Organising a European Green Activists Training Programme

GEF GREEN EUROPEAN FOUNDATION

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Published by the Green European Foundation with the support of its partner foundations: Vihreä Sivistysliitto ry (Visio) – Finland, Grüne Bildungswerkstatt (GBW) – Austria, Ökopolisz Alapitvany (Ecopolis Foundation) – Hungary, Institute for Active Citizenship – Czech Republic.

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This publication has been realised with the financial support of the European Parliament to the Green European Foundation. The European Parliament is not responsible for the content of this project.

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Printed on FSC® Recycled certified paper. October 2016.

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Green European Foundation
The Green European Foundation is a European level political foundation. It is linked to, but independent of, other European Green actors such as the European Green Party and the Green Group in the European Parliament. Modelled on

many successful national green political foundations, GEF works to encourage European citizens to participate in European political discussions and to ultimately forge a stronger, more participative European democracy. The primary source of GEF's funding is the European Parliament.
The mission of GEF is to contribute to the development of a European public sphere, where European citizens can engage in a political dialogue to shape decisions taken at European level. A key audience for GEF is the Green political family across Europe: politicians, activists, policy experts, or campaigners, who GEF works with to encourage cooperation across borders, disseminate expertise and information on EU policies and EU decision making, and share best practices.

Vihreä Sivistysliitto ry (Visio)
Vihreä Sivistysliitto was founded in 1990 and has been running the Visio Educational Centre since 1995. Visio has 24 member organisations, representing civil society from around Finland. Visio offers training and educational services for civil society organisations and volunteers, members of the Green Party, migrants' associations and individuals interested in environmental issues. The training activities of Visio include courses, lectures, seminars and study groups, as well as non-formal adult education in Finland.

Grüne Bildungswerkstatt (GBW)
The Austrian Green Foundation (GBW) works in four areas: education, media, event organisation and archives. Through its work, the GBW supports Green and Green-related people and organisations with the goal of stimulating a "learning to learn" process for a radically changing world. This process is inspired by a reflection on controversial positions, linking substantive issues with creative methodological approaches, as well as imparting skills and abilities that are important for shaping the future. As a national organisation, GBW works in close contact with the regional Green Foundations of Austria.

Ökopolisz Alapitvany / Ecopolis Foundation Hungary
Ecopolis was founded by the Hungarian Green political party LMP (Politics Can be Different) in 2010. The Foundation is an autonomous and independent legal entity whose mission is to function as a background institution for its parent party, LMP. The aim of Ecopolis is to explore the eco-political ideas and approaches of the party, in dialogue with important public figures who share the party's views. Furthermore, the organisation aims to generate an open society, increase the number of party sympathisers and enlarge the party's potential voter base, while promoting the existence of a social and economic structure based on civil participation and the principles of sustainability and justice.

Institute for Active Citizenship
The Institute for Active Citizenship is a Prague-based non-governmental organisation whose mission is to support the civil society development in Czech Republic and the promotion of Green values. To that end, the organisation has so far implemented projects such as conferences which engage prominent local politicians defending the public interest, a long-term training programme for young activists, as well as a refugees' support programme.

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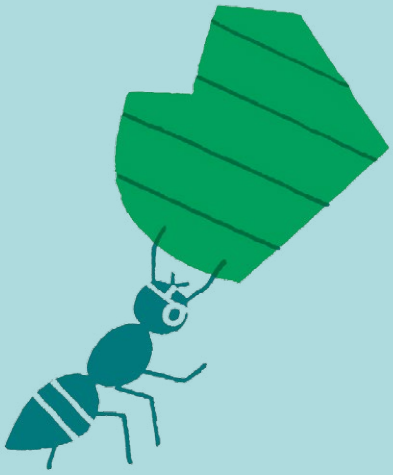
1. Introduction

In 2015, the Green European Foundation and its partner organisations from Hungary, Austria, Czech Republic and Finland organised for the first time a project entitled "European Green Activists Training" which supports and promotes European training for Green activists across Europe. In the course of the project, the partner organisations planned and organised a training session at national level to explore the history, functioning and institutions of the European Union within a Green context. The training programme at national level was complemented by a European study tour to Brussels in spring 2016.

The European Green Activists Training project was inspired by the belief that creating a space for learning and exchanges between European actors can help to push the Green movement forward. Training and networking empower political activists to be involved in the Green movement, and even to stand as candidates in elections and to run successful campaigns.



