



HETEROTOPIA TOUR

RESOURCES



***An intercultural cycling trip
to question our society
and our way of life.***

Rabastens, France

20/06/2025 - 04/07/2025



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



WHAT IS A "HETEROTOPIA TOUR" ABOUT?

A GLIMPSE OF ANOTHER SOCIETY...

The several crises our society is going through reinforce the idea that we need to **change the way we live**. On the one side, we are destroying the environment we rely on, compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. On the other side, inequalities are growing and many people feel excluded, distrust the people around them and experience self-absorption and identity regression.

However, a growing number of citizens strive to find **new and creative ways** to fix their problems and tackle social challenges in their communities. They develop **atypical projects** that prove that we as society have the capacity to overcome the problems we are facing and to ensure **sustainable pathways** in a **fairer** and more **inclusive society**.

The "Heterotopia Tour" by VIA BRACHY has been developing since 2013 mostly consists in **visiting these projects** in which citizens are taking action to meet their needs while taking into consideration the needs of the society they belong to and the need to preserve and regenerate ecosystems.

The Heterotopia Tour is designed as an **inclusive learning experience** which impacts you at several levels, so that you can become a **key player** in the change you want to witness for yourselves and for the society you take part in, while both preserving ecosystems and standing for human dignity.

LEARNING BY TRAVELLING

The Heterotopia Tour relies on the idea that **traveling** offers to whoever experiences it an opportunity to **take a step back from one's daily life**. It makes it possible to **examine and question** one's convictions, lifestyle, choices and motives.

During the traveling time, you will be encouraged to **welcome new experiences**. It will be a time for you to **face and address your perception of yourself and others** and question your relationship to your environment.

AN INSPIRING JOURNEY TO MEET ACTORS OF SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL CHANGE

Taking advantage from this Open-minded mindset, the Heterotopia Tour encourages you to discover **social and ecological projects**, based on **cooperation** and **humanistic values**: freedom, justice, solidarity, welcoming of the Otherness, overall inclusion.

It aims to be a **practical inspiration** for you, from **both personal and professional** points of view, by creating the proper conditions for you to meet people who are taking action for social and ecological change and who can offer you **practical answers** to some of your interrogations, in various contexts and fields.

The Heterotopia Tour is meant as a chance to **unravel the prejudices** you may have against alternative lifestyles and to **envision desirable futures** thanks to the time spent meeting people with an **inspiring background**, who are **actively involved** in down-to-earth social and/or eco-friendly projects.

As a participant, you will get the opportunity to speak with **pragmatic figures of social change**. It is **on the field, immersed within the projects**, that you will meet them.

It may happen in various ways: **non-formal interviews** (to get a **sense of purpose** and grasp complex projects), **practical workshops**, during work sessions and tasks for the benefit of the project, allowing you to get **first-hand experience**, learn from your hosts and get a feel for the tasks they're dealing with.

Beyond these planned activities, you will set your camp on the land of your hosts and **share your daily routine** with them for a few days, which will create appropriate moments to address your interrogations and **get taboos out of the way**.

AN INTERCULTURAL AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE TO FIND UNITY IN DIVERSITY



The Heterotopia Tour is also an **intense human experience**. It gathers people from different backgrounds, ages, cultures, origins, living conditions... for an **extended experience of community living** within a **multicultural group**.

Along with your mates, you will be responsible for your **group dynamic**, trying to find a **balance** between your personal needs and the group's requirements. You will have to imagine ways to **interact** and **communicate** with each other.

We invite you to look at the Tour as a chance to **re-learn** how to **listen to yourself**, to **communicate** with others, to **welcome diversity**, to **respect and support each other**. The Tour is always an in-depth experience which teach us that community living isn't effortless. It relies on many **cooperative attitudes**, some of which we are often not aware of and we are responsible for improving.

Eventually, the Tour is meant to empower you so you can regain a **sense of collective action**, and **feel part of a community** you can contribute to and in which you will blossom.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHALLENGE YOURSELVES INTO A MORE SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE



Last but not least, the Heterotopia Tour introduces you to a more **ecological lifestyle**.

The Tour offers an opportunity to **learn practical know-hows** to **reduce our ecological footprint** and to determine what is actually a necessity in our lifestyle, from what is unnecessary or excessive.

All the Tour long, you will use **dry toilets**, decrease your use of water and electricity, experience **seasonal cooking**, discover **local and fair-trade supplying**, **ecological** hygiene and cleaning **products**, **renewable energy** and low-consuming equipment.

