production also aimed to have a broader impact

on the independent theater scene in Hungary by demonstrating how sustainability can be incorporated into smaller-scale productions without sacrificing quality. The project provided valuable learning for the organization, enhancing its capacity to produce future sustainable theater projects.

One of the challenges faced during the production was balancing the educational aspect of the play with the entertainment value. The team overcame this by incorporating humor and relatable dialogue, making the performance both engaging and educational. Another lesson learned was the importance of integrating sustainability in all stages of the production, from conceptualization to execution. Future projects should focus on increasing collaboration with sustainability-focused organizations and seek more green funding opportunities to enhance the eco-conscious aspect of productions.

3) DUALITY – Fire-Theatre Group “Lords of Dreams” (Bulgaria)

Lords of Dreams is a newly formed Bulgarian fire-theatre collective exploring the intersection of non-verbal theatre, movement, and light. Founded by Diana Tankova, the group blends fire dance, circus techniques, and visual storytelling to communicate ecological and philosophical ideas through immersive public performances. The company’s mission is to use art as a transformative medium for awareness and collective reflection, emphasizing care for nature and community.

Their project DUALITY combines installation, performance, and audience participation to explore humanity’s relationship with nature and technology. Structured as a one-day open-air festival, the project begins with the interactive installation Parallel Worlds, where audiences enter two contrasting environments: an industrial, resource-extractive world and a nature-centered, regenerative one. Visitors are invited to physically generate energy through bicycle-powered generators and solar panels, symbolically contributing to the electricity needed to power the evening light spectacle.

As dusk falls, the installation transforms into a non-verbal fire-and-light performance that contrasts materialism and spirituality, individualism and community, destruction and renewal. Through choreography, light, and fire, DUALITY stages a sensory dialogue between these two realities, culminating in a collective reflection on personal responsibility and legacy. At the end of the performance, audiences are invited to respond to the question “What should my successor be like?”, leaving written, recorded, or visual reflections that form

the basis for future artistic iterations.

The production itself embodies green principles. All scenography and costumes are made from reused or donated materials, and lighting equipment is powered by rechargeable batteries and renewable energy sources. Informational banners and QR codes replace printed materials, while the project's communication strategy emphasizes transparency and education about its sustainable methods. Beyond the event itself, the Lords of Dreams collective uses documentation—behind-the-scenes videos and social media storytelling—to demystify the green production process and inspire peers in the performing arts to adopt similar practices.

DUALITY demonstrates how sustainability can be integrated not only thematically but structurally into artistic creation. The project's format—portable, multilingual, and community-oriented—makes it highly adaptable for festivals and public spaces in both Bulgaria and abroad. Its immersive and participatory design invites audiences to move from passive spectatorship to active engagement, transforming ecological awareness into lived experience.

Through participation in the Re-Imagine Green residencies, Lords of Dreams refined their approach to sustainable production and gained new knowledge on eco-design, responsible touring, and audience engagement. The mentorship and peer exchange helped them articulate a clearer vision for integrating environmental ethics into artistic and organizational practice. As the team reflects, "The residency helped us see production as a form of activism—where creativity, care, and responsibility become one performance."

4) Green Grammar – Macedonian Center ITI/PRODUKCIJA (North Macedonia)

The Macedonian Center ITI/PRODUKCIJA is an independent cultural organization dedicated to developing, promoting, and internationalizing contemporary Macedonian performing arts. Through projects that intersect theatre, digital media, and social reflection, the organization has cultivated a unique hybrid aesthetic combining live performance, video theatre, and critical dramaturgy. With a long-standing focus on experimentation, education, and the interrelation of form and content, it approaches theatre as a space for civic and ecological imagination.

Green Grammar builds on this practice, emerging as a continuation of the Green Inversions project. Conceived as a hybrid, eco-performative experiment, it ex-

plores how theatrical language itself can embody ecological consciousness. Each of its five segments reimagines grammar as an ecological system — where language, movement, and emotion articulate the relations between human and nonhuman worlds. Through a sequence of monologues by polluters, elements, and everyday people, the performance exposes conflicting logics of exploitation and resistance, transforming linguistic structures into a performative reflection on ecological interdependence. The project's development followed principles of sustainable practice, embracing minimal material use, repurposed scenography, and digital collaboration to reduce its environmental footprint while amplifying its conceptual depth.

