



Krišjānis Liepa,  
RepairCafe Riga



KRIŠJĀNIS LIEPA is a cheerful 26 years old young man. Born in Bauska, a little town near Riga, like many youngsters after high school he didn't really know what he would do in his life. The only thing that he thought about when he was 18 and had to choose his course of studies was to be successful and earn money. So, he enrolled in the prestigious Riga Stockholm School of Economics. During these years of study Krišjānis was immersed in the mainstream world of economics, the one where they teach you that profit is the engine of every other thing and that producing and consuming more and more is key to economic growth. But while his fellow schoolmates were beginning to feel as part of a prestigious élite that would one day have earned a lot of money, for Krišjānis this starts to be a minor factor, a rejection

<https://www.facebook.com/RepaircafeRiga>

towards those kind of values slowly grows in him, and even more so towards that kind of economic thinking. Krišjānis started to ask himself some questions: what is the environmental impact of that economic model? Is it really right that only a small élite of people benefit from economic growth? Is this economic structure actually the only one possible?

The answers weren't late, and Krišjānis understood that wasn't the world he wanted to be part of.

Nevertheless, after graduating in Business and Administration, Krišjānis didn't abandon economics, but he decided that he would use his knowledge to promote a completely different form of economy: one that is fair and sustainable, where the engine that moves everything is not profit and unrestrained consumption, but recycling, low environmental impact and sharing.

And so it was that Krišjānis, together with some friends, founded Repair Café Riga in August 2017.

The main aim of the newborn NGO is to organize events to teach people how to repair and recycle waste and items. It is a place to share and spread knowledge, with the goal of expanding the culture and practice of responsible and sustainable consumption. This idea is successfully spreading and, with the help of Krišjānis and his friends, a community of repair cafés is rapidly growing around Latvia.

*“Some events have been organized with neighborhood associations, this means that there has been a lot of participation by senior citizens and pensioners. We realized that elderly people are a precious source of technical knowledge and repairing skills; they grew up in the Soviet Union, not in the throwaway culture like us young generations. I really think that creating a space where distant generations meet and share their knowledge gives an added value to our work”*

- KRIŠJĀNIS LIEPA