Moreover, transnational training serves as an important forum for meeting fellow activists from different regions and countries, as well as enhancing participants' European identity in a non-formal and engaging way.

The driving force behind the project was the Young Green Activists Training in Finland, organised by ViNO, the Federation of Green Youth and Students, together with Visio, the Finnish Green Educational Centre. The training has been running since the 1990s and has been developed continuously. The founder of the training was Heidi Hautala (Finnish Green politician, currently a Member of the European Parliament), who has been active in the training ever since.

The training extended over two semesters, including five national meetings and one study trip to Brussels. The Brussels study tour has always been sponsored by Finnish Green MEPs. The training has proved very successful in involving young activists in the Green movement – and especially in keeping them involved. Many of the current MPs, local councillors and party workers in Finland have taken part in this training, as well as many Green activists outside the party. This successful Finnish experience was the model on which the European Green Activists Training has been developed, leading to the development of this handbook.

About this handbook

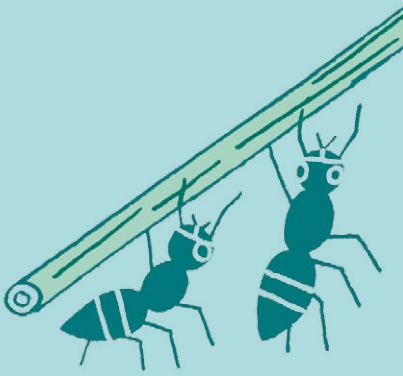
This Handbook was developed by the Green European Foundation (GEF) together with representatives of Green foundations across Europe (Finland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria) with the aim of sharing experience and providing tips on organising trainings for Green activists. This handbook is therefore aimed at organisations involved in educational activities for Green actors, such as Green foundations, Green parties, Green youth organisations and Green study centres in European countries. Through this instrument, we mainly address those organisations which have little or no prior experience of organising European activist trainings, but we think that more experienced organisations can also find useful tips and tricks that may inspire their future educational projects.

How to read it

The structure of the handbook follows the chronological logic of the project management process, looking at the main aspects to be kept in mind during the preparation, implementation and follow-up phases. Drawn up as a practical guide rather than a theoretical manual, the content of this handbook includes:

- Comprehensive guidelines on how to organise the various aspects of the Green Activists Training, from the initial training idea until the evaluation after the training day;
- BEST PRACTICE examples from real trainings organised in different European countries;
- The Key Elements to REMEMBER throughout the process, without which the success of the training can be affected;
- Issues to THINK ABOUT and reach consensus on amongst your team;
- HOW ABOUT sections, providing extra tips and recommendations;
- TOOLS and METHODS providing ideas on how to specifically implement a certain training activity.

2. Good planning is halfway to success



Being well prepared is indispensable to successful trainings. When planning, it is best to start early, at least six months before the training is due to start, or even earlier if possible. Of course, how much time needs to be devoted to this phase depends on the training and the organisation's resources.

Bear in mind the following:
Have you organised a Green Activists Training before or are you launching one now? Is it easy to reach the target groups? Will you need more time to identify them? Does your organisation need to fundraise? Allow plenty of time for this and build your training on a firm foundation.

2.1 Specify the objectives

Defining the objectives of the training is perhaps the most important step in the entire planning process. All the training content will be influenced by the defined objectives. In addition, the training objectives go hand in hand with defining the target groups and the scope of the project.

Formulating SMART objectives

A popular way of ensuring your objectives are well formulated is to check whether they are **SMART** – an acronym used to determine the criteria for setting objectives:

- **Specific:** objective should answer the questions: Who, What, Where, When, Which, Why?
- **Measurable:** establish concrete criteria for measuring progress towards the attainment of each objective
- **Attainable:** objectives should be achievable - the objectives should match the resources and skills which can be invested by the organisation in the project
- **Realistic:** state what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources
- **Time-related:** specify in which time frame the result(s) can be achieved

2.2 Set your indicators

Once your objectives have been defined, the next question is: how will you know your objectives have been met? Think about how the impact of the training can be measured. Identify the indicators you could use to check if your project is meeting its objectives and is making a real impact. It is good to include both quantitative indicators, which refer to measurable outcomes, and qualitative indicators, such as changes in attitudes and behaviour.

