



**Patras meeting  
13-17 May2019**

## **Results of Activity 3: Pupils turn into reporters**

### **Reportage about Messolonghi Lagoon**



**The Activity was:**

**Date:** 14 & 17 May 2019

**Topic:** “Reportage about Messolonghi lagoon”

**Location:** Messolonghi lagoon, Saltworks of Messolonghi + Working at school

**Teams:** 6 (4 teams consist of 8 students and 2 of 9 students)

**Activity Goals**

- To make a reportage on a real field with the joy of observation and research, cooperation and creativity.
- To play the role of a reporter
- To take an interview in real conditions.

**Objectives****Main objectives:**

- Learn how to select information on a real field, evaluate it and use it to write an article.
- Learn how to prepare an interview (questions etc.) and carry it out.
- Boost critical thinking
- Boost teamwork skills
- Boost communication skills

**More objectives (Indirect):**

- Teams will comprehend the inter-dependence and interaction between man and the environment.
- They will cultivate their evaluation abilities towards human interference in the lagoon and the measures taken for its protection.
- They will develop a responsibility code and sense of personal contribution to the solution of environmental issues that degrade the lagoon.
- Teams will comprehend the procedure activities that the lagoon supports (fishing-commerce), how it contributes to the cultural value of the area (traditional fishing, traditional architecture, customs and tradition, monuments, history, art).
- They will come to think about the fundamental questions such as: to what degree can humans intervene with the environment?
- The teams will understand the procedure activity of the salt-works which function respecting sustainability.

**Resources/Materials**

**Notice:** Pupils for this activity will use some of the material distributed at Messolonghi Environmental Education Center (EEC of Mesolongi)

- Resource Sheets (attached)
- Mobile phones/cameras, pencils, spare sheets of paper.
- Guided tour by an expert
- Field study at the Messolonghi lagoon and Messolonghi saltworks.

**Results**

- An article on each topic. Some articles will be posted by the local press/blogs.
- A podcast/video of the interviewee fisherman.







## Procedure

- Students are divided into 6 mixed-nation groups. Each team has a name, *the red team*, *the green team*, *theyellow team*, *the blue team*, *the dark blue team* and *the white team*. There will be a coordinator teacher for each team.
- Each team will cover a topic:
  - Interview from a local fisherman
  - Traditional fishing
  - The role the Messolonghi lagoon played in The Greek War of Independence of 1821.
  - Myths and legends
  - Human activities and consequences – Threats
  - Messolonghi saltworks – desalination
  - Fauna of the lagoon. Birdwatching
- Students are going to make a field study at the Messolonghi lagoon and Messolonghi saltworks with the help of a specialist in that field.
- Each team should collect information through cooperation, observation, research, asking questions to the specialist, taking photos and taking notes.
- Activity will continue on Friday 17 May at school (General Lyceum of Vrachneika)
  - Each team will write an article about the topic they are covering, using all selected information.

## Instructions

You are going to visit the “Mesolongi lagoon”. During this visit you select information in order to write various articles about the Lagoon.

To do so, you should:

		
<i>listen carefully</i>	<i>observe carefully</i>	<i>use internet to find more information</i>
		
<i>work as a team</i>	<i>take notes</i>	<i>take pictures</i>

# RESULTS

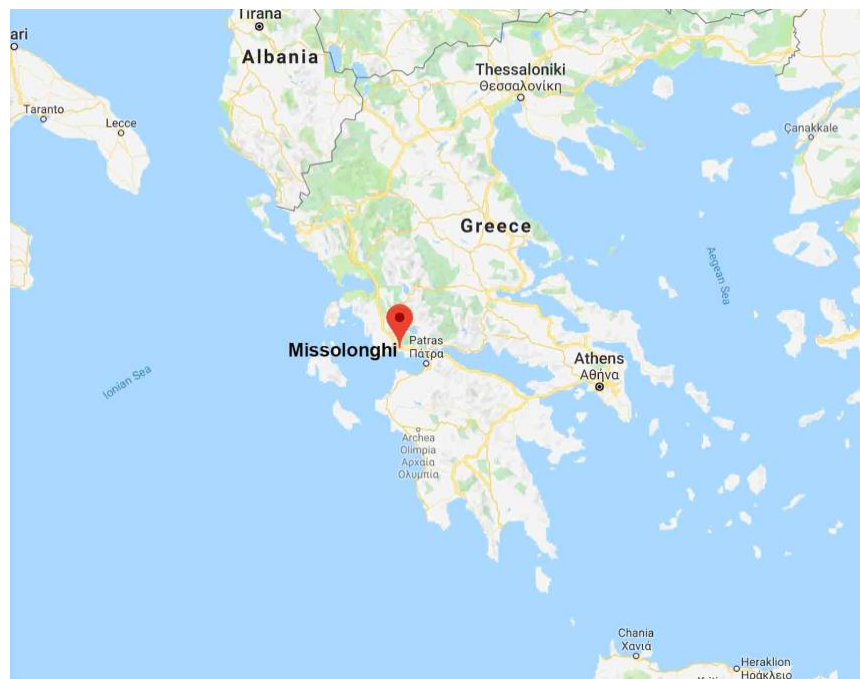
## Articles

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## 1. The role the Messolonghi lagoon played in the Greek War of Independence in 1821

