

# VOICES

MAGAZINE FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

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VOICES to Hear



初春風  
無常迅速  
春終わった

Hello reader,  
another spring is coming.

I bet you are surprised to read this beyond a word document.

We haven't talked that much lately, have we? Life has been a whirlwind of ever-changing circumstances. Although it was always like this. Change is a constant. Change is never changing. Next time we will meet in a word document again. Or maybe not. A lot can change in the meantime.

I'm sure you got used to it by now at this point. Not like anyone can help it. Things have to change, so they can progress. Otherwise, they decay. Even you have changed over time from a close friend to nostalgia. The bond we share has progressed. Since the moment you have opened this letter, we have both become different, and maybe the paragraphs following this letter will change us some more.

My new friends worked really hard on them, so I hope you will taste the flavour of youthful creativity and savour them.

Maybe you'll decide to travel to the unknown, try some new dish from food already known or just spend some time with yourself reflecting. I'll leave that up to you. I can't force you to change, but I can stand by you as we both take a step forward.

And whether we continue to grow apart or become closer again, just know that what we have in this very moment was real.

**February 18th, 2025 12:55**

Dáša Holecová

Haiku translation:  
First spring breeze  
Oh, how the life passes  
The end of spring

Здраво читателу,  
доаѓа уште една пролет.

Претпоставувам дека си изненаден што го читаш ова, а не е на Word.

Не зборувавме многу во последно време, нели? Животот стана виор на околности кои постојано се менуваат. Иако отсекогаш беше вака. Промената е константа.

Промената никогаш не се менува. Следниот пат повторно ќе се сретнеме во Word. Или можеби нема. Многу работи може да се сменат во меѓувреме.

Сигурна сум дека се навикна на тоа. Не дека некој може да помогне. Работите мора да се променат за да има напредок. Во спротивно, тие се распаѓаат. Дури и ти со текот на времето се промени: од близок пријател во носталгија. Врската што ја делиме - напредуваше. Од моментот кога го отвори ова писмо, и двајцата станавме различни, и можеби параграфите што следуваат ќе не променат дополнително.

Моите нови пријатели работеа навистина напорно на нив, па се надевам дека ќе ја почувствуваш младешката креативност.

Можеби ќе одлучиш да отпатуваш во непознатото, да пробаш некое ново јадење од веќе позната храна или едноставно да поминеш време со себе... размислувајќи. Тоа ќе го оставам на тебе. Не можам да те принудам да се промениш, но можам да застанам покрај тебе додека двајцата правиме чекор напред.

И дали ќе продолжиме да се разделуваме или повторно да се зближуваме? Само знај дека она што го имаме сега е реално.

**18 февруари 2025 12:55 часот**

Даша Холецова

Преводот на хаику:  
Прво пролетно ветре  
Ах, како минува животот  
Крај на пролетта

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# Do you have our app?

10:10 am

He was walking through the dull streets of his hometown. Early spring. The remnants of the snow were slowly disappearing, creating a muddy mess everywhere the eyes could reach. Earphones connected, a random song becoming a soundtrack of the day. Going for another interview seemed pointless. How many has he been to at this point? Was it ten or eleven? Maybe even more, he could barely remember all of them. Desperation was creeping up on him with each failure. Savings were drying out; he was dreading the due date on rent every time he checked the app with his bank account. Low on spirits, he marched on. What else could he do anyway?

The red light on the crossroad stopped him at the border of the office district as the cars sped by trying to catch the green while it lasted. *How nice it would be to have a car again*, he thought. After the subscription to the operating system of his last car ended in November, he couldn't afford renewal so he sold it. There was no point maintaining a car that wouldn't start without the paid app, and he was able to get at least three months' worth of rent out of it.

"Have you tried our new smart house app? Combining all your appliances with just one click..." Sudden advertisement after the end of the song startled him. He still didn't get used to the ads after every other song. It wasn't that long ago that paying premium got you uninterrupted streaming. The streamer's shareholders expected a stock growth though, so they introduced a golden tier and premium became only slightly better than the free version, ads playing just every tenth song, so he cancelled as well. Golden tier was a convenience he couldn't afford right now.

There it was, the office building he was looking for. Finding it was harder than he expected, the glass covered walls towering over him on both sides of the street all looking eerily similar and lifeless. The reception desk was empty. No visible computer, no coffee or personal belongings, a remnant of its previous purpose.

A whirring noise was closing in on him from behind his back. "Welcome to *Appco*, please, state the purpose of your visit?" an emotionless, yet pleasant female voice came out of a metallic capsule-like body that stopped next to him. "Job interview." "Please scan your fingerprint in the designated area." A small square lit up on the droid's surface. "Data collected. Proceed to 20th floor, room three. Use the fingerprint to unlock the doors."

He proceeded to the elevator leaving the droid behind in a dead silence of the empty entrance hall. He met the first people in the building on the 20th floor. All few of them staring at the screen in front of them, ignoring his presence. Room number three was nothing special. Small meeting room with table and chairs taking up the most space. A recruiter in a suit was already expecting him, offering him a seat and a glass of water.

"I am gonna be honest, your previous work experience isn't exactly what we are looking for, but nobody wants to work these days..." after the introduction the recruiter went on a rant about how a good work force is hard to come by. If his future wasn't on the line he would have rolled his eyes. 'App administrator' wasn't any special position, and the salary they offered was less than competitive, if he had had a different option he wouldn't have applied. The shit working conditions were likely the reason he got an interview despite little to none experience in the first place. "So, what is your experience with m-commerce? Do you know at least something about it?" The recruiter jumped from complaining straight to the interview. His condescending attitude ever so present.

10:37 am

The research he has done beforehand ended up not being a waste of time. From his own experience he knew that applications were the driving force of modern marketing and commerce. He was no stranger to ordering daily necessities through various apps on his phone and spending hours scrolling social media full of ads. It's not like there was a way to avoid it, if he wanted to save a few bucks with app exclusive coupons and reward codes. However, this was nowhere near enough to impress. So, he mentioned how retention of the user should be the main goal, as only a quarter of the apps installed are used daily, most of which are for entertainment. This was however nowhere near to impress, m-commerce is about money after all. If the brands wanted to sell through apps, and collect sellable data, they should make the apps fun and offer rewards to frequent users. Make the apps unusable without permissions to internal phone data. Then the advertisement can be targeted more effectively with greater returns. There should also be an incentive to connect bought products to the app, with additional features locked behind subscription to maximize profits on minimal costs. As he continued speaking about user-friendly design and convenience, it dawned on him more and more that he was a victim to the apps as well.

Leaving the office district felt to him like leaving a prison. Even the dingy streets seemed more welcoming. Walking without a set destination, he reflected on the interview. Was using a phone always like this? Apps upon apps upon apps...users seen as piggy banks, kept unaware by bread and games while their information's sold between the companies to train the algorithm, and make them sign up to more apps. He entered the first supermarket to grab a snack, ignoring his passing former colleague at the entrance, still in his head.

Maybe it was just nostalgia speaking, but he felt confident that the first apps were either pure fun or convenience. How could an app that was just an animation of a lighter be anything else? He knew, though. Everyone knew. And yet all of them still signed up to the new trendy app, and connected that toothbrush to Bluetooth, trained the AI models that left them jobless, and lived their lives online. Only now he was snapped back to reality by an automatic message from the cash register. "Do you have our club-app?"

Yes.

11:11 am

Dáša Holecová

11:12 am

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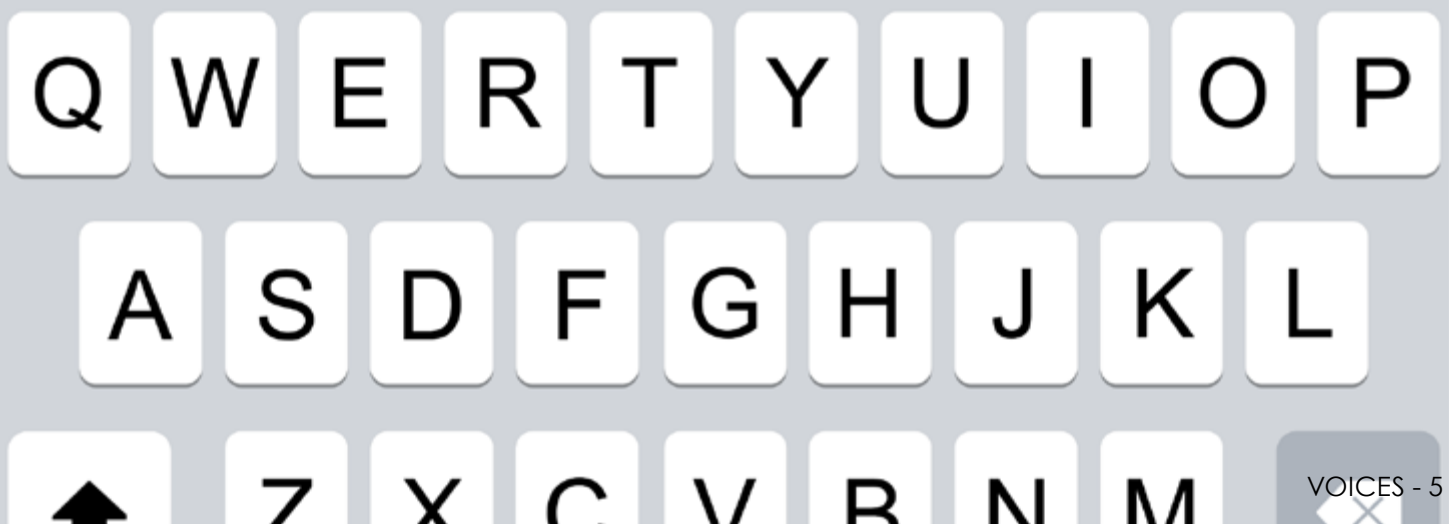
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Send



# WHY CAN'T I BREATHE?

## 6 tips to take control of your mental health today

*Sunday, locked in the bathroom of my workplace with a heavy weight on my chest. I want to cry, but there is no air in my lungs. My eyes are tearing but I am just gasping and my hands are shaking. Why can't I breathe? This is the first time I experienced an anxiety attack. It took me some time to learn that what is happening is okay and it will get easier.*

*At first I felt scared and alone - but I wasn't. According to WHO, 1 in every 8 people is living with a mental disorder and the most common ones are anxiety and depression disorders. That used to be the case, but after COVID-19 the numbers increased by almost 30%. Although there are effective ways to prevent and treat mental health conditions, many people who struggle with these challenges are unable to access the care they need.*

*Mental health stigma still exists but all symptoms or emotions are valid. Even anxiety disorders vary, each with unique triggers and characteristics. The most common ones include generalized anxiety, social anxiety, panic disorder and separation anxiety. But what can we do? What are some accessible ways to live healthy and prevent mental health problems or to help dealing with them once they already occurred? Let me give you the 6 tips and tools that I have collected through the years.*

### Learn how to breathe

The first "tip" you will always find online will tell you to breathe. My question was: "Okay, but how?" When your body feels trapped in a tight pulsing cage, being told to breathe is not helpful - it's frustrating. Navigating a person through strategies on how to manage intense stress and learn how to breathe through it is more helpful. There are plenty of exercises you can start practicing in a safe environment, when you feel well. Breathing exercises always bring very slow but very effective results, so be patient. By practicing daily for even a few minutes, you will learn those breaths in specific rhythm so well, that at some point you will manage to repeat this exercise in a stressful situation - and that moment is your small but very significant victory.