Here are some examples of indicators:

1. Participants' knowledge

Output: the training programme for each session, participants' evaluation of their knowledge of politics and activism;

Outcome: participants in the Green activist training gain knowledge of Green politics and decision-making at European, national and local levels, as well as different forms of activism related to them.

2. Participants' attitude

Output: changes in participants' self-evaluation before and after the training;

Outcome: participants in the Green Activists Training recognise the value of European citizenship and local activism and realise what it means to them – to be active citizens at the local and European level.

3. Participants' involvement in the Green movement

Output: number of participants involved in activities in Green organisations six months after the training. In the years that follow: the number of participants standing in elections, being a board member for a Green organisation, taking part in international activities offered by the Federation of Young European Greens, being involved in campaigning, being elected local councillors, MPs, etc.

Outcome: after the training, participants join Green activities with great enthusiasm and stay in the Green movement for a long time.

From the very beginning, remember to align your indicators with the project objectives. While planning a training session or content package, ask yourself how each helps to achieve the initial goals.

2.3 Know your target group

Who do you want to reach through your project and what are their needs? Target groups arise from the project objectives, but it is worth considering who they actually are. Ideally, at this stage, you will take the time to analyse the real needs of the potential participants – and be ready to reformulate the objectives if it seems that the needs of your target group(s) are not in line with the objectives originally set out for the project.

Build a persona

One method you could use when analysing your target group's needs is to build a persona. Personas are fictional characters which describe social and behavioural patterns among your target group. Building a persona can help you to understand how to improve your training activities and content to respond better to your participants' profiles. Here are examples of questions you might want to ask when creating your training participant persona:

- **What age is this person?**
Here you will choose the average age of your training participants. This question can help you identify whether, in particular, you need to respond to certain conditions for a certain age group, so this element could determine whether you should add tasks to your activity. At the same time, a large age gap among participants could be a challenge when adapting the content of your training to suit all ages.

- **Where do they come from?**
Mainly from the capital city, its surroundings, or from all over the country? Is your persona more of an urban than a rural inhabitant? This aspect could influence their travel time and how tired they are when arriving at your training location. If most participants come from far away, the first activities in your training should take this into account. Also, depending on your specific national situation, there may be other differences between rural and urban areas that you might want to take into account.

- **What are your personas' interests?**
Are they predominantly students, activists or involved in any other activities? The learning process is most successful when it is connected to already known experiences and can be directly applied to practice. Knowing your participants' interests and backgrounds can help you to determine the most suitable educational methods and topics they are interested in.

Other questions can be included, but are not limited to:

- What are their future plans within the Green movement, if any?
- Can you support these ambitions through the content of the training?
- What is each persona's motivation for taking part in the training?
- Is your persona somehow disadvantaged? Is the threshold of the training at the right level to motivate everyone?

BEST PRACTICE: Ideal participant in the Young Green Activists Training in Finland

Age: 15 to 25.
Experience within Green movement: none or very little
Motivation to participate: high
Future plans: to become a Green activist, to stand as a candidate in elections, to be an active citizen
Interests: Green values, environmental issues, equality, politics, activism
Why? To get new people involved in the Green movement and young Greens in particular;
To create a coherent group as regards their level of knowledge;
To separate 'young Green Activists' training more clearly from Visio's 'Green Activists' Training, which is targeted at more experienced and adult activists.

REMEMBER: Underaged participants

If the target group includes people who are underage, it is important to take this into consideration throughout the project.

Points to consider:

- Signed permission from the parents is needed for minors participating in non-formal educational activities, especially those taking place abroad. Remember to explain to parents what is going on and to mention the trainers' competencies and the whole programme.
- Choose venue(s) for your activities in accordance with the participants' ages (do not hold the official part of the programme in a pub or other places which are inappropriate for minors).
- Consider an alcohol policy during the training: what kind of example does the coordinating team set? For instance, are you going to invite participants to a pub after the activities? If so, some might be excluded because of their age.
- Remember that during the training, and especially abroad, the staff are responsible for underaged participants. Pay special attention to them while avoiding becoming a 'substitute parent'.

HOW ABOUT:
Conducting an analysis of participants' needs?

