

Report EDE Damanhur 2012



This years EDE was Damanhur's second EDE, organized by Soc. Coop. Olami Damanhur in collaboration with Damanhur Education, in partnership with Gaia Education and the Global Ecovillage Network. Founded in 1975, the Federation of Damanhur is an eco-society of about 1000 citizens: a federation of communities and eco-villages with their own social and political structure in continual evolution in the north of Italy in the foothills of the Alps, 40km from Turin.

The Ede had 13 participants from 10 different countries, Latvia, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Brazil, Usa, Italy, France, Perù and Roumenia.

The age ranged from 22 to 62, two people in their twenties, many in their thirties, some in their forties, some in the fifties and one 62.

The gender proportion was 5 men and 8 women.

The main facilitators were Kosha Joubert and Macaco Tamerice for the social dimension and world view, Martin Stengel for the ecological one and Lemming Cactus for the economy part. Macaco was cofacilitating the ecological and economic dimensions.



Several damanhurian facilitators were present for specific sessions: Formica Coriandolo for the art workshop, Inti China for strawbale building with Martin, Formichiere Carota for health, Husky Vaniglia and Coboldo Melo for politics and the integration with the bioregion, Quaglia and Karen, a participant from last years' EDE lead the Open Space session.

The EDE was held despite the small number of participants and showed that it was a good choice, as it became a fantastic course.

All participants were highly motivated to achieve new knowledge and experience a shift of consciousness through community. Indeed the course was held in a manor with a beautiful lawn and rose garden and the participants were living in the same place. A highly appreciated damanhurian-italian cook took care of the physical wellbeing of the group and also the weather was mostly good.



The social dimension ignited the fire for community in the group. Many different group building dynamics especially exercises for leadership supported by more global tools like world cafe and open space helped the group feel like a community since almost the start.



A particular note was that despite, or maybe thanks to, 13 strong characters no conflicts arose between the participants. A very exciting community building experience was a two day community experiment in the woods, that helped the already strong group go even deeper. Also visiting some damanhurian nucleos (smaller communities of 15-25 people) and experiencing how life feels like in a big community that has existed for almost 38 years strengthened the experience of community.

The world view dimension was naturally embedded in Damanhur with visits and meditations in the Temples of Humankind, an introduction to Spiral Dynamics, exercises to connect with nature from Deep Ecology and Damanhur and a morning spent on observing our world from a holistic point of view. A highlight was two half days spent approaching art through both sculpturing and painting.





The ecology dimension included a beautiful project through permaculture design for a very romantic still abandoned area and hands-on experiences building and plastering a strawbale house, an earthbag house and working in the garden of a damanhurian community. The hands-on days were very appreciated, balancing the emotional and mind work of the rest of the course.

One of the highlights of *the economy section* was the design of a complementary currency in small groups and a little film about blue ecology. The participants learned how to make a business plan as well as hard facts around money in a world that is troubled by a global and unfair financial system.



Outcomes:

An eco-tourism project between Latvia and Transylvania.

Two new EDE's in the future in Latvia and Transylvania.

A link between GEN and CAŞA, the new Southamerican Network, established.

In many participants, the awareness around North-South themes.

What went well:

- The group became very strong and a family feeling created a warm learning environment which became a perfect ground for personal transformation.
- Dragon Dreaming was a powerful tool to create successful projects.
- Many new social tools and games were learned.
- The meditations in the Temples helped to center.
- The community building experience in the woods gave the opportunity to experiment different roles.
- A field trip in the town of Vidracco allowed to see how a community can integrate with the bioregion.
- The evenings in the nucleos showed community life.
- The art workshop allowed the artists lying in everyone to come out, in collaboration with all the others.
- The sessions for leadership helped the participants to grow beyond their limits.
- Lot's of fun and parties.
- Great content and an inspiring learning adventure.
- Hands-on days helped to see what a small committed group, can accomplish.
- The intercultural exchange between people from many different countries.
- Contacting nature gave strong experiences of inner transformation to many.
- Tools for conflict solution and leadership were learned.
- Many songs from the world were shared.

Weaknesses:

- Limited Internet access.
- Too little free time because of tight schedule.
- During the first days it was a little cold in the sleeping rooms.
- Not much personal space due to three-four bed rooms.
- The economy session needs more tools in English and a more dynamic didactic.

Quotes:

"This was a life changing experience"

We learn a lot about ecovillage, social aspect, economic aspects, ecological aspects.

It's good being inspired by a real community here in Damanhur.

So much inspiration.

I'm not the same after this 4 weeks together, and I'm sure that I have more capacity, more ability.

It's very important, in this time, to gather people from all over the world and talk and experience something that comes from our heart.

The EDE course gave me tools and ideas on how to integrate and work with different visions to create one vision.

We could really dialog and create a heart community

My EDE experience in Damanhur, has been enriching at many different levels, one has been experiencing this visionary community in "real life".

What I really appreciate is to experience living in a community

I learn how manage group conflicts, how to coordinate our dreams, how to create a big plane from the individual dream

I'm walking away with some great information and some amazing tools

I really feel like I got deep understanding of the importance of communities

It has been a very holistic education

I really experienced a personal growth in myself

I'm walking away inspired

For me our group is a real community, we grow and make real connection.

Living in the same house has been a great environment for personal development.