Some guided breathing exercises can be found online or you can get recommendations and practice with a therapist. It is important to start from easy ones, such as easy box breathing, and then slowly progress through more challenging exercises. When trying them out, make sure you sit comfortably and stop immediately in case you start feeling dizzy or uncomfortable. Once you perfect your breathing techniques, you can progress to meditations which are more advanced but also a very helpful tool.

But be careful to double check the sources you are learning from. Not every meditation is designed by a professional who can guide you through it and help your mental health, always check if your app, channel or website is actually run by professionals.

### Take your body seriously

Everyone says this and I will repeat. You really need to take care of your body, because your mental health will reflect it. Our mood is, more often than we think, influenced by the most simple and often neglected things: exercise (even a walk, dance or yoga are exercises!), good sleep schedule, getting more sunlight, fresh air and spending time in nature, healthy regular meals and a lot of water. It really is cheap to experiment with these! Your mind and your body are connected, so remember it when you take care of one more than the other.

### Write it out

In my country, Slovakia, we say "the paper can take it," which can be said for unrealistic plans but also for journaling. I get it, you don't always feel like you can share with others what exactly your train of thoughts was about. But the paper will deal with it, write it down as angry, sad or messy as it gets! Some people may find regular journaling very helpful, for some people it is enough to write it down, when they are going through something.

One of the best pieces of advice I got was to regularly write down my moods, it may also help you. How are you feeling at the moment - name the emotion, do you recognise this emotion or is it new? If so, when did you feel like this? What are some triggers that brought this emotion? Write it also with time, so you can see it later as data and notice connections, such as lack of sleep brings sad thoughts etc.

## Step by step, practice gratitude

Every day try to think of something you are grateful for and something you are proud of. It may be easy some days but there are many days when we feel like saying “nothing” and it takes us a while to think. Remember that setting small challenges for yourself and managing them is a success to be proud of, some days getting out of bed may be one of them. It is really okay and it is valid.

## Everyone says it, hear it again - seek professional help

Your best friend can only help you this much, and my article will also not do magic. It may be a difficult step but it is an investment to yourself and your healthy future. And yes, you can totally see a professional even if you feel fine, just to work on yourself and prevent problems in the future. You may choose to talk to your general doctor first, or go straight to a therapist, psychologist or psychiatrist. Worst thing that can happen is they will connect you with another person that can provide suitable help. And the best, they help. It is also no shame to visit one and if you do not share the same energy or communication style, you can visit another one and try again. Sometimes it may be stressful but believe me, it is worth it!

Are you looking for something else but not exactly sure what? There are plenty of options which help with mental wellbeing such as online therapy. You may feel unsure at first but when you give it a try you start noticing a lot of positive aspects of it. When you have a therapist but you don't have to go to their office, you can feel more secure and comfortable and join the call even from your own bed. It is usually considerably cheaper and gives you plenty of flexibility - you can join even from another country! One of the platforms I can recommend is [hedepy.com](https://hedepy.com) but you can search for similar ones that are more present in your country.

And how about alternatives such as art therapy? Process all your emotions through painting or many other activities!

## Use AI as our strength

Not everyone has a close person they could talk to and not everyone can easily access professional help. Or someone may need immediate response for certain worries. Let artificial intelligence be our support tool. But don't forget to be a little extra alert and careful.

There are apps which offer AI therapy, which is way cheaper than a therapist or sometimes even for free. This can be a short term solution which can help many people to access help. But with the same breath I have to add that it brings certain risks. So, first of all check properly the reviews before downloading an app. Are there some professionals recommending this app? Check carefully which data the app creators collect and how. And most importantly - whatever it says, it is never going to be a person, so find someone to talk to aside from AI, because AI may sound realistic but is not a human. Some apps I can recommend are ChatMind where you can schedule AI therapies, VOS with an AI chat, or Waking Up.

VOS is an app I would like to specifically highlight, it is recommended by therapists and it has many functions, such as mood tracker, guided journal, breathing exercises, guided meditations, affirmations, daily challenges and offers also reports based on your activity.

If you take at least one tool or tip from this article that will help you, or someone you know, it met its purpose. But if not, it is also okay because there is no simple recipe that works for everyone. Do your research and use sources and people you trust. The most important part is to ask for help. And maybe, most importantly, when there are people who offer help or try to check on you, let them. Remember that asking for help or accepting help from others is a sign of strength!

Lucia Marciová

Illustration: Lucia Marciová

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maybe  
*nostalgia*  
is the only home you get



I've never liked the smell of spring. Maybe it's because it reminds me of all the springs before. A sudden realization of how much time has passed, once again. A bittersweet sadness that hits me every year. This feeling has always confused me, because what can be better than warm rays of the sun on your face and days getting longer? It all comes together – the warmth, the memories, the passing time – into the strange mix we call nostalgia.

Cambridge Dictionary definition of nostalgia is *a feeling of pleasure and also slight sadness when you think about things that happened in the past*. Well, if you asked me, the definition would be my childhood summer house, Nirvana songs I used to listen to in middle school and collecting stickers. But nostalgia isn't just mine to feel. If you let my dad talk freely about any topic he wants, I can assure you, he'll sooner or later start talking about the first computers he used when he was still in high school, or the Eastern European buildings out of the huge gray panels that he remembers from his youth.

The thing is, I'm not sure if I would describe it as pleasure. In fact, at first nostalgia was considered a psychiatric disorder related to homesickness, with symptoms such as anxiety, irregular heartbeat or insomnia. It's not recognized as a disease anymore, and happiness accompanies sadness in today's definition of the phenomenon. However you experience it, have you ever wondered why nostalgia even exists...?

One of the reasons is a psychological bias called *rosy retrospection*, causing us to remember the past more positively than it actually was. Think of your last holidays. It's very likely that you think *'oh man, I wish I was there again'*,

but the frustration of waiting two hours for a lost bus or your travel companion being late doesn't feel relevant anymore. What can I say, we tend to romanticize the past a lot. The reason behind it is quite simple – our brains get rid of some of our memories to work faster and more efficiently. A lot of people imagine memory as a film of reality saved in our heads, but it's not how it actually works. It might sound surprising, but not only forgetting things is completely normal – having so-called 'false memories' is too. Your memory isn't complete when the event comes to an end. It can still get influenced by something you see or hear after it, as well as your own beliefs and previous experience. If you're around people always talking about the 'good old days' while your own memories get blurred with time, you might start remembering them as much better than they actually were in the moment.

You might ask, *why is our selective memory so positive when it comes to nostalgia, though?* I'd say another special ingredient of nostalgia is a mix of the fear of change and comfort of the known. Better the devil you know than the devil you don't, right? We often cling to the past even though it doesn't serve us anymore, or we can't go back there – like our childhood or school days. It seems easier because it's... already done.

Well, it explains the mechanism of nostalgia quite well, but the question remains: *what is the purpose of all of this?* Turns out there are several possible reasons. In a way, nostalgia connects our past selves with the current self. Reflecting on important events in our lives unites the sense of who we are and creates personal continuity. Some researchers say it helps in times of anxiety, loneliness, or

transition in life. Nostalgia reassures us that we made things work in the past, so we can do it now too. It also gives us a better idea of who we want to become in the future.

Once again I'm thinking about the lunches at my grandma's house, about the walks in the forest that I knew through and through, about rushing home after school to watch another episode of Death Note. To be honest, remembering all these things makes me deeply sad. And scared, scared of how fast the time flies. I'm turning 23 in less than a month, but I swear I was 16 last year. I can feel I'm carrying all the past versions of myself, not sure how to take care of them. I hope I'll make peace with them one day, even though I think my heart will always be a little bit broken.

---

Anna Wojdziak

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# A Linguistic Tapestry of the Balkans

The idea for this article came to my mind while writing my previous one, that in some way was also connected with linguistics. It seems like this previous article made me find again my interest in doing research about linguistics. So let's talk about a fascinating, yet not necessarily well known topic: the Balkan Sprachbund, or Balkan language area.

You might wonder what I'm talking about, so to put it simply it is the ensemble of linguistic characteristics that can be found amid the different languages of the Balkans. Different language families are present in the Balkan region, notably Slavic, Romance, Hellenic or Albanian, for example.

While many linguists agree with the existence of such a thing as a "Balkan linguistic area", it is important to keep in mind the fact that there are also some that don't agree with it, whether it's because of the origins of these similarities, or them being relevant enough to be a specific language region.

In this article I will try to provide some examples of words, or sentences for each feature that I will present. However, they will only be in Macedonian and Bulgarian, as those are the only Balkan languages in which I have some knowledge in and thus feel comfortable using here. If you're curious about examples in other languages, I encourage you to do your own research about the topic by, for example, reading the articles that I used as sources. Furthermore, keep in mind that I cannot present all the characteristics as it probably would take some time to introduce them all, and also this is only a vulgarisation article about a complex topic. You might also see the mention of BCMS, which stands for Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian. I will mainly use it here to make my life easier.