Developed through research, writing, and rehearsal processes between Skopje and Bitola, Green Grammar experiments with monologue and movement as “green syntax.” Inspired by the Rashomon effect, it presents multiple, often contradictory ecological perspectives: the polluter and the polluted, the human and the element, the profiteer and the activist. By doing so, the piece challenges audiences to navigate the blurred boundaries between complicity and resistance. The work positions the actor as both performer and medium, carrying multiple textual, visual, and sonic identities through live and recorded layers of the piece.

In line with its “green working manifesto,” the project applies low-impact production models: set design uses recycled car tires and found natural materials, costumes are second-hand, and digital tools replace printed materials and long-distance rehearsals. Collaboration with the National Theatre Bitola provides existing infrastructure for performance, reducing the need for additional resources and transport.

Beyond its aesthetic and ecological innovations, Green Grammar proposes a new performative methodology, a “grammar” of care, adaptation, and resistance, which may be replicated or further developed by other independent theatre makers. The project embodies how sustainable thinking can extend beyond content into the very syntax of performance-making, offering a poetic yet practical contribution to the green transformation of the performing arts.

5) Three Part Balkan Comedy: Hell, Purgatory, Heaven – PATOS Theatre (Serbia)

PATOS Theatre from Smederevo has been a driving force of youth and experimental theatre in Serbia since 1986, known both for its artistic innovation and for its strong community engagement. Over decades, the group has consis-

tently produced performances that challenge conventional theatre forms while supporting young generations of artists. Their long-standing methodology of combining professional actors, art students, and teenagers has positioned PATOS as a disseminating factor of contemporary culture in Smederevo and beyond. In parallel, PATOS has cultivated an international presence through co-productions, exchanges, and guest performances across Europe.

Building on earlier ecologically engaged works such as *Plastic Gardens* (2009), *2100: The Aska Fable* (2019), and the long-running *Eyes Shut Theatre* program (since 2014), PATOS entered the Re-Imagine Green Residency program with the project *Three Part Balkan Comedy: Hell, Purgatory, Heaven*. The performance explores the afterlife from a Balkan perspective, using blindfolded immersion as its signature form. Here, audiences are deprived of visual perception and guided instead through soundscapes, scents, tactile encounters, and even taste, creating an embodied experience that brings themes such as pollution, war, purgatory, and the search for paradise into immediate, emotional focus. By removing sight, the work levels the field between sighted and visually impaired audiences, offering a shared sensory journey that is at once vulnerable, intimate, and transformative.

The creative process is structured around five phases- historical and literary research, interviews with diverse communities, drama workshops, text development, and production. By weaving lived perspectives into dramaturgy, PATOS situates ecological and social crises within the timeless frame of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Hell is presented as the chaos of present-day wars, climate disasters, and systemic injustices; Purgatory is theatre itself, a liminal space of reflection; Paradise remains undefined, provoking existential questions about whether it can be imagined at all.

From a sustainability perspective, the *Eyes Shut Theatre* model is inherently resource-light: there is no scenography, minimal or no lighting, and costumes and props are either reused or locally sourced. Touring is conceived with a small ecological footprint, designed for adaptability across theatres, classrooms, and cultural centers, though challenges remain due to limited rail infrastructure in the region. The company anticipates clustering performances and working with local partners to reduce transport impacts.

Beyond artistic form, PATOS links its work to broader advocacy. By integrating

real-world data on air, water, and soil pollution into communication materials and framing the experience within contemporary Balkan ecological struggles, the performance invites audiences to reflect on corporate and governmental accountability. In doing so, Three Part Balkan Comedy extends the stage into public discourse.

Participation in the Re-Imagine residencies reinforced PATOS's commitment to sustainability not only as material practice but as a relational ethic. The process encouraged them to reimagine every layer of their work from production methods to dramaturgical choices through a green lens, deepening both their artistic identity and their awareness of community impact. For PATOS, sustainability is as much about nurturing relationships and care as it is about reducing resource consumption.

6) Water Reflections – Atrium (North Macedonia)

Atrium is a Skopje-based interdisciplinary collective founded in 2022, working across theatre, visual arts, and research to explore the social and ecological dimensions of contemporary life. As a young organization, Atrium develops projects that blend artistic experimentation with civic engagement, focusing on urgent environmental and social issues through collaborative artistic processes.

Water Reflections is the third project in Atrium's ongoing Senses series, which investigates the human relationship with nature through performance, architecture, sound, and visual art. Following previous projects centered on the sun and human interaction, Water Reflections turns to one of North Macedonia's most pressing ecological concerns — the pollution of the river Vardar. Once a vital lifeline connecting communities across the region, Vardar today faces critical degradation caused by decades of industrial pollution, mismanagement, and institutional neglect.