Beyond the simple living conditions offered by the Tour's logistic arrangements, you will benefit from numerous theoretical inputs and practical workshops led by skilled trainers in sustainable farming, eco-building, low-techs, food transformation...

We hope this wide range of activities will allow you to **understand the issue of sustainability** and to gain **practical knowledge** on **how to apply ecological values in your daily life**, whether you are living in the countryside or in the city, and whatever your standard of living is.

WHERE DO WE GO AND WHAT WILL WE DO ?



The Heterotopia Tour 2025 will take place in South-West France (Occitanie) from **June, the 20th to July, the 4th 2025** (travel days not included). Rabastens is 50 km from Toulouse.

The training will take place mainly in a rural area, around Rabastens, and we will be travelling by bike to meet the partners. We welcome you to a rural area where many social and ecological projects are being developed.

Given the social, economic and environmental challenges we face, it is more than ever necessary to encourage consumers to consume differently. Children and young people are being drawn into a consumption spiral, where critical thinking is replaced by impulse reactions and the immediate satisfaction of desires. This runs counter to the objectives of education, which aims to train people to make critical judgements and choices, and to receive messages in a thoughtful and rational way.

Through this seminar, we aim to strengthen the skills of youth workers so that they in turn can provide relevant support to the target groups in the areas in which they are active.

We want to cross our views, share our experiences, develop our knowledge of the issues and mechanisms at work and equip ourselves with new skills to strengthen people's capacities for social and ecological transition, the promotion of diversity, living together and active citizenship in each of our territories.

Consumer education needs to be part of a more global approach to education. It's part of a broader model of society, which includes sustainable development, a look at waste, etc. It touches on the issue of children's development and the values we want to pass on.

How can we get away from over-consumption and consume in a much more thoughtful way? New behaviours are emerging as 'alternative consumers' who are adopting the 'new consumption'. Small gestures feed a whole network of thoughtful, ethical, sustainable and responsible consumption. More and more associations support and facilitate a range of initiatives designed to promote dynamic citizenship and freedom of choice.

For 15 days :

- We'll be using a gentler form of transport, and experimenting with a slower pace of life: respectful of the environment : bycicle !
- We'll be making natural products for the collective, taking part in the bike mechanics workshop and the artistic and low-tech workshop.
- We'll visit the local social centre, the craft recycling in the building trade, the local exchange system, the eco-neighbourhood, the DIY café, the solidarity garden, etc. We'll take part in their activities according to their needs and in some collective projects.

If there is something specific you want to offer, please let us know so we can see if we can include it in the program and get organized for it.

WHAT ABOUT OUR LIVING CONDITIONS ?

A SELF-MANAGED ECO-CAMP

For each step, we will set up an eco-camp on our hosts' venue. It will mainly be composed of:

- **dry toilets**
- **outdoors showers** (we will try to warm up the water as much as we can but be prepared to experience cold showers...)
- an **outside cooking area** (with running water)
- a shelter for the **group gatherings**



We will provide everything except private camping equipment. You will need to bring :

- your **tent** (make sure it is **waterproof** before coming)
- your **mattress**
- your **sleeping bag** (warm enough as summer nights can be cold)
- your **camping flashlight/headlamp**.

We won't have a cook. Each day, a group of volunteers out of our group will take care of preparing the meals.

Likewise, we will be responsible of cleaning and maintaining toilets and shower cabins as well as any equipment of our camp.

We will set our collective rules together at the beginning of the Tour to make it smooth for everyone.

FOOD DIET AND SUPPLY

We will mainly adopt a **vegetarian diet** during the Tour to keep in line with our objectives of reducing our ecological footprint. If you feel like eating meat is something you can't stop doing for so long, don't worry: We will also have some barbecue parties and a few meat-based meals during the Tour.

Food will be **local and seasonal** as much as possible, which means that some products won't be available during the Tour.

If they are some recipes you want to bring with you, or some typical products from your place you want to take with you to share with the group, feel free to do so !

OTHER PRACTICAL ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

We will provide you with **home-made natural soaps** and **shampoo** (for showering and laundry) as well as natural **toothpaste** and **deodorant** in order to avoid soil and water pollution all along the Tour. **Please, don't bring yours!**

There won't be internet access in the venues we will be, except for emergency needs. Likewise, your **phones might not connect by lack of network**.

Bring some **warm** and **rain clothes** as we will spend most of our time outside (we never know about the weather).