Now you might wonder, what could be the possible reasons behind these shared attributes? First of all, it's important to remind ourselves that there historically always were lots of contacts between different populations and cultures in this region, especially due to the Ottoman empire ruling the region that lasted for centuries. Due to the turbulent history of the region, many people moved around, which also contributed to the contacts between populations. Obviously, these contacts led to many cultural similarities. So it would make sense that languages that don't seem to have any connection would share some features. Some other theories behind the existence of these similarities are that some could be inherited from paleo-balkan languages, such as Thracian or Illyrian, however due to the lack of knowledge about these languages, we cannot be sure about this theory. However, it's likely that the existence of the different characteristics is due to multiple sources, that is different languages from different language families.

## Reduction of the case system

Slavic languages are known for having complex case systems, however Macedonian and Bulgarian are exceptions to this rule. Indeed, their case system has almost fully disappeared, apart from some leftovers. Here, you can, for example, see some words put in vocative:

МК пријателе, мајко  
(prijatele, majko)  
BG - приятелю, майко  
(priyatelyu, mayko)

Macedonian and Bulgarian also have traces of accusative and dative pronouns, but you will get to see some examples of the short forms later in the part about double clitics.

While for Macedonian and Bulgarian the reduction of the case system is complete, it is not the case for other Balkan languages, that is Romanian, Albanian and Modern Greek. In their instance, while there's a significant reduction of the case system, they are still very much in use.

## “Want future” + present tense

All Balkan languages have an analytic formation of the future, that is using an auxiliary verb/ particle that is followed by a verb conjugated in the present tense. Several languages like Macedonian, Bulgarian, Albanian or Modern Greek have some kind of invariable form. Although for Romanian or BCMS languages the auxiliary verb is conjugated to.

In the case of Slavic languages, this auxiliary verb/ particle comes from a Proto-Slavic/ Old Church Slavonic verb for “to want”, and that morphed over time.

ex: MK Ќе одам ...  
(Kje odam)  
BG Џе отида ...  
(Shte otida)

## Loss of infinitive

Much like the case system, infinitive forms have also disappeared in Macedonian and Bulgarian languages; as it is also the case for Modern Greek.

While in Albanian, or BCMS the infinitive forms exist, other structures can also be used.

Here are examples showing the use of the so-called da-construction is used in Macedonian, Bulgarian:

MK Сакам да читам.  
(Sakam da chitam.)  
BG Искам да чета.  
(Iskam da cheta.)

## Postponed definite articles

The existence of postponed articles is a characteristic shared by most Balkan languages, except for Modern Greek and BCMS. It is also interesting to note that Macedonian and Bulgarian are the only Slavic languages that use definite articles.

ex: MK мажот, жената, детето, родителите  
(mažot, ženata, deteto, roditelite)  
BG мъжът, жената, детето, родителите  
(măžăt, ženata, deteto, roditelite)

## Clitics (doubles object)

Clitics, especially double clitics are also a prominent feature of Balkan languages.

While clitics are obligatory in Macedonian and Albanian particularly with indirect objects, they're more optional in Bulgarian, Romanian and Modern Greek.



Here you can see examples of sentences that use these clitics, that also serve as the short forms of accusative and dative pronouns. The first example shows the use of both dative and accusative, whilst the second example only shows accusative.

ex: MK И ја давам книгата на Марија.  
(I ja davam knigata na Marija.)  
BG Давам книгата на Мария.  
(davam knigata na Mariya.)

MK Стојан го јаде сендвичот.  
(Stojan go jade sendvichot.)  
BG Стоян яде сандвича.  
(Stoan yade sandvicha.)

As we can see though Balkan languages are very diverse they can still have common properties, that in some ways connect them. Though this fact may seem unexpected, like we have already seen it makes sense when we look at the history of the region. I already mentioned that I couldn't mention all characteristics but here are some other more that you could look at if you're interested in the topic: the renarrative mood, the deictic system, or even phonetic features and loanwords.

Chloe Gaschy

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# Ја имате ли нашата апликација?

10:10 am

Тој одеше низ здодевните улици во својот град. Рана пролет. Остатоците од снегот полека исчезнуваа, создавајќи каллив неред каде и да погледнеш. Слушалките поврзани, случајна песна стануваше мелодија на денот. Одењето на уште едно интервју му се чинеше бесмислено. На колку беше досега? Десет или единаесет? Можеби и повеќе, веќе тешко се сеќаваше на сите. Очајот го обземаше со секој неуспех. Заштетата се намалуваше, а секој пат кога ќе ја отвореше апликацијата за банкарската сметка, со страв ја гледаше датата за кирија. Нерасположен, продолжи да оди. Па, и што друго можеше да направи?

Црвеното светло на раскрсницата го запре на крајот на деловниот комплекс, додека автомобилите брзаа да го фатат зеленото светло. *Колку би било убаво повторно да имам автомобил*, си помисли. Откако минатиот ноември му заврши претплатата за оперативниот систем на последниот автомобил, не можеше да си дозволи да ја обнови, па го продаде. Немаше смисла да одржува автомобил што не би тргнал без платена апликација, но барем доби доволно пари за три месеци кирија.

*„Дали ја пробавте нашата нова апликација за паметен дом? Поврзете ги сите ваши уреди со само еден клик...“* Ненајдената реклама што се појави по крајот на песната го стресе. Сè уште не можеше да се навикне на рекламите по секоја втора песна. А, не беше толку одамна кога плаќањето премиум значеше непрекинато слушање. Но, акционерите на стриминг платформата очекуваа раст на акциите, па воведоа „златен“ пакет, а со тоа премиумот стана само малку подобар од бесплатната верзија, со реклами што се појавуваа на секоја десетта песна. Затоа го откажа и тоа. „Златниот“ пакет беше удобност што не можеше да си ја дозволи во моментов.

Ете го, деловниот комплекс што го бараше. Наоѓањето беше потешко отколку што очекуваше; стаклените ѕидови се издигнуваа над него од двете страни на улицата, сите морничаво слични и безживотни. Немаше никој на рецепција. Никаков компјутер на повидок, ниту шоља кафе, ниту лични предмети, само бледа сенка на некогашната функција.

Звук на тивко зуење се приближуваше зад него. „Добредојдовте во Аррсо, ве молиме, наведете ја причината за вашата посета?“, рамнодушен, но пријатен женски глас излезе од едно метално тело налик капсула кое запре покрај него. „Разговор за работа“. „Ве молиме, скенирајте го вашиот отпечаток на означеното место“. Мал квадрат засвети на површината на дроидот. „Податоците се собрани. Продолжете на 20-ти кат, соба три. Користете го отпечатокот за отклучување на вратите.“

Тој продолжи кон лифтот, оставајќи го дроидот зад себе во мртвата тишина на празниот влезен хол. На дваесеттиот кат ги сретна првите луѓе во зградата. Неколкумина, сите вперени во екраните пред нив, не му обрнаа никакво внимание. Собата број три не беше ништо посебно - мала просторија за состаноци, со маса и столици кои заземаа најголем дел од просторот. Рекрутерот во костум веќе го очекуваше, па му понуди место да седне и чаша со вода.

„Ќе бидам искрен, вашето претходно работно искуство не е баш она што го бараме, но никој не сака да работи во денешницава...“ по воведот, рекрутерот продолжи да се жали колку е тешко да се најде добар работен кадар. Да не му зависеше иднината од ова, ќе му превртеше очи. „Администратор на апликации“ не беше некоја посебна позиција, а и платата што ја нудеа беше пониска од конкурентната. Да имаше поразлична опција, немаше ни да аплицира. Прелошите работни услови беа веројатно и причината што го доби интервјуто, и покрај минималното искуство. „Па, какво искуство имате во мобилната трговија? Знаете ли нешто околу тоа?“ Рекрутерот премина од жалење директно на интервјуто, а неговиот потценувачки став беше присутен во секој момент.

10:37 am

Истражувањето што го направил предвреме испадна дека не било залудно потрошено време. Од сопственото искуство знаеше дека апликациите се движечката сила на модерниот маркетинг и трговија. Веќе беше навикнат да нарачува потребни работи за секој ден преку различни апликации на телефонот, и да поминува часови листајќи на социјалните медиуми полни со реклами. Не е дека имаше начин како да се избегне тоа, особено ако сакаше да заштеди малку пари со ексклузивни купони и кодови за награди од апликациите. Сепак, ова не беше воопшто доволно за да ги импресионира. Затоа, го спомна фактот дека задржувањето на корисникот треба да биде главната цел, бидејќи само четвртина од инсталираните апликации се користат на дневно ниво, и тоа повеќето се за забава. Но, и ова не беше доволно за да ги импресионира, бидејќи мобилната трговија, е пред сè за пари. Ако брендовите сакаа да продаваат преку апликации, и да собираат податоци погодни за продажба, треба да ги направат апликациите забавни и да понудат награди за постојаните корисници. Апликациите треба да станат неупотребливи без дозволи за пристап до внатрешните податоци на телефонот. Тогаш, рекламите ќе може целосно да се насочат, со поголеми приноси. Треба да има и поттик да се поврзат купените производи со апликацијата, со дополнителни функции заклучени зад преплатата, со цел да се максимизира профитот со минимални трошоци. Како што продолжи да зборува за дизајнот што е пријатен за корисниците и удобноста, сè повеќе му стануваше јасно дека и тој е жртва на апликациите.

Излегувањето од деловниот комплекс му се чинеше како излегување од затвор. Дури и запуштените улици изгледаа примамливи. Одејќи без конкретна дестинација на ум, се навраќаше на интервјуто. Дали користењето на телефон секогаш било вака? Апликации по апликации... корисниците гледани како касички за пари, држени во незнаење со леб и игри, додека нивните информации се продаваат помеѓу компаниите за да го тренираат алгоритмот и да ги натераат да се најават на уште повеќе апликации. Сè уште замислен, влезе во првиот супермаркет да земе нешто за јадење, игнорирајќи го поранешниот колега со кој се размина на влезот.