The project uses interdisciplinary collaboration to transform scientific and social research into performative and visual expression. Artists, architects, and musicians jointly explore the river as both a physical and symbolic site — a witness to environmental decline and collective memory. Choreographic movement interprets the obstructed flow of water; sound artists capture and recompose the river's altered soundscapes; visual artists create installations from natural and recycled materials to evoke contamination and renewal. Alongside these artistic interventions, researchers document archival and oral histories

of life along the riverbanks, contributing to a digital platform that merges art, data, and public memory.

Through this convergence of artistic research and ecological advocacy, Water Reflections seeks to raise awareness of water pollution while addressing broader questions of responsibility and collective care. The project's dissemination strategy includes performances and exhibitions across cities and villages along the Vardar, combined with public talks and digital storytelling to encourage dialogue among citizens, NGOs, and policymakers. While still in its development stage, the project already demonstrates a model for art-based environmental education rooted in regional collaboration and open access. The anticipated impact of Water Reflections lies in its ability to connect emotional experience with scientific and political awareness — to transform the perception of water from a depleted resource into a shared space of memory, resistance, and interdependence. As part of the Re-Imagine Green Residency framework, the project benefited from mentorship and regional exchange, reinforcing Atrium's capacity to integrate ecological thinking into artistic practice and to mobilize networks for cross-border eco-advocacy.

7) The Story of Anuk, the Inuit Boy- Ship Adventures (Bulgaria)

Ship Adventures is a small independent travelling puppet theatre company from Bulgaria. Their hallmark is live music, audience interaction and stories based on exciting adventures. Margarita Petrova, actress and dramaturg, Zdravka Kantareva, scenographer, and Milena Velikova, musician have always been keen to bring sustainable practices into their work – by keeping the scenography light and mobile, by reusing and sharing props, by sharing travel for performances. The company's selection to take part in the Re-Imagine Green residencies was their first encounter with a systemized approach to introducing eco sustainability in performing arts.

Their project, The Story of Anuk, the Inuit Boy, tells an ecological fable through puppetry, music, and interactive play. It follows a young Inuit boy who embarks on a journey to save his friend, a bear cub that lost its icy home due to pollution. Guided by magical sea creatures, Anuk confronts Paluk Paluk, a sea monster who hoards human waste under the ocean. In an act of recognition and compassion, Anuk helps the monster rediscover his true self—a bear transformed by greed—reminding audiences that “the more you get, the less you have.” Through music, rhythm, and decision-making games, children become part of the story, exploring empathy, cooperation, and care for the natural world.

In parallel to its ecological narrative, the production applies tangible green practices. The set and puppets are made entirely from leftover materials gathered from print studios and recycled fabric; scenography is modular and lightweight, designed for easy touring. Puppetry merges rag-doll techniques with shadow theatre, accompanied by live instruments and throat singing to evoke Arctic soundscapes. This fusion of art forms not only creates aesthetic richness but also models circular design and resource efficiency for young audiences. Through the Re-Imagine program, Ship Adventures refined their intuitive low-impact methods into a comprehensive sustainability plan—adopting eco-scenography, shared mobility, and energy-efficient touring. The project secured support from the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture, allowing the company to complete production and tour the performance across Bulgaria. Beyond environmental education, Anuk engages children and families in workshops on reusing materials, encouraging them to transform waste into toys rather than purchasing new ones.

At its core, The Story of Anuk connects local audiences with global ecological realities. By bringing an Arctic tale to Bulgarian children, the performance bridges distant geographies to reveal shared concerns—pollution, overconsumption, and the fragile balance between humans and nature. The company's guiding message, "the more you get, the less you have," remains a simple yet powerful reminder that sustainability begins with awareness and imagination. Ship Adventures demonstrates how small, mobile collectives can pioneer accessible and educational green practices in the performing arts. Their model-light in structure but rich in creativity proves that sustainability in theatre is not a limitation but a catalyst for storytelling innovation and community engagement.

8) Superhero Tutorial- SÍN Arts Centre (Hungary)

SÍN Arts Centre is a creative hub focused on producing socially engaged art, particularly addressing environmental and societal issues through theater and performance. The center's mission is to create art that serves as a catalyst for social change, with a particular emphasis on climate change and youth empowerment. The independent cultural sector in Hungary faces challenges, including limited funding and a lack of institutional support for sustainable practices. However, there is growing demand for innovative projects that address global issues like climate change and encourage younger generations to take action. Given Hungary's cultural policy context, which does not fully support

green initiatives in the arts, SÍN Arts Centre faced the challenge of creating a sustainable and eco-conscious production while maintaining the integrity of the artistic message. However, the project provided an opportunity to experiment with new models of combining art with activism.