Messolonghi has a total population of 34.416 people. As we speak it is the capital of Aetoloacarnania, a region located in Western Greece. Messolonghi lies between two rivers, Achelous and Evinos. The region around Messolonghi used to be inhabited by ancient Greeks. Messolonghi's economy has always been based on fishing. By the 18th century its ships were trading throughout Greece. By that time the town had a very strong fleet

Messolonghi took part in the revolt of 1770 against the Ottoman Empire although its peace and



wealth were endangered. As a result, its ships were destroyed and eventually the city was burned. The inhabitants were forced to leave. As soon as all hostilities stopped, the town was rebuilt, and new ships were made in the following years.

Messolonghi was one of the first towns that rose against the Ottomans on May 20th, 1821.

The Ottomans often put the town

under siege during the following years. After two failed sieges, the Egyptians helped the Ottomans to siege Messolonghi once again in 1826 but its inhabitants managed to resist. The siege lasted for a whole year until the people of Messolonghi ran out of food supplies. The situation became harder day by day. The Ottomans had the lagoon under their control. The Greek soldiers had to dig underground tunnels (lagoumia) so that the Greeks could get some food a little bit easier. Finally, they decided to try to escape by getting out of the fortified walls. The Greeks wanted to get out secretly at night, but their plan was betrayed, and their enemies surrounded them and massacred them.

“The exodus of Messolonghi” was a historic event that caused sympathy across Europe towards the Greek Cause. The “Garden of heroes” is a garden made by the first governor of Greece in order to honour the heroes that died that night.





source: Wikipedia

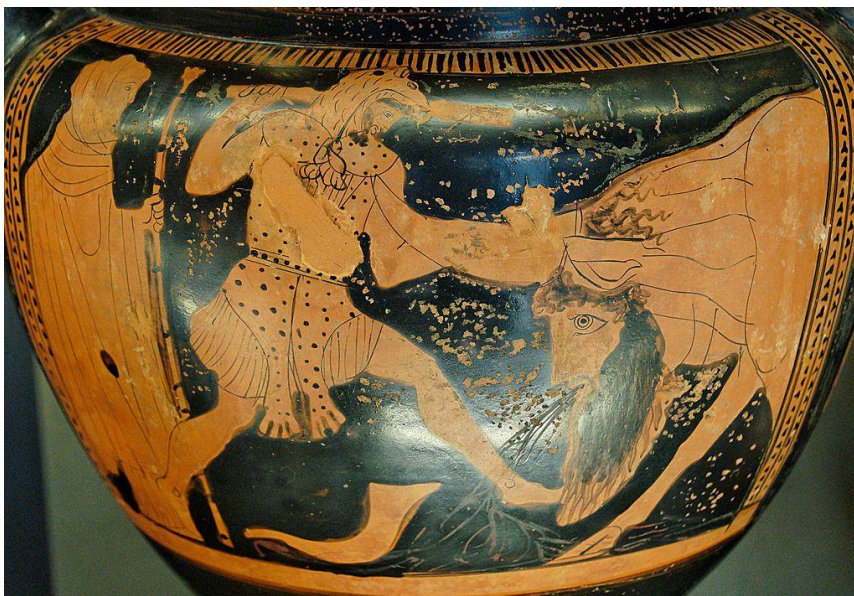
*“Greece on the Ruins of Messolonghi” by Eugène Delacroix*

14 May 2019

**Journalists:** Dimitris Kyriakopoulos, Nikos Antonopoulos, Nikoleta Rougala, Dimitra Krousali, Oona Kiljunen, Lina Poetsch, Paula Navarro Castro, Alba Herrero Méndez

## 2. Ancient myths and legends

Achelous, the largest Greek river, was considered to be a river-god in Greek mythology. Achelous fought with Hercules over Deianeira, a river nymph who was also the princess of Calydon, a Greek city on the west bank of river Evros. There was a statue made of cedarwood and gold dedicated to Achelous in ancient Olympia. Achelous was sometimes depicted as a gray-haired old man or a young man with a beard, a head with horns and a body in the form of a serpent. Achelous is also represented as a bull on several coins.



source: Wikipedia

The gods the Aetolians mainly worshipped were Apollo, Artemis, Asklepius and last but not least, Zeus, the god of thunder and king of the gods.