Можеби зборуваше носталгијата од него, но беше уверен дека првите апликации биле или чиста забава или удобност. Како може една апликација што беше само анимација на запалка, да биде нешто друго? Но, знаеше. Сите знаеа. И сепак, сè уште се најавуваа на нова тренди апликација, и ја поврзуваа четката за заби на Блутут, ги обучуваа AI моделите кои ги оставија без работа, и ги живееја своите животи на Интернет. „Дали ја имате нашата клуб-апликација?“

Да.

11:11 am

Даша Холецова  
Превод: Теодора Димитриевска

11:12 am

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Send

Q W E R T Y U I O P

A S D F G H J K L

# The greatness of Africa



Although Africa is the second-largest continent on Earth, don't be surprised that many young people outside the continent mistakenly think of it as a single country. With 54 countries and more than 1000 languages spoken across Africa, I am often surprised by how many facts are unknown to youth around the globe.

As an African girl living in Macedonia for a few years, I enjoy sharing facts about Africa, which inspired today's writing.

The minimum things known about it are the famous pyramids of Giza in Egypt, Kilimanjaro on the coast of Tanzania, which is the highest mountain on the continent, as well as the popular safari trips.

Speaking of safari trips is about visiting the National parks in the east of Africa such as the Kenya Masai Mara National Reserve, the Rwanda Volcano National Park, and the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo. But did you know the inspiration behind naming it a safari trip was because the mentioned countries share a language called **SWAHILI** which by the way is the most spoken language in Africa? Simply a **TRIP** is translated as **SAFARI** in Swahili.

Africa is a diverse land, with a rich culture, history, traditions, cuisine and beliefs that open the minds of travelers from elsewhere. Let me tell you more details about it while recommending where you can experience the best.

## As for CULTURE and HISTORY

I believe each way of life is beautiful on its own, such as the rituals of the Masai tribe in East Africa or Egyptian culture, the number one most culturally influential in Africa, with its 5000 years of recorded history and cultural monuments.

Historically, starting in the late 19th century, the Colonial Era had a huge impact on life and culture. This period was followed by the Post-Colonial Era when African nations gained independence and started to rebuild their nations.

## AFRICAN CUISINE

While food topics can often spark debates, we can all agree that in any room where cuisine is being discussed, African dishes are sure to stand out. With a bunch of dishes out there, the internet believes these are the best African dishes.

Egusi soup (Nigeria), jollof rice (West Africa), kitfo (Ethiopia). **UGALI**, which is one of the best East African meals - for reference it looks like polenta, is usually served with cassava leaves popular name **SOMBE**, grilled meat, or African spiced red sauce. There are quite a lot of interesting dishes that we can name, but the most similarity is Africans use a lot of spices during the cooking.

Food is a big deal in African communities and the majority of African countries organize food and drink festivals now and then.

## MUSIC

Talking about Africa and leaving music behind, sounds like a crime. African music and dances such as afro jazz, afrobeat, Congolese rumba, Bantu Music, R&B, hip-hop, and the latest trend of Amapiano that influences today's modern trending music will leave you in awe mode. There is nothing like Africa without music because Africans believe **MUSIC** is a language that connects people, that heals and nourishes souls.

There is a popular African quote that says "If I have ever seen **MAGIC** it has been in Africa" and that is true. Did you know that some African tribes can heal some diseases using Drums and musical sounds? As unrealistic as it sounds, that is **AFRICAN MAGIC**.

In a world where traditional and contemporary music meet, there's a chance to experience it all at the yearly '**AFRONATION FESTIVAL**', which takes place in **PORTUGAL**, where the heartbeat of afrobeat meets the soul of global movements in a celebration of African creativity.

Dearest VOICES magazine readers, it can take days, months, or years to talk about Africa. As for today, let us end it here.

## HAKUNA MATATA!

Queen Euidge



# FINDING PURPOSE

## IN SOUTHEAST ASIA'S BACKPACKING CULTURE

A one way ticket, no concrete plan, a dangerously low budget, and a complete trust in the good will of local people - such clichés and many others have been pivotal in constructing an idealised stereotype of backpacking, and the rituals that define the practice. Although these associations remain relevant, the art of backpacking itself has undergone a dramatic metamorphosis in recent years. In the context of Southeast Asia, an increased popularity amongst Western European youth shifted the *raison d'être* of backpacking as globalisation streamlined our travelling culture. Therefore, how can we find purpose in the current iteration of backpacking culture, and what are the collective responsibilities associated with this style of travel?

Navigating an extensive period of time away from home has never been for the faint-hearted. Ingrained in Western ideas of contemporary 'exploration', this style of wandering, spontaneity and naïve world curiosity could be situated somewhere between long-term travel and a curated lifestyle. For most, it presents a unique opportunity for an honest immersion into local society and culture, adopting similar techniques used for ethnographic research. This often manifests itself through a collective desire to 'be like a local', aiming to achieve a casual relationship with members of the host society. However, it is no short of a challenge - particularly in areas where cultural and political differences were not negotiated, or historical traumas can remain.

But it is the challenge itself that was so commonly sought after. What we would consider as 'essentials' today would be perceived as a luxury for many classical backpackers. Even as online forums became a popular medium for exchanging tips and recommendations, independence and uncertainty remained central to the experience. In this context, the idea of 'comfort' be in came, in

means that many places had to adapt to the genre of activities that Western tourists expect to guarantee consistent revenue. Therefore, it becomes a routine and replicated experience. Many backpackers will stay in the same hostels, return to the same beach bars and temples, swim in the same waterfalls and engage in some version of this itinerary in each following place they visit.

Changes in travel culture consequently had material changes in popular destinations. Southeast Asia has seen rapid development to adjust to this new surge of backpackers, with some areas isolating further from the everyday life and practices of locals. Taking Canggu as an example, this small town on the Balinese coast has become dominated by concrete buildings accommodating almost any activity popular in Western countries. It has become a confluence of exoticism and gentrification, attempting to navigate the expectations of both in one place. Sunrise surf classes, upmarket brunch spots, beach bars, padel courts and networking spaces are plentiful. Tourism has been put in direct tension with tradition - whether this is in culture, industry or lifestyle.

a sense, quasi-antonymous with the culture itself. As such, backpacking can be considered as a sort of paradox. Its inherent drive towards openness, flexibility and curiosity comes with a caveat - resisting any deviation into conventionalism. This search for authenticity thus becomes a clear motivation behind the vision of an ideal backpacking experience.

With the rise of mass tourism, this culture of wanderlust is something that has seemingly vanished amongst the majority of contemporary backpackers. As global networks expanded, travelling has become much faster and simpler to navigate. The digitalisation of information and logistics alleviates the pressure of preparing such a long journey, opening the possibility of backpacking to a much larger audience. In this sense, challenges have become obstacles rather than opportunities. But what has been more pivotal in changing backpacking culture is how curated media redefined the expectations of many destinations. In the case of Southeast Asia, tourist hotspots are often promoted as a form of 'tropical paradise' which has successfully captivated a large audience of young people. This aesthetic trap

With rising costs, Bali's agricultural sector has been declining to free space for commercial expansion. Even green belt initiatives do not suffice to protect local people or guarantee liveability, particularly as the economic potential from tourism trumps that of any farming potential on the island.

It has become a familiar image across the region. Krabi, Phi Phi and Phuket in Thailand have also transformed into backpacking havens, offering nightly fire shows, boat day trips, snorkeling with sharks and ample opportunity to party. Hostel chains emerge frequently and en masse in desired locations; areas of natural beauty are desecrated by ostentatious Hollywood-like signs and crowds competing for the ideal photo spot. For those who defend backpacking orthodoxy, the only difference between typical tourists and the current backpacker culture is that they wear a bag on their back instead of bringing a suitcase.

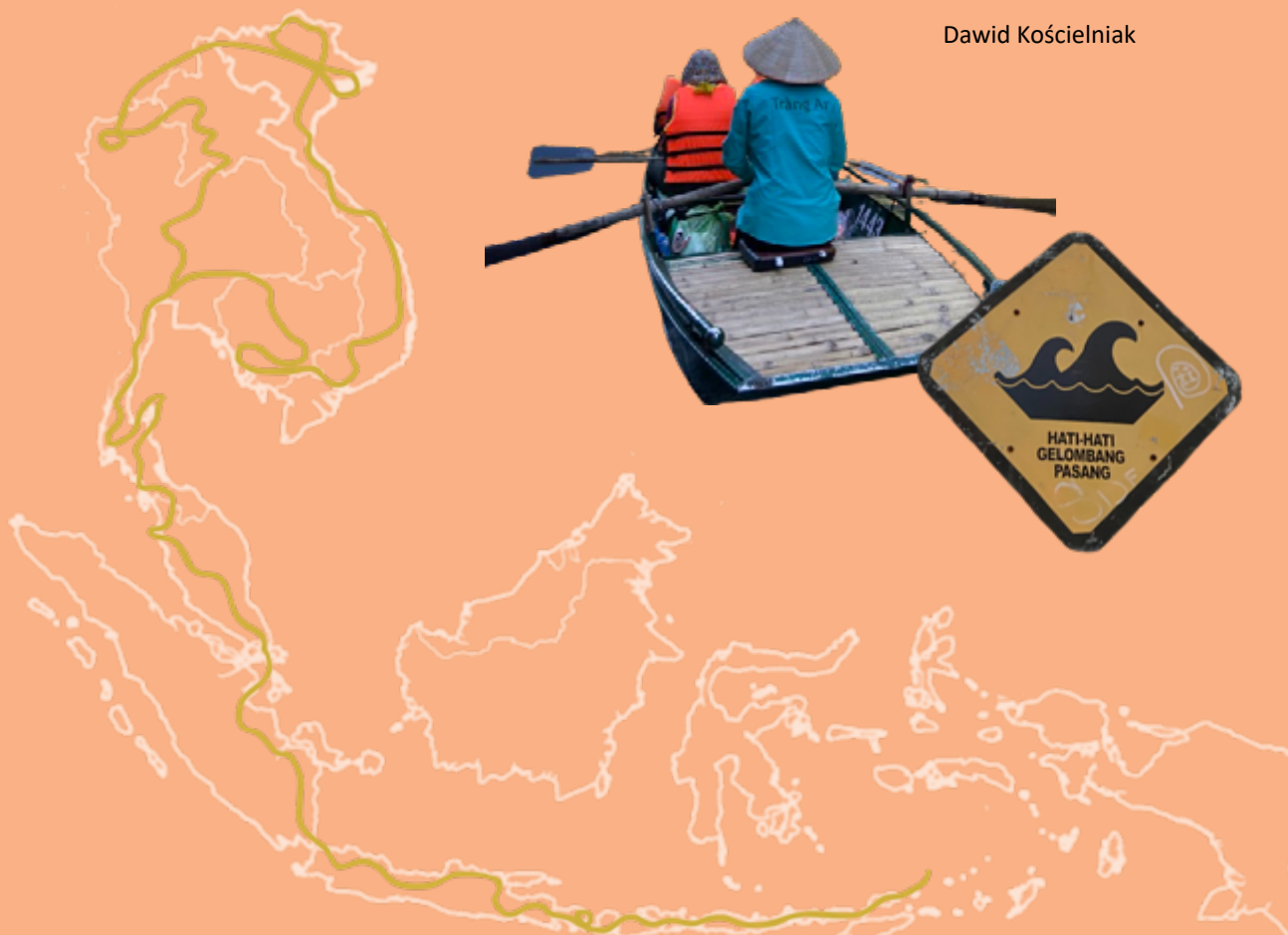
Nonetheless, there are lessons to be learned from both sides. For