Superhero Tutorial is a performance that uses humor, vulnerability, and engagement to raise awareness about climate change and imperfect activism. The project centers on Miss Sparkle, a superhero alter ego created by Laura Tóth, who navigates the challenges of fighting against the climate crisis while embracing imperfection. The project includes a participatory performance, a TikTok campaign, and a community-building initiative designed to inspire action. One of the main challenges in the project was creating a sustainable production without compromising artistic quality. Additionally, engaging a diverse audience and ensuring the message of imperfection in activism resonated across different platforms (theater and social media) posed unique difficulties. To address sustainability, the production used eco-friendly materials, second-hand costumes, and minimalistic sets. The team also embraced outdoor venues to reduce energy consumption. The green production plan was integrated throughout the project, with all team members committed to reducing waste and promoting sustainability in their practices.

Miss Sparkle's persona was used not only in the performance but also as a social media campaign. Through TikTok, Miss Sparkle shared imperfect yet actionable steps towards fighting climate change, encouraging others to take small but significant steps. The campaign aimed to normalize imperfection in activism and highlight the importance of taking action, even if it's not perfect. The project also involved community building, bringing together artists to create their own superhero personas, known as the "Guardians." These artists worked together to amplify the message of sustainability and climate action, showing that collective effort can lead to meaningful change.

Superhero Tutorial aimed to have a significant impact by empowering youth to take climate action and recognize their role in making a difference. The anticipated outcomes included raising awareness about the importance of sustainability in the arts and encouraging a broader movement for climate action. The project also aimed to influence the cultural sector by demonstrating that art and activism can coexist and that sustainability can be integrated into artistic production without compromising creativity. The project's impact was measured by its ability to engage young people and foster a sense of community around the fight against climate change.

The project highlighted the importance of vulnerability and authenticity in engaging young people, especially in the context of climate activism. Miss Sparkle's character, who openly embraced her imperfections, resonated deeply with audiences. One key lesson learned was the importance of integrating digital platforms like TikTok to extend the reach of the message beyond physical performances. Future projects should continue to integrate social media and art in creative activism and explore further collaboration with green organizations to enhance the sustainability of the production process.

9) Magical Circle of Water- NIBIRU Collective (Serbia)

The Belgrade-based NIBIRU collective, founded in 2023, brings together young theatre professionals whose backgrounds span directing, dramaturgy, production, and stage architecture. Although at the beginning of their professional journey, the team is already united by a commitment to experimental formats, interdisciplinary practice, and engaging audiences in proactive and participatory ways.

Their project *Magical Circle of Water* positions children's theatre as a "laboratory of curiosity," where scientific thought becomes a tool for storytelling, imagination, and empathy. Aimed primarily at children aged 7–12, with parents and teachers as a secondary audience, the performance introduces ecological and emotional processes through interactive play. At the heart of the narrative is water, presented in its multiple states—rain, steam, snow, ice, and plasma. Following the story of a boy who, through grief, learns to connect his inner emotions with natural transformations of water, the play weaves scientific hypotheses into theatrical experience, challenging the idea of science as "cold" or "distant" and instead presenting it as a way of thinking that nurtures imagination, resilience, and care.

While the collective does not yet have extensive experience in ecological production, the project integrates sustainability both thematically and structurally. Preparation will include a residency in Northern Montenegro, where the team will collaborate with local craftspeople and cultural workers to explore traditional, low-impact methods of creating costumes, scenography, and sound design. Recycled and locally available materials will be prioritized, supported by the expertise of a designer specializing in children's products. This collaboration aims not only to reduce the ecological footprint of the production but also to bring practical sustainable knowledge back to the local community through

workshops and shared activities.

Back in Belgrade, rehearsals and production will translate the gathered insights into scenography, sound design, and costumes, while the team develops the performance's interactive structure. The culmination will be a premiere at the Museum of Science and Technology, a venue symbolically connecting art and science. Afterward, the play will tour schools and festivals, extending its impact and promoting ecological literacy among young audiences.