14 May 2019

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### 3. Fauna of the lagoon - Birdwatching



Some days ago, we had the chance to visit the lagoon of Mesolonghi, the biggest Greek lagoon, thanks to Erasmus+ Exchange Programme. After having interviewed a fisherman we collected many interesting information about traditional fishing and of course about the fauna of this fabulous lagoon. The fisherman explained to us that the

lagoon's water is warmer than sea water and that is the reason why fish grow up faster and easier inside the lagoon. Moreover, more than 16 different kinds of fish such as eels, mugilidae, two species of sparidae (sparus aurata and diplodus annularis) and one species of mullidae (Mullus barbatus) have been recorded to live in the lagoon. Fishing in the lagoon depends on the month of every season. For example, kefalus is fished in September, fishermen fish gilt-head bream in November and egg fish in August. Furthermore, more than 200 species of migratory birds have been reported to visit the lagoons as they stop there to find food on their way to southern regions with a warmer climate. That's why the fishermen have made some changes: they did some holes on the fish trap so that the small fish will not get trapped and thus they will be protected from migratory birds. The lagoon is also known for bird species such as the Gyps fulvus, many hawks, ravens, black vultures, sea eagles, imperial eagles and flamingos. Finally, we have to admit that the lagoon of Mesolonghi is one of the most beautiful lagoons in Greece.



14 May 2019

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## 4. Saltworks

On Tuesday 14th of May, our Erasmus Team visited the town of Messolonghi in terms of the Erasmus project. We visited the biggest lagoon in Greece (150 km<sup>2</sup>). Its depth is normally about 80 cm except from some parts that reach depth of up to 2 m. After seeing the breathtaking lagoon and interviewing a local



fisherman, the guide showed us the saltworks and informed us about the desalination. This is a way to remove salts and minerals from the seawater which is inside the lagoon in order to transform it into a commercial product that will be consumed by people. Salt is essential for our body and it is also used in order to conserve food.

Messolonghi saltworks is located west of the town of Messolonghi (West of Central Greece). It is the biggest saltworks in Greece. This complex has been created by the rivers Acheloos and Evinos that have created a semi-artificial saline ecosystem having an ample gradient of characteristics starting from regular saline wetlands (pre-basins) up to extreme hypersaline meadows (crystallisers). In the area of Messolonghi lagoons 12 different vegetation types have been distinguished, out of which several are met in the saltworks themselves.



The two saltyards are named differently depending on the quality of the salt they produce. For example, we visited the “white” one that collects the most known salt of Greece. In Messolonghi there is also a second salt mine, on the island of Tournida, the so-called “black” salt mine, with an area of 2,500 acres and production of 15,000 tons. Both belong to

the state-owned company Hellenic Alykes SA. An important fact is that it represents 70% of the production of salt in the country. The saltyards are separated in small and shallow “tanks” which are basically underwater fences so that the water is warm and evaporates fast. The air moves the salt crystals near the boards so that the people can collect it. At this moment the salt is really tasty and it’s called “afrina”. For this procedure no one uses energy, only sun, water, wind and the appropriate temperature for the water to evaporate. Part of the saltworks area has been used for making salt since several centuries

whereas there has been a considerable expansion in the 60s. This manual work requires strength and that's why more men than women work there.

Our Erasmus team learned a lot of things about the lagoon and the saltyards. However, we expected to see mountains of salt and buildings near the lagoon that would help the salt be formed with human technics. But instead of that, the salt was fully made by itself in the water. Last but not least we expected more people to be working in the lagoon since a difficult work needs more workers. We think such an amazing place should be treasured in our country and protected by the locals. We were glad that we were able to visit it and had the chance to learn new things.

14 May 2019

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## 5. The Rio-Antirrio Bridge



The Rio-Antirrio Bridge or, officially, the Charilaos Trikoupis Bridge, is the longest multi-span cable-stayed bridge in Europe and one of the longest bridges in the world. It crosses the Gulf of Corinth, near Patras, linking the town of Rio to Antirrio by road.

This bridge does not have only a commercial function since due to this facility national tourism has also increased.

It took six years for the bridge to be built (from 1998 to 2004). It was open to the public one week before the Summer Olympics in Athens, in 2004, and the torchbearers were the first people to cross this brand new bridge.

The lead architect was Berdj Mikaelian, and the total cost was approximately 630 million euros, but there are other non-official sources according to which the real cost was approximately 800 million euros.

Due to the depth of the water and the seismic activity, the construction of the bridge was expected to finish later than it was programmed. Despite the problems during the construction of the bridge the workers managed to apply some innovative techniques and this is why the bridge was ready earlier than expected.



14 May 2019

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## 6. Human activities at Mesologi lagoon

### Problems

1. The litter from the toilet are thrown directly in the lagoon
2. The water is dirty
3. The endangered species of white flamingos were not protected instead they were near the road
4. Until last year they were fishing the small fish
5. There are many thieves who steal the caught fish
6. The road was built right onto the ecosystem of the lagoon
7. There is rubbish into the lagoon

### Human activities at Mesologi lagoon



At the Mesolongi lagoon we noticed some problems. Originally, the litter from the toilet is thrown directly into the lagoon, which is a disaster for its ecosystem. As a result, water is dirty. Then the endangered species of white flamingos were not protected instead of they were near the road. Then, until last year, they were fishing for the small fish and as a result they disappeared slowly. There are also

many thieves who steal the caught fish. Eventually the road was built into the ecosystem of the lagoon. All these problems will probably be fixed. Generally speaking, the environment and the ecosystems must be protected. So Mesolongi lagoon fishers can take care of their valuable lagoon.

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