someone who is eager to embark on a long-term voyage and get lost in the world, this tendency towards the mainstream can be disheartening. However, it is equally as important to maintain a level of sensibility. The pressure to continually immerse yourself in authentic, irreplicable experiences can be exhausting. There is nothing wrong with going on a popular excursion, booking a hotel to rest, eating pasta instead of pad thai, and most importantly, taking care of yourself. Not every day requires an exhilarating experience to feel fulfilled, and you do not need to return home as a changed person. Long-term travel carries the same personal responsibilities, sensitivities and challenges as it would back home. Moreover, the purpose of your trip can change over time, too. Creating distance from expectations within travel subcultures can help to separate societal pressure from what you truly feel you want to experience and achieve. Altering your perspective and remaining honest will help to find true purpose and meaning in your journey.

What is equally crucial is maintaining a sense of awareness for local society, culture and environment. Our travelling footprint can leave just as much an opportunity as consequences for our hosts. We need to be conscious of our choices, and try to reflect on how we can best impact the places in which we travel. Even challenging stereotypes, both when travelling and back home, can help to improve awareness and remove any stigma. Being aware of your own positionality can make genuine differences, no matter how small they are.

So how can we find purpose and meaning? It all depends on the individual. There are no right or wrong answers, but there are conscious choices you can make to reduce negative impacts on yourself and others. In the context of Southeast Asia, as one of the most popular regions of backpacking, there are plenty of fellow backpackers who engage in different activities, plans and perspectives. Anyone can find something that suits their needs and goals with patience, honesty and curiosity.

Dawid Kościelniak



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# Bad Bunny's Ode to Puerto Rico



**DeBí  
TIRAR  
MÁS  
FOTOS**



"There's a lot going on. I don't know if you know this but there's literally a floating island of garbage in the middle of the ocean right now. Yeah. I think it's called Puerto Rico." - Hinchcliffe, a comic, during a Donald Trump meeting.

Some people view Puerto Ricans as second-class citizens, and even the government regards them this way. However, Puerto Rico is a commonwealth, an unincorporated and organized territory. This means it lacks the same rights as American citizens; for example, it cannot vote for the president. Nevertheless, American citizens living in Puerto Rico enjoy certain benefits, particularly tax advantages. Because of these advantages, gentrification happens in Puerto Rico. People cannot rent a house, or feed themselves properly, white American immigrants don't speak Spanish and it's complicated for Puerto Ricans to be understood.

So, what's happening in Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean in general? This is what we will discover through DeBÍ TIRAR MÁS FOTOS today.

Why "DeBÍ TIRAR MÁS FOTOS" ("I should have taken more photos")? Today, we can snap photos of everything, but in the past, pictures were genuine memories. You captured a moment for something special—a wedding or a birthday. You had to wait to receive the photos, which is why you cherish looking at them with your family; they are one of a kind. You can't store them in the cloud or on an SD card. Considering this, you might think, maybe I should have taken more "real" pictures because nowadays we don't really reflect on these moments anymore.

I chose 3 songs I wanted to talk about because I feel real melancholy in these songs. But you should definitely listen to the whole album.

First, I'll discuss the music that most affected me: LO QUE LE PASÓ A HAWAII (What Happened in Hawaii). In this song, Bad Bunny talks about his island, Puerto Rico. How people feel where they are here, and how people gentrified the island, everything is beautiful even when everything is going bad, people heal themselves with alcohol (kind of allegory about real physical injuries and mental injuries). You can hear some people crying because another person is gone, they wanted to stay but some forced them to quit the island. People who have already moved away want to come



back and Bad Bunny says he will be in pain if he should go away. So he doesn't want to see Puerto Rico changing like they did with Hawai'i.

Another song that touched me was DtMF (the eponymous song in the album). In this song, Bad Bunny talks about appreciating life in San Juan, all the things people miss when they are abroad: nature,

culture, nightlife, playing dominoes and listening to music, being pleased with the food, drinks, and, of course, people. Life is peaceful in Puerto Rico, but he should have taken more pictures and enjoyed the time with his people.

The last song I'll talk about is BAILE INOLVIDABLE. In this song, Bad Bunny tries to do salsa, one of the most important music genres in Puerto Rico, a root in the ground of this island. He speaks about an old relationship, where he learned a lot of things with his woman, that she is unique and irreplaceable, like a BAILE INOLVIDABLE. The most interesting thing in this song it's how they made this music. Bad Bunny went to La Escuela Libre de Musica Ernesto Ramos Antonini and composed this song with teenagers from 17 to 20 years old. It's also another way to transmit musical culture through education.

Finally, what we can learn from this album is how to preserve culture and do it well. We live in an Americanized world, everything we do is about the USA, the influence of food, the culture (especially arts cultures, like music or films) how to continue to capitalize on this society forgetting the most important thing: take care of your family when you still have it, transmit your culture during some (family) events to never lose it, because when a tree cannot find water with its roots, leaves, and flowers will never appear. And life is less beautiful without flowers.

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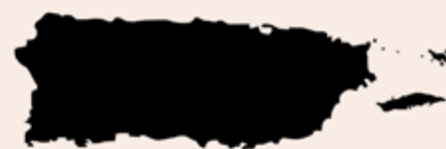
Terry Ruart

Puerto Rico

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# Public Transport



# looksmaxxing

Fastest Shinkansen line *Nozomi* takes two and a half hours to cover 515 kilometres from Tokyo to Osaka and departs around a hundred times a day. Fastest train connecting Slovakia's two biggest cities takes about five hours to cover 443 kms on a good day leaving the station 17 times a day. If you want to go from Skopje to Bitola by train there are only 3 trains a day and it takes three and a half hours to

cover just little over hundred kilometres. And if you were planning on taking a train to arguably more famous city of Ohrid, well tough luck, because the train from Skopje ends in Kičevo even though Google will try to convince you otherwise. Only one of these takes less time than using a car. And don't even get me started on the bus travel.

Undoubtedly, the current state of public transport (PT) in the majority of the world is not meeting the expectations of the passengers. You might have experienced it yourself. The train is late, the tram is overcrowded, the underground only goes to a few parts of the city, the bus takes too long... The vehicles are older than your grandparents, AC is too hot or too cold if it's even working, buying a ticket is like jumping through the loops of fire, if you are lucky enough to find a seat there is a chewing gum in the middle and candy packs on the floor. God forbid you go late at night alone with a strange looking person staring at you the whole time while the light flickers and the vehicle is making noises that sound like something is not working as it should be. Strange smells, ages old dirt, wind coming in through closed doors, or regular fire hazard (Slovak trains, I'm looking at you). Not to mention people living in settlements where public transport is limited to five buses a day or less. The reasons not to use PT seem to be a never-ending list. Hence people who can afford it rather opt for a car that provides a freedom to go whenever wherever in comfort. However, cars have their own issues like air and noise pollution, traffic jams, parking space requirements and so on. Things a society should be moving away from to promote sustainability, and to create cities that are more pleasant to live in. Why do you think people enjoy living in Copenhagen?

So, how can we make public transport suck a little less? First of all, significant improvement takes not months but years. Results of new rules and policies likely won't be felt right from the beginning, but if the process is communicated with the public transparently, governing bodies should not be afraid to make changes the results of which would be felt only after the closest elections. Secondly, accessibility and functionality. What do I mean by that?

### Accessibility

As much as it is necessary, accessibility is not only about easy use of available vehicles by

disabled, elderly or mothers with strollers. Accessibility of public transportation also includes access to information. In the digital era there is no excuse for either publicly or privately owned carriers to not have functional websites in at least two languages with understandable timetables, maps and connection search function, as well as information about the ticket prices, selling places or option of digital ticket. Additionally, actual information should be available at all stations and bigger stops. While regular passengers of public transport might not need these on daily, possible new users might feel deterred from switching to public transport because of inability to figure out how it works.

Furthermore, the cost of tickets is usually the apple of discord when it comes to public transport. While some advocate for free public transport with the equal affordability for everyone, others see the necessity for rentability and profit as more important. Undoubtedly, the service itself can never be free. Infrastructure investments, workforce, maintenance, energy source all cost money whether they are paid from collected taxes or the ticket sales. Thus, finding a balance between a ticket cost that won't reduce demand and burden the low-incomers, and governmental subsidies is an important task for PT planners.