Last but not least : Please, make the most to **limit as much as possible the size of your luggage**.

HOW TO JOIN ?

WHO CAN APPLY ?

Participants have to be adults (**at least 18 years old**) and to come from Greece, Spain, Italy, Romania or France .(Your nationality doesn't matter).

Participants' motivation and commitment will be the key assets of the Tour. There is **no technical requirements** to join it.

We are looking for people who:

- want to **discover inspiring projects, experience community living** and a more **sustainable life-style**;
- are **available for the whole duration** of the Tour (coming later or leaving earlier is not possible) and for **all the other activities their participation will imply before and after** the mobility (preparatory meetings, assessment meetings and dissemination activities)
- **are interested in sharing their experience** with others after their return
- are able to **express themselves and to debate** on complex issues in **English**.

You don't need to be fluent in English to apply but you should be able to meet other participants and English-speaking partners without being always monitored by your teammates or the facilitators.

Of course, you might improve your English and we will do our best to support you in your efforts but the use of a foreign language should not prevent you from getting the most out of the Tour.

An intensive experience

Be aware that the Heterotopia Tour is an atypical training session, which involves a person at several levels at the same time.

As a participant, you will not only visit social and ecological projects: you will also experience community living and simple living conditions.

Therefore, make sure you are:

- ready to live within a **group of 30 persons** for **15 days**, where you will experience **community living** and its challenges;
- interested in experiencing an **eco-friendly way of living** which includes: self-managed camping, dry toilets, cold water showers, outside activities, rare access to the internet, limited access to electricity, etc.

If you feel it suits you, welcome on board !

HOW TO APPLY ?

To attend the Tour, please send an email to communication@viabrachy.org. Tell us in a few words who you are, where you come from and what your main motivations are. We will do our best to answer you in short delays.

If it matches, we will put you in contact with the **partner organization of the country you are living in**. You will deal with them directly to prepare your trip and for any other logistical, pedagogical or administrative matter. They will tell you about the **procedure to follow**.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST ?



The Tour is funded through Erasmus+ Program. Thus accommodation, food, planned workshops and pedagogical equipment are **fully covered** from June, the 20th to July, the 04th. **Any expense incurred before or after these dates or linked to extra activities / leisure** (as alcohol, tobacco or tourism) **will be yours**.

Likewise, your **travel costs** to reach the venue and go back to your country, up to the maximum allowed amount and in a time-frame of **maximum 2 days before and 2 days after** the Tour, are fully covered.



Be aware that **we can only reimburse your travel expenses if you travel :**

between the 18th of June and the 6th of July.

If your tickets don't fit this time-frame, you will not be reimbursed.

If you feel like doing some tourism in France after or before the training course, be aware that **NONE** of your travel expenses can be covered.

Bear in mind that **you can also use the remaining money from your travel costs to cover your expenses** for your potential accommodation in Toulouse in case of need (**upon presentation of invoice**) on the 21th, 22th of June and/or on the 08th and 09th of July.

Via Brachy will not provide any accommodation in Toulouse.



According to the Erasmus+ Program regulations, the financial contributions to your travel costs (+extra accommodation) will be as follow : <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/distance-calculator>

Country	Max € reimbursed per participant	Max € reimbursed per participant if green travel*
10 - 99 km	28,00 €	56,00 €
100 - 499 km	211,00 €	285,00 €
500 – 1999 km	309,00 €	417,00 €
2000 – 2999 km	395,00 €	535,00 €

**green travel = boat, bus, train, carpooling*

You can come **either by plane, train, boat or bus**, depending on your availability and ethics, but remember that we can reimburse only public transportation, 2nd class fares. Taxi is not refundable.

If you have any doubt concerning your travel plans, don't hesitate to contact us.

IMPORTANT for the reimbursement:

you will need to give to your sending organization:



1/ An **invoice** with the **itinerary** of your trip, the **names** of the **passenger(s)** and, very important, the **price** of the ticket. Usually when purchasing your plane/train/bus ticket you can ask for **an invoice**. If the company doesn't give invoice, we will accept the e-tickets as long as they mention the aforementioned information.



2/ **All your original travel tickets and receipts** (train, boat and bus tickets with the price on it, boarding passes, etc.).

The stamped ticket/boarding pass is a **very important document**, the only evidence that you took the flight / train / bus / boat, and is required by National Agency of Erasmus+ for reimbursement.



If you use your mobile phone (so you don't have to print the ticket/boarding pass) **don't forget to take a screenshot**, because the link will expire and you won't be able to use it some weeks after your transportation, and we will not be able to reimburse you.

