

## ZUMBARA

[www.zumbara.com](http://www.zumbara.com)

Zumbara is a platform where groups and individuals can pool and trade experiences and skills, using time instead of money as the unit of currency. To give an example, Mary shows how to make his own web page to David for 2 hours earns 2 hour in return, spends 1 hour on having her washing machine fixed and the other hour by having her wedding playlist organized by someone else.

We believe that *Zumbara* has an important role to play in supporting the shift that the world is experiencing. *Zumbara's* power is in fostering a gift culture. For us, this gift culture is two sided. To begin with, each of us has a unique gift, which seeks continuously to be realized and expressed. When given the chance, this gift flows naturally and that which we give somehow comes back to us. Secondly, when we share our gifts with others, we experience a feeling of unity. Thanks to the social technologies that exist in today's world, the gift economy and sharing culture is being practiced – every day – by huge numbers of people, resulting in major changes in behavior patterns. At *Zumbara*, we're doing everything we can to support this positive paradigm shift.

## INTERVIEW WITH AYŞEGÜL GÜZEL, ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF TIME BANK ZUMBARA

(Compiled from previous interviews)



Zumbara: Innovative sharing platform where time is used instead of money as currency.

**\*Hello Ayşegül, how did you come up with the idea of Zumbara and how is it developing?**

My Zumbara adventure started when I met the time bank concept in my neighbourhood in Barcelona where I was working as a strategical consultant at one of the innovation consultant agencies. I was questioning how my job contributed to the whole. It was a time when I was also questioning the values and concepts that are associated with money, these concepts associate money with time. I was searching for what I really wanted to do with my life. The Idea of a time bank seemed like a good idea, with its values and principles. I took the first steps to start a time bank in Turkey under the name of Zumbara.



Ayşegül Güzel, One of the founders of Zumbara

### **\* What has changed in your life with Zumbara?**

It's changed all of my points of view surrounding my value system, relationship models, beliefs and fears. I've made the life changing decision to gift everything instead of concentrating on making money and now my life is more real and alive with Zumbara. It enables me to meet many different people, ideas and communities. It also enables me to make contact with people, to experience, to feel different emotions, to make new friends, to acquire diverse knowledge, to improve my fields of interest, to experience that nothing is impossible and to become a part of this community. Zumbara is one of the greatest things that has happened to me. It is an incredible adventurous journey.

### **\* How does it work?**

In brief the system works like this: Users enter with the invitation code that they received from Zumbara platform. After registering the web site they mention about what they would like to exchange. They find people who have services that they would like to exchange on the web site and then contact them. After agreeing on the details they exchange the services online or offline. The one who takes the service repays with time to the one who gives the service. That person who receives the time may use these hours to get a different service from someone else.

**\* How is the value of the service defined?**

At Zumbara someone's time is the value that is exchanged and it does not matter what the service is. Ironing and marketing consulting have equal values. This equality is important because it asks us to rethink the idea that money is the only exchangeable thing of value, it reminds us that time really is the only thing that matters.

**\* How are people affected by using time instead of money? How do they approach this topic?**

The Zumbara community involves people who have dreams about a different world concept. They have a high level of awareness and are ready to share their knowledge. For this reason it is very satisfying for them to share their talents with open hearts with people and who have a common interest. Sometimes people do not expect anything in return but there are some people who make the exchange just to collect time. We try to give the message again and again that the act of exchanging time is just a game for us. The essential thing is sharing, to be able to give what we have as a talent and to receive from others. Thus we can create relationships which are based on trust and build healthy communities.

**\* Do you think the people who share their time will start to share different things like their cars or their houses, etc?**

Yes, definitely. This sharing economy is rising rapidly. When you start to share, every little action about sharing makes some change in our habits and this changes our behavior. You can share your car, house, children's clothes, toys, garden, meals even your time. We try to make sharing the daily routine of our lives by being more willing to share every day. I think this sharing economy which has especially grown in 2013 will eventually become one of the factors that threaten economic growth in the world. We are longing for economic shrinkage and will be relieved when it begins to take place.

GÖZDE OKÇU 25, ZUMBARA USER

**\*Hi Gözde, when and how did you meet Zumbara?**

I met Zumbara at the beginning of 2012. I came across with news about Zumbara on the internet, it sounded interesting so I registered. A few weeks later, an unused building was granted to Zumbara for its activities, and Zumbara were calling for help

to clean and decorate the building. I thought that it was a good chance to meet people from Zumbara and to take part in the creation process of Zumbara's future center. Before I went to cleaning I asked help from Freecycle, an internet platform where... With some chandeliers and paintings for decoration from Freecycle, I went to the meeting. We worked, cleaned, laughed and had very nice conversations all day. We transformed the long time unused old building to a nice, comfy, lovely place all together. This place is used by Zumbara members for the following 10 months and it hosted many service exchanges, activities and of course building of new friendships. At the end of the day I already felt like a part of Zumbara community. Later, I started joining weekly meetings.

### **\*What have changed your life after Zumbara?**

I can say that many things have changed. First of all I should say that Zumbara is more than an internet platform where you can exchange services. It's a community. I met many nice and inspirational people; many of them are my friends now. I know that if I need something it will take only minutes to find someone who would help me. And they help me because they want to help me rather than expecting something in return. This interaction is based on trust and collaboration. I feel like Zumbara makes your friend circle larger, it brings you the people you need, within gift and sharing culture.

When I first registered to Zumbara I had difficulty to find something to offer. I didn't have a very special skill, like playing an instrument or knowing a rare language. In time I discovered what I can to offer to the community, I discovered how I can contribute to other's lives. That is a big gain for me.

When I am not in Turkey for travels, I really miss Zumbara. Next year I will start European Voluntary Service in Germany and want to build Zumbara there as well. You can follow updates on Zumbara Germany page on Facebook.

### **\*What is the most interesting service you took?**

When I started to get interested in working in civil sector, I took working at Civil Sector Experiences service from an experienced civil sector worker Derya Kaya from Turkey 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Foundation. That was quite valuable for me. In addition, pain relief massage, tips for finding jobs abroad, career consultancy, innovation methodologies seminar were among very interesting ones. One of the things I like about Zumbara is that you can learn things which you can't even imagine, or things which you definitely cannot purchase. You can be invited one night by an astrologist to watch rain of stars, or you can help someone finding a creative birthday party idea. Imagination is the limit.



The photos from notebook making workshop