### Functionality

Functionality is another key factor in PT. It's nice to know when your tram is supposed to leave and how much the ticket costs, but it does not matter if you have to walk half an hour to the nearest stop and the tram departs twice an hour even then still being late. Convenient locations of stops, stations and interchanges are a part of effective PT. Understandably, there can't be a bus stop in front of everyone's house, but it should be within a walkable distance less than 15 minutes away. The closer the better. Interchanges and stations should be in strategic locations and easy to navigate to reduce the transfer time. Shortening

the travel time should be one of the goals of effective public transport. Dedicated bus lanes, unobstructed tram & rail tracks and options for choosing connections with reduced number of stops can all reduce travel time making PT more attractive.

Moreover, functional PT should be reliable with sufficient frequency of departures. In Japan, conductors apologize even for short delays, because of the possible disturbance to the passengers' plans. In Slovakia, after hours of delay you have to fight for reimbursement. In Macedonia, you should be lucky the train even arrived. Unreliability drives up the perceived costs in people's eyes, making them choose individual transport to save time.

Despite the underwhelming current state of public transport, it doesn't have to be this way. Functional and accessible PT not only effectively transports passengers but also helps the environment, tourism and commerce, opens up more employment and leisure options, supports public health, and last but not least promotes more movement into the daily lives. The governing bodies responsible for urban planning and public transport should consider higher investments to make PT more functional and accessible if their goal is to make cities more liveable, because people who already have cars, and there are a lot of them, are less likely to use PT if it isn't undeniably more convenient.

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Dáša Holecová

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# HOW TO BE... WILD AGAIN?

## Primitive human - hunting and gathering

We share 99% of DNA with monkeys and chimpanzees. Beginning from the first human (2,5 mln years ago), our needs haven't changed that much. Primitive humans had to practice hunting and gathering to survive, it was their main life area. Along with slowly disappearing sexual dimorphism and increasing the mental faculties, humans started to create more organized groups which gave them big predominance on other hominids, and contributed to excluding them with time. It means that we always had to be on the move, we were living in groups with a profound need to belong and to reproduce. That's why we survived.

Humans have always followed their choices with emotions or instincts. Did you know that throughout evolution we have developed primordial emotions, which remain independent of culture or environment? They include pain, fear, hunger, anger, contentment and happiness. This term was invented by Derek Denton - professor from Melbourne University in Australia in his book "The Primordial Emotions: The Dawning of Consciousness". His theory assumes that instinctual emotions are fundamental to our awareness. However, because of cerebral cortex growth throughout evolution, more complicated processes like imagination and perception were able to emerge, shaping our consciousness. So, everything begins with primordial emotions.

**Instinct** - innate ability - characteristic of humans and certain animal species – for unlearned, intentional actions that allow both the individual and the entire species to survive in the environment (translated from Polish dictionary WS JP).



## How does it look now?

### Human "regression"

Now, we live in different conditions that enable us to be more comfortable in a lot of ways, especially through technological progress which we made as human species. However, we ceased to care for nature and our health. Convenience became the most important factor in decision-making. The times are changing, but the needs? Not exactly.

It turns out that "highly civilized" humans live in artificially created conditions and because of that they have a problem with survival instinct. It's an effect of excess data and chaos in the sphere of values.

## How to live in harmony and grow your primitive human abilities?

### The art of surviving; bushcraft/ survival - As people return to primitive instincts

In the last few years we can see a new trend that more and more people are interested in: survival or bushcraft. I think that it might be connected with towns growing more and more - in Poland we call it "betonosis". In general, our everyday life drifts apart from living around nature and primitive needs which are not attended to but still exist in subconscious. People need relief from the noise and infrastructure. We can find something only when we go out to the muted and organized world of nature.

### "LEAVE NO TRACE"

**Bushcraft** is the art of long-term living in the wild, using natural resources away from civilization at the same time protecting nature in which we live. Survival method is based on basic human needs in a way similar to how indigenous people have done for thousands of years.

There is a so-called "Big four" rule to survive - shelter, water, fire, food. For example: building shelters, fire crafting, making tools from natural sources, hunting traps, food and water foraging. Maybe it's better to say that bushcraft teaches how to be... wild again?

### But who is a bushcrafter?

Bushcrafter is a forest explorer. They absorb knowledge from personal experience, from past generations, scientific research and the modern world. They reduce the use of modern tools, merely guiding them through the process. As such, their sense of safety and confidence is independent and their sense of resourcefulness is developed without reliance on external help. Bushcraft teaches that you become someone when you start to understand the forest without unnecessary violence and destroying nature.

**"THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE LESS YOU HAVE TO CARRY. THE LESS YOU KNOW, THE MORE YOU HAVE TO CARRY." – FAMOUS BUSHCRAFTER , MORS KOCHANSKI**



### HOW CAN YOU BENEFIT FROM BUSHCRAFT?

- **Empty your mind from unnecessary noise**, social media, too much information that come to us every day from every side (*overstimulation*);
- **Get rid of material objects** (*simplicity, minimalism*) - experience and understand that we don't need a lot of items to survive and be content;
- **Be in the present** not in the past or future, through natural meditation, everyday focus on things that we see around us; it's a state when we can stay in natural environments and in being able to look after yourself and have skills; it teaches us that in the forest we are participants not observers;
- **Use forest bathing to connect with nature**; place where we impact our way of thinking in the very direct way, it might even have an impact on our physical state;
- Develop creative thinking and problem-solving skills, **because DIY is the way of life!**

**"SILENCE IS THE STORM THAT BREAKS DOWN OUR DEAD BRANCHES AND SENDS OUR ROOTS DEEPER INTO THE HEART OF THE LIVING EARTH." – KHALIL GIBRAN**

Okay, so you could ask me, if I want to, how should I start? There are a lot of organisations and groups that associate people who are interested in the art of surviving. You can easily find them in your country on social media. I found a lot of groups on Facebook and their websites on search engines. In addition, if you are looking for some places where you might pitch up for a few days you can look for legal regions at your state forests website or forestry management website. Sometimes you can also do survival training to practice your abilities. It gives you the opportunity to experience difficult situations and figure out on your own how to handle them. It's good to search the forest and get to know it at the same time. So, it's your sign to start your first adventure with bushcraft! It's very simple, trust me everybody can try!

Karolina Kubera

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Drawings: Karolina Kubera

# United in the pot (a to)

## Kluski Śląskie (Silesian Dumplings)

1 kg peeled starchy potatoes  
250 g potato starch  
13 g salt  
1 eggs - depending on the dough's moisture

How to make it:

1. Boil potatoes
2. Mash potatoes
3. Cool potatoes
4. Put them in one bowl
5. Take ¼ to make space
6. Put flour and egg
7. Mix it together
8. Make a ball from the dough
9. Make a small hole in ball (not too deep)
10. Put them in pot with boiling water with salt
11. Once they float to the surface, cook for an additional 3-4 minutes
12. Serve them with butter, meat or other things

Our favourite potato recipes!!!

potato flower

## Basic Potato soup

1 kg potatoes  
4 carrots  
1 soup green  
2 tablespoons of bouillon  
Parsley  
If you want a bay leave  
(if you like you can also add a small onion, but then you should fry it before)

How to make it:

1. Peel and cut the potatoes, carrots and the soup green
2. Put everything in a pot (also the bay leaves and onion if preferred), pour enough water so everything is just covered
3. Add the bouillon and cook everything.
4. Blend the soup (without the bay leaves)
5. Season it as desired e.g. with salt, pepper and parsley

As you prefer you can eat it with bread, sausages or ham cubes.  
Some people also like to add crème fraîche to the soup shortly before the end of the cooking time.

Around vegetable, buried in the ground, covered in a brown shell. Inside, its golden flesh unlocks endless flavors and delights when harvested and well prepared. This vegetable, known as potato—or as we call it, Kartoffel/картофель—is often underestimated as just a side dish. Yet, it flourishes in an endless variety of dishes and tastes. So let’s discover this intriguing vegetable from our own perspectives.

**Origin of potato**

Potatoes originate from present-day Peru, and the first archeological tuber remains are dated to 2500 BC. In South America, potatoes haven’t been used only as a food but as well as a currency and way to measure the time. Potatoes got popular by bringing them to Europe in the 30’ of the 16 century by Spanish conquistadors. Potatoes weren’t always popular. It wasn’t until 1740, when Prussia’s King Frederick planted them during wartime, hoping to encourage peasants to eat them, that they gained widespread acceptance. Following this, potatoes became a staple in German lands and Poland.

**Potato facts**

Potatoes are spread nearly all over the globe in over 125 countries. Being able to grow from 0 up to 4,700 meters above sea level, from southern Chile to Greenland, this uncomplicated vegetable conquered the world. With the ability to produce two to four times more food per year than grain crops while requiring less water, potatoes are an incredibly efficient and sustainable food source. In addition to being rich in starch, they also provide essential nutrients such as Vitamin C, minerals, and fiber.

Historically, potatoes were even used as medicine, though their effectiveness remains uncertain.

Today, global potato production exceeds 300 million tons, with over 4,000 cultivated varieties and more than 180 wild species. A member of the Solanaceae family, alongside tomatoes and tobacco, the potato has even made history as the first vegetable grown in space. As a testament to its impressive nature, the Guinness World Record for the largest potato stands at a whopping 4.98 kg.

**Many ways to prepare potatoes**

Potatoes exist in every imaginable way and you have endless possibilities of dishes to make with them. As a side dish potato serves well in forms of cooked, mashed or fried potatoes with a variety of different ways of preparation and seasoning.

Think of gratin, crispy fries, creamy fillings, stuffed potatoes, potato pancakes, hearty soups, the list of amazing potato dishes goes on and on. Is your mouth watering yet? As you can see, making potatoes is different and depends on the country or even the family, but potatoes connect us as humanity.

**Potato culture**

As we described before, potato is not just a vegetable, but through its extraordinary abilities it has grown to be part of our cultures. Potatoes appear in stories, songs (such as the Polish tune “Święto ziemniaka” - “Feast of Potato” by Franek Warzywa & Młody budda) and even art, with Vincent van Gough painting four still-life works featuring them.