If you have already chosen the participants, then it is time to test the objectives you set previously. Conduct an analysis of needs (organise a meeting, use an online form or make a phone call) and ask your participants for their actual needs and expectations from the training. If you get to know their level of knowledge, skills and attitude, you can design a more suitable programme for them, which will match their learning needs.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those people who are able to have an effect on and are interested in your organisation's activities. In the case of green activists' trainings, they might be Green parties, Green youth or students' organisations, MPs or MEPs, training funders and so on. The key issue concerns how the relevant stakeholders should be involved in the project and kept informed about what happens during the various stages.

One possibility is to invite some of the stakeholders into the project team. The team could be responsible for planning the 'milestones' in the training: for instance, the objectives, target groups and topics of each training session. Another possibility is that the stakeholders have a rather minor role in planning the training, but the training coordinator reports to them on a regular basis.

BEST PRACTICE:
Stakeholders in the Young Green Activists Training in Finland

In Finland, the training is organised by the Federation of Youth and Students (ViNO) together with the Green Educational Centre (Visio) and Heidi Hautala, Green MEP. ViNO and Visio both receive funds from the Ministry of Education, to which they report the use of this funding on a yearly basis. Thus, for both organisations it is important to be able to present the outcome of the training to ministry officials.

Visio has a permanent representative in the working group which is responsible for planning the training. This representative is responsible for the part of the project funded by the Green European Foundation (GEF) and associated with the training at the same time. This representative keeps Visio, its board and GEF informed about all developments. One board member from ViNO is always in the working group, acting as a link between the board and the actual implementation of the training. As Heidi Hautala, MEP, is financing the Brussels study trip from her visitors' budget, her office is always involved in planning the programme related to the European Parliament visit in Brussels.

THINK ABOUT:
Conflicting interests

What can you do if the stakeholders, project coordinator or the organiser have different opinions on the training objectives, content or target groups? For example, there may be disagreement on the main criteria for selecting participants: one stakeholder might want to focus on motivation and potential for future involvement within the Green movement as a primary criteria

when selecting participants, while another could advocate that age is the most relevant criterion, as choosing participants of similar age helps to create a coherent training group.

In such situations, it is extremely important to take the time to negotiate on the difference of opinion and find a common agreement before moving forward with the training. If such differences are not solved at the beginning, this could result in various stakeholders having different views on how successful the training has been.

2.4 Project roles

Who is involved in the project and what kind of roles do they have? There are multiple possibilities. The training can be organised by one organisation with an internal coordinator and trainers, or it can be co-organised with other Green organisations, with an external coordinator and trainers. It is important to clearly define the people involved, their roles and their responsibilities.

Project team

Who should be included in the project team and how can you make sure they will create a well-functioning group? The ideal situation is that the people are selected according to the skills and abilities they can apply to the training project. In practice, the situation might be that both the organisers and the stakeholders want to have a member in the project team. In this case, it might be useful to consider how large a functioning team can be, and what other possibilities exist for stakeholder involvement. Of course, the people selected from each organisation should have a particular interest and relevant knowledge to contribute to the project.

From the beginning, do your best to build an inspiring team spirit and encourage enthusiasm among the group, especially if volunteers are involved in your team. Promote the project as 'can do' rather than 'must do'. Clearly define and decide each team member's roles and responsibilities. Are they only there to stay informed about the project, or are they actively involved in planning the content for the training? Are some of them also expected to co-organise the practical arrangements during the training sessions? Make sure that those who want to and can be involved are able to do so.

The importance of communication within a team cannot be stressed enough. Transparency in the information and democratic decision-making procedures should be ensured within the team. Make sure that the whole team knows about the project objectives as well as everyone's responsibilities related to the activities. Communication can be achieved

through regular (in-person or online) meetings, e-mails and sharing information on online platforms like Dropbox or Google Drive. If everyone agrees, it is also possible to create a Facebook group or a similar forum for discussions between the meetings. However, as regards team decisions, only official communication channels should be used to avoid confusions and to ensure transparency in decision-making.

BEST PRACTICE: Coordination team for the Young Green Activists Training in Austria

The Austrian Young Green Activists Training in 2016 was organised by the Austrian Green Foundation together with the Young Greens and the Green Student Federation. The Green Foundation employs an external project coordinator to organise the training. In addition, there is a consulting body – the coordination team. The project coordinator and a representative of the Young Greens and the Green Student Federation make up the coordination team. The coordination team meets to discuss the key points and design of the training after the project coordinator has produced a draft programme and time schedule.