As a concept-driven and still-developing project, Magical Circle of Water demonstrates how emerging collectives can embed green practices from the very start, not as an addition but as a guiding principle. By combining interdisciplinary collaboration, community exchange, and ecological awareness, NIBIRU models an inclusive and responsible approach to theatre-making. The project highlights the potential of children's theatre to foster curiosity and environmental consciousness, offering a playful yet profound entry point into questions of sustainability for future generations.

10) Mother Courage and Her Children: A Traveling Production in One Cart- Informal Collective (North Macedonia)

This emerging informal collective, composed of producer Martina Petreska and theatre director Kristijan Atanasov, represents a new generation of cultural workers in North Macedonia exploring alternative, low-impact models of performance-making. With backgrounds in theatre production, directing, and event organization, they focus on accessible, community-driven, and environmentally conscious performance formats that bring theatre to diverse audiences beyond institutional stages.

During the Re-Imagine residencies, the team developed the concept for "Mother Courage and Her Children: A Traveling Production in One Cart," a mobile adaptation of Brecht's iconic play. The project reinterprets Mother Courage as both an anticapitalist and ecofeminist symbol—an allegory of survival, moral ambiguity, and care in times of perpetual crisis. Performed from a single cart designed for mobility and sustainability, the production aims to reach rural and small-town audiences across North Macedonia, reviving the tradition of traveling theatre while minimizing environmental impact.

The cart functions as both stage and symbol: a vessel of survival and persistence that echoes Brecht's critique of capitalism and war. The adaptation

emphasizes Mother Courage as a woman navigating a male-dominated, war-torn society, embodying resilience and agency amid systemic oppression. Through this lens, the project situates her as an anti-capitalocene figure—resisting the destructive cycles of profit, extraction, and violence that define modern existence.

Ecological and production choices reflect this ethic of resistance: the team employs minimalist scenography, repurposed materials, and low-impact touring logistics. The cart and costumes are built from found and recycled objects; props are symbolic and multifunctional; travel relies on public transport, and ticketing and promotion are entirely digital. Rehearsals combine online and on-site sessions to reduce travel and emissions, while each performance encourages audiences to attend on foot or by bicycle.

The touring format also enables direct interaction with local communities. Performances are followed by public discussions exploring themes of war, care, and collective resilience. The project thus becomes both an artwork and a civic action—an invitation to rethink sustainability, solidarity, and the social role of theatre in times of ecological and political instability.

Through Re-Imagine, Petreska and Atanasov expanded their understanding of sustainable production practices and the value of community collaboration. The residencies strengthened their commitment to integrating ecological awareness, feminist perspectives, and accessibility into their artistic process. As Petreska reflects, the experience “made me a more conscious citizen of Planet Earth and a better cultural worker- reminding me that collaboration and care are as essential to theatre as creativity itself.”

11) The Life I Live – Travel Theatre Skrin (Bulgaria)

Travel Theatre “Skrin” is an independent street and community theatre company that has been bringing live performances to small Bulgarian towns and villages for more than seven years. Founded by actress and director Daniana Koeva, the company emerged from the idea that theatre should travel where culture is least accessible, making art a shared, everyday experience. Over the past three years, Skrin has created seven productions performed across more than ten rural locations, enriching local cultural life through participatory and environmentally conscious performances.

Their project “The Life I Live” continues this mission by addressing one of Bul-

garia's most visible ecological problems — plastic pollution. Conceived as a large-scale street performance combining dance, stilt walking, and shadow theatre, the piece explores humanity's dependence on plastic and its consequences for both the planet and human identity. The performance begins with a massive pile of waste, from which figures gradually emerge — hybrid human forms made entirely of discarded plastic. Through their transformation, the piece exposes how overconsumption and waste have come to shape contemporary existence, while inviting reflection on the possibility of renewal and collective responsibility.

The production's concept is directly informed by the environmental realities of Bulgaria's rural peripheries, where waste management remains a persistent challenge. By performing in these communities, Skrin not only raises awareness but also brings cultural activity to areas often excluded from national cultural programming. Each performance becomes an interactive encounter, in which audiences participate through choice-based storytelling — deciding how the narrative unfolds — and by contributing recyclable materials as part of an innovative "EcoEntry / Plastic Pass" ticket system.

Ecological values are embedded throughout the creative process. Costumes and props are made from upcycled plastics, old fabric, and found objects; an old metal dumpster serves as the central scenographic element. The team uses solar-charged batteries to power sound and lighting, while touring collectively in a single vehicle, with plans to transition to an electric or hybrid bus. All communication materials are digital, minimizing print waste, and audiences are encouraged to walk or cycle to performances. Following each show, workshops led by the designer introduce audiences to upcycling techniques, reinforcing the idea of creativity as a sustainable practice.