During Shakespeare’s time, potatoes were even referred to as the “apple of love”. This cultural significance has led to unique attractions like the Potato Museum in Poznań, where visitors can create their own potato-inspired artwork. In Poland, you can also find the world’s largest potato monument in the small village of Biesiekierz. In Germany, there are yearly potato queens, being potato ambassadors. The queens are crowned for the different parts of Germany sharing the importance and amazingness of potatoes.

Beyond monuments and museums, potato fairs and festivals take place across the globe. On 30th of May we take time to celebrate one of our favourite vegetables with the International Day of Potato. Why not join in this year? Visit a potato-themed restaurant or cook your favorite potato dish with family and friends!

We never expected potatoes to be such a fascinating topic of discussion. One evening, we met in our flat and ended up talking about potatoes for at least an hour. Later, at a music festival, we even sang a Polish potato song together. Inspired by our conversation and this article, we’ve decided to celebrate Potato Day for the first time this year. Coming from different countries, our shared passion for potatoes brought us together to write this article. In the end, potatoes have a unique way to unite people.

Jakub Pokuciński & Maike Seuffert

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# CAN YOU JUSTIFY THIS?

! **DISCLAIMER** !

*DRY TEXT ABOUT JUSTICE AHEAD!*



Justice – a fairly simple term for a complex construct with even more profound implications. It is easily dropped as a matter of course, like a naturality. Whether in societal discourse, amidst heated arguments or during casual conversations, justice stands out through its omnipresence and degree of entanglement in nearly every realm of life. Yet due to this extensive and still extending usage of justice as a buzzword with a seemingly inexhaustible stock of notions attached to it, its meaning is increasingly strained and overbent. What is it that we claim when demanding “justice for everyone”? What is it that we press to enable, when we condemn a system’s injustice? What is it that we desire, when we feel treated unjustly?

When looking up the meaning of “justice” in the Cambridge Dictionary the first definition that pops up is “fairness in the way people are treated”. On the first glance, this definition of justice seems to be quite narrow owing to its ignorance of justice’s connection to moral righteousness. But upon closer inspection this interpretation

of justice actually captures three of this concept’s most prominent features. First and maybe foremost, the given definition implies the dependence of justice on action. As justice belongs to the space in between, the social in-between of people, groups and institutions, actors and actions are needed to build the bridge enabling just societal and social interrelations. In this way, justice lies in our very own hands coming down to how we, as individuals, groups, and institutions, treat each other. The reliance of justice on action becomes even more evident considering that justice can only ever exist in the field of tension between the conception of it that is currently in force and the ideals around it that demand these norms to be revised. Due to this ambiguity, justice’s requirement of acting is not only based on its form of manifestation but its ideal essence that we can only approach

through perpetual adjustments to draw closer.

Secondly, the way this definition of justice is formulated reflects another important characteristic of justice, namely that justice is linked to everyone being granted what is due to them or, in other words, receiving their fair share. Theories of justice usually have the purpose of resolving and clarifying the conflicting interests arising from each person’s claim. Different perspectives on and approaches to these conflicts result in differing understandings of justice putting the emphasis on varying connected aspects like distribution or outcome. Therefore, justice is in fact not one but many.

Thirdly, by referring to fairness the Cambridge Dictionary’s definition of justice also points to the close ties of justice and impartiality. In action, justice requires both that conflicting claims are treated equitably and thus fairly as well as similar cases of conflicting claims on justice are treated in a consistent manner and thus impartially. Consequently, justice is to be understood as opposite

to arbitrariness as inconsistent and unreasonable treatment. Taking this understanding of justice into further consideration, the connection between justice and justifying are after all not of solely semantic and lexical nature but also of logical one. Therefore, it is most particularly the case that any conception of justice requires justification in order to be valid.

Spread across virtually every geographical region and historical period theories to justify certain conceptions of justice have been forwarded. In fact, the aforementioned equation of justice with fairness is part of such a justification as it turns out to be a familiar formula famously proclaimed by philosopher John Rawls in his "Theory of Justice". Ever since Rawls' 600 pages strong paper was published in 1971, a serious discourse of justice is barely possible without his theory being included. Although the innovation of his basic thesis, namely the understanding of justice as fairness, remains questioned, his method of derivation brought about a fundamental rethinking in the philosophical landscape dedicated to justice. By means of reviving the dusty but not less significant contractualism of the enlightenment, Rawls' "Theory of Justice" promotes the idea of the social interdependencies and societal connectivity inhering justice. Like the classical contractualism of Kant, Hobbes, and Locke, Rawls' modern contractualism is based on the idea of a fictional contract between the members of society symbolizing everyone's submission to the power of the rule. To back up his ideas on which rules and laws should prevail in a just state of a just society, Rawls designed what he calls the "original position", a hypothetical scenario in which individuals come together under a "veil of ignorance" hindering them from any insights into their personal disposition with the purpose of choosing the political system they want to be ruled by or, in other words, agreeing on their terms of

justice. In this artificial state, the participants find themselves in a position of impartiality in which self-orientation and the search for the greatest self-benefit equates striving for the best of everyone since no one knows where they stand within the social structure they create. According to Rawls, the participants of the "original position" will choose by the "minimax" principle, that is to say they will choose whichever system has the maximum minimum or the best out of the worst-cases. Thereof, Rawls deduces two principles of justice namely the principle of equal liberty and the difference principle. The first one, entitling everyone to the same set of basic civil liberties and the second one, ensuring that inequality may only occur under the conditions that everyone has the equal opportunities to obtain the inequality or that it benefits the least benefited. This is how Rawls ensures that everyone is given what is due to them. At this point, the assertive reader will have noticed that Rawls' theory of justice features two of justice's basic characteristics but lacks one. With his theory, Rawls captures the impartial nature of justice as well as justice's call for what everyone is entitled to have. Nevertheless, although being intrinsically connected to the moral obligations arising from the social interdependence associated with living together in a society, Rawls' theory fails to take us all into the reciprocal responsibility to act as agents of justice.

This is where T. M. Scanlon's theory of justice steps in. With the telling name "What we owe to each other" of his book, the very essence of Scanlon's theory is already captured. Sharing the contractualist approach to justice with Rawls, the two theories coincide in the main points and differ only regarding the coming forth of the hypothetical contract (Scanlon's criteria for just social rules rely on reasonable rejection) and the societal interrelation in focus: While Rawls mostly aims toward the justice between institutions and people,

Scanlon takes each individual in the responsibility acting in accordance with justice by asking the simple question of what obligations we have not only overall as members of society but directly in between one another.

Accordingly, what we claim when demanding "justice for everyone", what we press to enable, when we condemn a system's injustice, what we desire, when we feel treated unjustly all comes down to what we owe to one another on the basis of justice as fairness or better said the impartiality of the "veil of ignorance", equality according to the principles of equal freedom and fair difference. So, by implication Rawls' theory points out the ideal principles of justice that ought to be realized, while Scanlon provides the practical guidelines for how to do so. In the end, justice is the responsibility we have to one another, it is the thread the social fabric is made of, it is the glue that holds us together. Due to this unifying power it withholds, justice is the most integral part of every society, community and human interrelation. Despite Rawls' and Scanlon's theories being only two of a seemingly indefinite amount of takes on and constructions of justice, they pin down justice's essence and potential as source of unity and reciprocal responsibility - both of which can only benefit social and societal life together. Therefore, it is of utmost importance not to allow 'justice' to become a mere matter of wear and tear in everyday discourse, but to allow a profound exchange about all theories connected to this intriguing concept.

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Sophia Abegg

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# GASTRONOMY STARTS WHEN WE ARE NO LONGER HUNGRY

SHARING IS CARING WITH COOKING PREPARING!

Cooking is an art and a science about food preparation. It is an area that requires imagination, knowledge of ingredients and techniques, as well as execution skills. It can be varied and includes different kitchens from different areas of the world, each with its own unique flavors, recipes and traditions. It's not just a way to create delicious meals, but it can also be a social activity, as food preparation can be a way to bring people together and exchange experiences and emotions. Some of the basics of cooking include the choice of appropriate ingredients, their preparation, the application of various cooking techniques (such as baking, , etc.) and presenting the food in a way that is attractive to consumers.

By identifying the term "gastronomic tourism" or "gastronomic destination" we mean the new form of an alternative way of vacation, dominated by local cuisine culture. When we talk about a gastronomic destination or tourism, we are essentially referring to a subcategory of cultural tourism (gastronomy is considered a cultural expression) in which travelers seek to experience unique gastronomic experiences, and is one of the greater trends in the world. Gastronomy is a tourist product for Greece, with a wide variety of ingredients and traditional recipes. Gastronomic destination is considered a destination (settlement, city, country) that stands out for its local cuisine, has made it a tourist attraction and invites interested tourists to visit and receive special gastronomic experiences.

Inside gastronomic tourism it is important to mention both the food photo and the decoration of food, because it is an important factor for attracting tourists with the food photography and food styling. Also, the photo of the food plays an important role because we observe that more and more users - regardless of gender and age - upload gastronomy photos on social media. Photos of the dishes of a restaurant are their image outward and our time is considered the "era of image". It just a very serious reason for the restaurant to take seriously how they will immortalize and edit their dishes before they are released online.

Equally important role also plays food styling. Food photographs of a restaurant contribute to the promotion and marketing plan of the restaurant. They are used on various social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, restaurant's website, etc. , and are a source of advertising. During a photo shoot the utensil must be clean and free from any fingerprints, splashes of sauce, etc.. Before clicking, make sure everything is perfect. Meat, for example, may look better in the middle so that its pink interior color and vegetables or vegetable colors come to life and give a nice tone to the photo.

Food styling is the art of imaging food in order to create delicious images. The main purpose of this service is to ensure that the final photo emphasizes the products and colors of the products and creates an atmosphere that supports and strengthens your strategy on marketing.



Tania Karaouli

# Spreading Polish tradition, one “pączek” at a time

Being a foreigner during special holidays can be a bittersweet experience. While some of us have celebrated our traditions abroad before, this time felt different, more fun, more connected.