Representatives from both young Green activist groups are chosen by the youth organisations themselves. They are responsible for communications regarding the training, including attending meetings with the Green Foundation's project coordinator, and for promoting the training and selecting participants from within their youth group. The project coordinator is responsible for all communications with training participants.

The project coordinator's responsibilities are:

- Drafting the training schedule (according to the previous year's feed back).
- Organising coordination team meetings.
- Choosing and booking trainers and accommodation.
- Promoting the training outside the Green youth organisations.
- Choosing six participants who are not already involved in a Green youth organisation but are part of the communal committees.
- Being the contact person for all questions regarding the training.
- Distributing practical information on the training session modalities.
- Communication with trainers.
- Obtaining and organising feedback.

Internal vs. external coordinator

One key issue is to decide whether you want to employ an external training coordinator or if someone from inside the organisation will coordinate the training. There is no simple answer to this, but here are some advantages and disadvantages of both solutions.

THINK ABOUT:
Internal or external – pros and cons

Internal coordinator:

Advantages

- An internal coordinator can acquire a complete overview of all elements in the training project: call for and selection of participants, needs' assessment and tailoring the programme, preparing handouts, visuals and background material, invitation and instructions for lecturers, and administrative tasks before, during and after the training.
- An internal coordinator is a trustee who is familiar with the mission and values of the organisation. As such, she/he can also reflect the values and political mission of the party – as compared to the political reality.

Disadvantages

- An internal coordinator might have many other projects which could affect timing and cause stress.
- The training should not become a dull routine task. Therefore, close and regular supervision, feedback and reflection, as well as developing the agenda are all essential.

External coordinator:

Advantages

- The external coordinator can focus on one specific project.
- The organisation and its employees can better focus on other projects at the same time.
- External coordination attracts talented professionals who may not be eager to work full-time for the organisation but are attracted by this particular training. Alongside competences in project management and coordination, their expertise could be focused more on youth work and lifelong learning. Hence, they bring extra capacities to those organisations whose employees usually have expertise in fields other than youth work.

Disadvantages

- Employing a person always requires extra resources, namely time and money, from the organisation.
- Communication between the project team and the coordinator might be difficult if the coordinator is working within limited hours and with limited responsibility.
- The coordinator will not be as accessible as a permanent employee in the office, due to fewer working hours.
- There can be confusion about the coordinator's role and responsibilities if these are not specified clearly at the beginning.
- The coordinator's working conditions might be precarious, for instance as regards health care, unemployment guaranties and/or pension.

BEST PRACTICE: Project team for the Accumulator training in the Czech Republic

The Accumulator training in the Czech Republic is organised by the Institute for Active Citizenship (IAC). When the idea of organising Young Green Activists Training was put forward in spring 2015, the IAC was going through a transition period and was looking for its future direction. It did not have any permanent employees or long-term activities. Yet, enthusiastic opinion leaders from the Czech Republic Green Party wanted to bring the IAC back to life. The Accumulator training, together with the Forum of Active Politics (the other crucial event currently being organised by the IAC), creates the backbone for the Institute's future direction.

The IAC hired an external coordinator for the Accumulator training, who was a non-formal education trainer able to conduct the training programme and ensure high-quality learning outcomes. Furthermore, another external non-formal education trainer was hired to implement the training and accompany the group to Brussels in spring 2016. The coordinator also represented the IAC during the GEF project 'Europeanising Green Activists Trainings'. In addition, she communicates with representatives of the IAC and the programme team, takes care of all the practicalities for the training sessions and communicates with the participants. The second trainer helps the project coordinator with preparing and facilitating the sessions.

Volunteers

If the organisation is working with limited resources, involving volunteers is always recommended. This may mean board members of local young Greens helping with practical arrangements during the training, or the involvement of volunteers during the entire planning process. Volunteers from previous training programmes can provide a valuable and recent participant point of view for developing the training.

BEST PRACTICE: Volunteer involvement in the Young Green Activist Training in Finland

Each year, the Federation of Green Youth and Students (ViNO) appoints a working group to plan and facilitate the upcoming training as soon as the previous training in late spring has finished. The members are recruited mainly from participants in the previous training who, at this point, are usually enthusiastic about continuing and developing the training. In addition, Visio's educational coordinator, ViNO's office workers and the board members are permanent members of the working group. Strong involvement by the staff guarantees that the group will function as a body able to help and consult with the coordinator, even in the case of less-active volunteers.