The Life I Live demonstrates how art can merge activism and community engagement through imaginative and resource-conscious production. By turning ecological constraint into artistic opportunity, the project models a new kind of rural performance ecology— mobile, participatory, and self-sufficient. The show's interactive form and visual spectacle make sustainability tangible, transforming the issue of plastic waste from an abstract environmental concern into a lived, aesthetic, and emotional experience.

Through the Re-Imagine residencies, Skrin deepened its understanding of green production and sustainable touring models. The exchange with other regional collectives strengthened the company's belief that small organizations

can act as catalysts of change, using art to build networks of solidarity and environmental awareness. As Skrin reflects, “We discovered more than tools — we discovered a community. Art can be both beautiful and responsible, and audiences are ready to join us on this journey toward a greener future.”

12) Empires Will Come and Go but Someone Still Has to Do Laundry- Zemunski mali umetnički centar, ZMUC (Serbia)

Zemunski Mali Umetnički Centar (ZMUC), founded in 2006, is a Belgrade-based grassroots art association working in contemporary independent culture. Known for its mobile and ironic formats, ZMUC brings together artists, cultural workers, and audiences through projects such as Movable Residencies, The Festival of Useless and Pointless Skills, and The Museum of Corruption. Over time, the association has also developed eco-oriented practices, most notably the Alternative Residency Center ARC Dve Babe, a rural artist-in-residence program exploring low-impact living and DIY approaches.

Within the Re-Imagine framework, ZMUC developed the project Empires Will Come and Go but Someone Still Has to Do Laundry, a performative ecofeminist critique that interrogates the links between environmental exploitation, historical power structures, and gendered labor. The concept is rooted in the symbolic act of laundry, a traditionally feminized and undervalued form of work. By staging this act in natural settings marked by histories of extraction, such as abandoned mines or polluted rivers, the project confronts both ecological devastation and the persistent invisibility of women’s labor. The choice of bedsheets as a primary artistic material further emphasizes intimacy and domesticity, while natural dyes and recycled fabrics connect the production to sustainable practices.

The project is imagined as a hybrid of performance and documentary film. The performative “ritual” of laundering becomes both an artwork and a record, filmed at ecologically vulnerable sites across the former Yugoslavia. These sites, once peripheral zones of empires or modern industrial exploitation, carry layers of meaning: from Roman mining in Upper Moesia to contemporary threats of resource extraction. By situating the act of laundry within these landscapes, the work juxtaposes the cycles of empire with the endurance of everyday tasks, underscoring the continuity of gendered responsibilities amidst political and ecological upheavals.

Although still at the conceptual stage, Empires Will Come and Go but Someone Still Has to Do Laundry embodies ZMUC’s distinctive way of working- mobile

ironic, and community-oriented, while opening new terrain at the crossroads of ecofeminism, performance, and environmental justice. It offers not only a critique of past and present forms of exploitation but also a proposition: that art, humor, and care can together challenge the hierarchies that shape both human societies and our relationship to the Earth.

Closing note

Green Art Practices on the Margin Curriculum & Toolkit represent a collective effort to rethink how the performing arts can respond to the climate crisis, not only through creative expression but also through everyday working models, decision-making, and collaboration. Developed through dialogue, experimentation, and shared learning, these materials are meant to grow beyond this publication, serving as living tools that evolve with every new project and partnership.

The green transformation of the performing arts is not a single act, but a continuous process- one that requires care, reflection, and collective commitment. Each small step, from changing production routines to reimagining touring practices or engaging communities, contributes to building a more resilient and responsible cultural ecosystem.

We hope that this document will encourage organizations, artists, and educators across the region to experiment, adapt, and exchange their own sustainable practices. By working together, we can strengthen the network of professionals leading this change and co-create a cultural field that not only reflects the world we live in, but also helps to transform it into a greener, fairer, and more imaginative place for all.

Authors of the publication:

Ksenija Marković Božović, Jovana Karaulić, Tijana Mićanović, Vladimir Đurđević, Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski, Emilija Čočkova, Vassilka Shishkova, Dorka Gadus, Dimitar Uzunov

* We extend our gratitude to all residency participants, external lecturers, and collaborators whose commitment, creativity, and shared learning have significantly contributed to shaping this publication.

The RE-IMAGINE project is co-funded by the Creative Europe program of the European Union. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are, however, those of the authors 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.