On the last Thursday of February, we observed “Fat Thursday” (Tłusty Czwartek), a fun Polish tradition marking the last indulgence before Lent. This day is deeply rooted in Polish culture and is a great opportunity to enjoy sweet, fatty foods before the fasting season begins. During that day we have pączki (soft, filled doughnuts) and faworki/chrusty (crispy, ribbon-like pastries). Many people take it as a challenge to see how many they can eat, turning it into a fun and delicious competition!

This year, as a Polish team living in Macedonia, we decided to share a piece of our culture with our “new” family. We took on the challenge of preparing these traditional treats, unsure of how long it would take. In the end, it turned into a 6 culinary marathon, long, exhausting, but incredibly rewarding.

The next day, we saw our efforts pay off. People gathered, first dancing to burn off some calories, then sitting together to enjoy the Polish delicacies. While food was the highlight of the day, it became clear that the real essence of “Fat Thursday” wasn’t just about indulgence, it was about bringing people together.

By sharing this tradition, we didn’t just introduce Polish flavors, we created a space for connection, joy, and cultural exchange. And that, in the end, is what made this Thursday so special.

Jakub, Ania, Karolina, Dawid  
volunteers at VCS



pączki



faworki



# Të bashkuar në Tenxhere

Receta jonë e preferuar  
me patate!!!

lule patate

## Kluski Śląskie (Silesian Dumplings)

1 kg patate të qëruara me niseshte  
250 g niseshte patate  
13 g kripë  
1 vezë - në varësi të lagështisë së brumit

Si ti gatواني:

1. Zieni patatet
2. Bëni pure nga patatet
3. Ftohni patatet
4. I vendosim në një tas

5. Merrni ¼ për të bërë hapësirë
6. Vendosni miell dhe vezën
7. Përziejini së bashku
8. Bëni një top nga brumi
9. Bëni një vrimë të vogël në top (jo shumë të thellë)
10. I vendosim në tenxhere me ujë të vluar me kripë
11. Pasi të dalin në sipërfaqe, gatujeni edhe për 3-4 minuta të tjera
12. Shërbejini me gjalpë, mish ose gjëra të tjera

**N**jë perime e rrumbullakët, e mbjellur në tokë, e mbuluar me një guaskë kafe. Brenda, përbërja e artë zhbllokon shije dhe kënaqësi të pafundme kur korret dhe përgatitet mirë. Kjo perime, e njohur si patate - ose siç e quajmë ne, Kartof(f)el - shpesh nënvlerësohet si një pjatë anësore. Megjithatë, ajo lulëzon në një shumëllojshmëri të pafundme pjatash dhe shijesh. Pra, le ta zbulojmë këtë perime intriguese nga këndvështrimi ynë.

### Origjina e patates

Patatet e kanë origjinën nga Peruja e sotme, dhe mbetjet e para arkeologjike të zhardhokëve datojnë në vitin 2500 para Krishtit. Në Amerikën e Jugut, patatet nuk janë përdorur vetëm si ushqim, por edhe si monedhë dhe mënyrë për të matur kohën. Patatet u bënë të njohura duke i sjellë në Evropë në vitet 30 të shekullit të 16-të nga pushtuesit spanjollë. Patatet nuk ishin gjithmonë të njohura. Vetëm në vitin 1740, kur mbreti i Prusisë Frederiku i mbollti ato gjatë kohës së luftës, duke shpresuar t'i inkurajonte fshatarët t'i hanin ato, që ata fituan pranim të gjerë. Pas kësaj, patatet u bënë një element kryesor në tokat gjermane dhe Poloni.

### Faktet mbi patatet

Patatet janë përhapur pothuajse në të gjithë globin në mbi 125 vende. Duke qenë në gjendje të rritet nga 0 deri në 4700 metra mbi nivelin e detit, nga Kili jugor në Grenlandë, kjo perime e pakomplikuar pushtoi botën. Me aftësinë për të prodhuar dy deri në katër herë më shumë ushqim në vit sesa drithërat, ndërkohë që kërkojnë më pak ujë, patatet janë një burim ushqimi tepër efikas dhe i qëndrueshëm. Përveçse janë të pasura me niseshte, ato ofrojnë edhe lëndë ushqyese thelbësore si vitamina C, minerale dhe fibra. Historikisht,

patatet janë përdorur edhe si ilaç, megjithëse efektiviteti i tyre mbetet i pasigurt.

Sot, prodhimi global i patates i kalon 300 milionë tonë, me mbi 4000 varietete të kultivuara dhe më shumë se 180 lloje të egra. Një anëtar i familjes Solanaceae, krahas domateve dhe duhanit, patatja madje ka bërë histori si perimet e para të rritura në hapësirë. Si dëshmi e natyrës së saj mbresëlënëse, Rekordi Botëror i Guinnessit për patatet më të mëdha qëndron në 4.98 kg.

### Disa mënyra për të përgatitur patate

Patatet ekzistojnë në çdo mënyrë që mund të imagjinohet dhe ju keni mundësi të pafundme pjatash për të përgatitur me to. Si pjatë anësore, patatja shërben mirë në format e patateve të gatuar, pure ose të skuqura me një sërë mënyrash të ndryshme përgatitjeje dhe erëzash. Mendoni për gratin, patate të skuqura, mbushje kremoze, patatet e mbushura, petullat me patate, supat e përzemërta, lista e pjatave të mrekullueshme me patate vazhdon e vazhdon. A ju bëhet goja lëng? Siç mund ta shihni, bërja e patateve është e ndryshme dhe varet nga vendi apo edhe familja, por patatet na lidhin si njerëzim.

### Kultura e patates

Siç e kemi përshkruar më parë, patatja nuk është thjesht një perime, por përmes aftësive të saj të jashtëzakonshme është bërë pjesë e kulturave tona. Patatet shfaqen në tregime, këngë (të tilla si melodija polake "Święto ziemniaka" - "Festa e patates" nga Franek Warzywa & Młody Buddha) dhe madje edhe në art, me Vincent van Gough që pikturon katër vepra të natyrës së vdekur që shfaqin ato. Gjatë kohës së Shekspirit, patatet quheshin edhe "molla e dashurisë". Kjo rëndësi kulturore ka çuar

në atraksione unike si Muzeu i Patateve në Poznań, ku vizitorët mund të krijojnë veprat e tyre të artit të frymëzuara nga patatet. Në Poloni, ju mund të gjeni gjithashtu monumentin më të madh të patates në botë në fshatin e vogël Biesiekierz. Në Gjermani, zgjidhen mbretëresha të patates çdo vit, duke qenë ambasadore të patates. Mbretëreshat kurorëzohen për pjesë të ndryshme të Gjermanisë duke ndarë rëndësinë dhe mahnitjen e patateve.

Përtej monumenteve dhe muzeve, panaiere dhe festivale të patates zhvillohen në të gjithë globin. Më 30 maj gjejmë kohë për të festuar një nga perimet tona të preferuara me Ditën Ndërkombëtare të Patates. Pse të mos bashkoheni në këtë vit? Vizitoni një restorant me temë patatet ose gatvani pjatën tuaj të preferuar me patate me familjen dhe miqtë!

Nuk e prisnim kurrë që patatet të ishin një temë kaq interesante diskutimi. Një mbrëmje, u takuam në banesën tonë dhe përfunduam duke folur për patatet për të paktën një orë. Më vonë, në një festival muzikor, madje kënduam së bashku një këngë polake me patate. Të frymëzuar nga biseda jonë dhe ky artikull, ne kemi vendosur të festojmë Ditën e Patates për herë të parë këtë vit. Të ardhur nga vende të ndryshme, pasioni ynë i përbashkët për patatet na bëri bashkë për të shkruar këtë artikull. Në fund të fundit, patatet kanë një mënyrë unike për të bashkuar njerëzit.

Jakub Pokuciński & Maike Seuffert

Përktheu: Dora Arifi

### Burimet:

Idaho Potato Museum: potato facts  
Cipotato: potato facts and figures  
Growing minds: Potato facts  
Food Republic: Things you didn't know about potatoes  
Wikipedia: History of potato  
US Davis Health: Potato Health benefits  
Wikipedia: Potato  
Smithsonian magazine: How the potato changed the world  
Montana State University: Fun Facts about potatoes  
Potatogoodness: Potato History  
[Potato song by Franek Warzywa & Młody budda](#)

# HOW TO WRITE ARTICLES FOR VOICES



## TOPIC

Anything, except politics or hate speech

Think of topics that would interest **our audience** (youth)

Maybe a **current event or trend** that you could write about?

## RESEARCH

Use **credible sources** when researching your topic

**Double-check** any information you include in your article to ensure **accuracy**

**Don't plagiarize**

**Link the sources** at the end of your article

## STRUCTURE

Use **short, attention-grabbing headline**

Write an **introduction** at the beginning (what, who, when, why, how)

Include **body** and **conclusion** in your article, maintain a logical flow

Write your **full name** at the end

## WRITING

Use **clear and concise language** that your audience will understand

**Avoid** too technical terms and **hard language** unless necessary

**Be engaging** and try to make your article interesting to read

## FEW RULES

The article should be around 500 - 1000 words

**Don't** include images or illustrations in the document

Send possible **photos separately** (with sources and assured they're **free of copyrights**)

**Edit and revise** (clarity, grammar, and spelling error)

## WHAT ELSE?

You can write in **English, Macedonian and Albanian**

You don't need to be pro, **VOICES is open for everyone!**

Writing to the magazine is **voluntary**

We can provide you with a **certificate** if you become a writer for VOICES magazine





Our monthly magazine has a very simple, yet powerful, mission - to be the voice of youth. And how do we do that?

We encourage young people to take an active part in today's society through journalism and designing by giving them a platform to express themselves. VOICES is produced in Skopje, Macedonia, and published online every month and four times per year as a printed edition.

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### Writing articles

VOICES accepts articles about anything, except politics or hate speech. Brainstorm your ideas with us and write articles once, twice, or every month!



### Translating articles

VOICES is published in three languages: English, Macedonian and Albanian. If you are a native speaker or fluent in these languages, join our translation team!



### Featuring your work

If you are an artist, photographer, designer or other, your work can be presented in the magazine. Send us your method of art and a short bio of yourself!



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