Likewise, you have to provide an **invoice of your potential accommodation** (if it doesn't exceed the maximum amount provided by the program) to be reimbursed.

Your sending organization needs to give us **all** the boarding passes, tickets and invoices of your travel costs. It will be your responsibility to take good care of those documents and to give them on time to your sending organization. If you take a picture of the documents please take care that it is a good quality picture, meaning that we can read ALL the information.

Be aware that we cannot provide reimbursement of ANY of your travel expenses if a document is missing. If you lose any of your tickets, boarding passes or invoices, your travel costs will not be supported at all.

Only when the sending organization has all the documents from all the participants from your country, money transfers will be done, from your sending organization to you. This can take from one to three months depending on how fast you are in providing the relevant documents.

ADDITIONAL FEES:

Your sending organization might ask you for a small financial contribution according to the administrative work it represents and to the support it will provide you before and after the Tour. *(For example, Via Brachy will ask for a free and aware contribution from the French participants).*

Please contact your sending organization to know about their policy.

SPECIFIC NEEDS, MEDICAL CARE & SECURITY



In case you have a **specific diet** (vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, pork-free...), **allergies** or any specific needs, let us know before June, the 05th, so we can get organized.

Obtaining a full insurance (travel risks, medical, injuries) **is your responsibility**.

Providing us information about your special needs does not remove your personal responsibility for ensuring your own health and safety. Therefore, we strongly recommend you to **subscribe to a European medical insurance** to cover your medical expenses if needed. We will contact skilled doctors and bring you to the pharmacy or to the hospital if needed but **we will not cover your fees**.

CHECK LIST

Before coming, make sure you have:

- **read carefully** this info-pack and take the scope of the Heterotopia Tour
- **make your arrangements and inform your colleagues, family and partners you will not be available for a couple of weeks.**
- bring with you:
 - ☐ **organic sun-cream** and **sun-blocking gear** (especially a hat)
 - ☐ a swimsuit
 - ☐ a **flask/water bottle**
 - ☐ a **rain jacket**
 - ☐ **warm clothes** for the evening
 - ☐ **working outfit** (sturdy, they will get dirty)
 - ☐ **closed shoes** (for the eco-building and eco-farming workshops)
 - ☐ a **warm sleeping bag** (you can expect temperature anywhere from 5 to 25°C at night)
 - ☐ a **mattress** (small but good enough to sleep well all the Tour long)
 - ☐ a **waterproof tent**
 - ☐ a **note-book** and a **pen** to keep track of the experience.

If you feel like, we also encourage you to bring:

- ☐ typical recipe(s) from your place so we can taste and share them
- ☐ some light music instruments (knowing we won't take any responsibility in case they get damaged during the Tour)
- ☐ some music on a USB key or a MP3 player
- ☐ (a few) songs from your country with the written lyrics and the tabs so we can sing together.

REACHING THE VENUE



PROJETS ATYPIQUES, ÉCOLOGIQUES & SOLIDAIRES

The meeting point will be on the 20th of June at 10:00 AM at Rabastens-Couffouleux train station. You will reach the meeting point by your own means.

The return journey will take place on 4 July, at 4:00 PM, at Rabastens-Couffouleux train station.

Unless you already have a friend in Toulouse who can take you in, you can stay either in youth hostels or with French participants who can accommodate you in their flats.

We will send you detailed information about the places you could stay and the way to reach them on the latest 2 weeks before your arrival.

Getting around Toulouse:

In Toulouse you can find metro and tram.

To check the itinerary and the time schedule, please consult the local transport company's website:
<http://www.tisseo.fr/en/home>

If you're travelling in Toulouse, you only need one ticket for 1 hour (€1.80/unit), no matter how many buses, metro or tramways you use. Please, keep the used tickets.

Train station: Gare SNCF Toulouse Matabiau

The easiest way to get to Rabastens is by train. The journey takes around 40 minutes.
<https://www.ter.sncf.com/occitanie>

Ask for a receipt and keep the used tickets. We will need them to pay you back.

CONTACT US

If you have still some questions to ask, do not hesitate to contact:

Christine LE REUN - @mail: communication@viabrachy.org

We will do our best to answer you in short delay.

Waiting to welcome you in Rabastens.
Warm greeting from France

VIA BRACHY'S TEAM



VOYAGES, INTERCULTUREL, SOLIDARITÉ & AUTOFORMATION