Together with the coordinator, the working group is responsible for planning the content for the training and selecting the participants. The group also plans the content for each training session. They communicate through live/Skype meetings, and also use a Facebook group for discussions.
The coordinator acts as the group leader during the Brussels study tour, but the working group chair, or someone else if the group so decides, partici-

pates in the Brussels tour as a second group leader. This has been embraced as a pleasant 'reward' for chairing the working group, which normally requires more effort than simply being an ordinary member.

REMEMBER: Balancing between volunteers and staff

The involvement of volunteers can be very fruitful for the training. However, it brings uncertainties too. Sometimes, they may not be as active and enthusiastic as expected, or their motivation to participate and contribute may decline during the project. This could exert more pressure on the training coordinator, as she/he will not receive as much input from the others. Communication is key to making it all work! Lay down rules and hold check-up meetings throughout the training. Giving more responsibility and freedom to the volunteers boosts their motivation. And the most important thing is to remember to thank them!

2.5 Resources

Make sure that the project is realistic and that your organisation is capable of undertaking it. What can you achieve reasonably and realistically with the available resources?

Scope and duration

First, consider the project's scope and duration. Both should arise from the objectives, although how broad trainings can be organised will also depend on the organiser's resources.

The scope can be quite limited, focusing only on the European aspect of Green politics and activism at the European level, for instance. In this case, the duration of the training could extend to one or two sessions only. Another option is to broaden the scope to the national and grassroots level. Remember to check against your objectives, and deduce the scope accordingly.

BEST PRACTICE: Broad activist training in Finland and the Czech Republic

The Finnish and Czech Young Green Activists Training presents the broadest training as regards scope and duration, including five national weekend meetings, starting each year in October, ending in April and including a Brussels study tour.

The main objective of both trainings is to convey motivated, Green-minded young people's knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning Green politics and civic activism. The aim is that the participants will stay in the Green movement and become activists, politicians and builders of the Green Party, both in their home countries and internationally.

The scope of the training covers decision-making, activism and politics at the national (parliament, NGOs, Green Party and Young Greens), regional and grass-root level, as well as on a European and international level. Moreover, political skills, public speaking, writing and social media skills will be included in the training.

BEST PRACTICE: Crash course on activist training in Hungary

Due to time restrictions in Hungary, the Green training was more like a crash course. It was very condensed, focused and intense. The inputs were comparable to a TED-talk: a well-prepared speaker made a presentation with the help of strong visual support, which is essential in a strict training scenario. The interactive parts, carried out in small groups, were strictly to the point.

The crash course training sessions are very result-oriented: a Green message is conveyed to the participants quickly and effectively. Consequently, rather than being a discovery process, the information and experience are dense, compared to a 'Green upload' to the mind. The team building is also more difficult than in broader trainings, which puts even greater importance on the follow-up and correspondence with the participants.

Human resources

The organisers must ensure appropriate human resources are provided. Keep in mind the training coordinator's working day, regardless of whether they are internal or external, and allocate the working time reasonably. If human resources are scarce, try to involve volunteers, for instance from the Young Greens. Remember that the burden should be spread equally across several shoulders and always make sure that someone else from the organisation can cover for the coordinator should something unforeseen occur.

Budget

Preparing a budget might be difficult at the beginning but, once again, good planning is halfway to success. Equipped with a realistic budget, it will be easier to confront any possible surprises during the course of the project. To plan the budget, write down all the costs that might arise: travel costs of participants and speakers, accommodation, venue, catering, staff costs, working materials and promotion costs, and always put some money aside for unexpected costs. In addition, make a list of the income from various sources (funding organisations, participation fees, etc.) and make sure the budget is balanced. Plan it in a timely manner so that there is time for fundraising, if required.

Create different budget scenarios to cover successful and not so successful fundraising. Be prepared that not all desired resources are available. Furthermore, ensure there is some flexibility in the budget to facilitate changes during the project.

How to save money:

1. Use free venues if possible: for instance, Green Party offices, student group rooms, free venues in the city, and so on. Sometimes local European Union officials provide free venues for events which are related to EU topics.
2. Involve volunteers to help with practical arrangements.
3. Use free materials from the GEF, Heinrich-Böll-Foundation and your own organisation.
5. Do not employ external coordinator and trainers, but work with internal staff instead.
6. Cook the food yourself or together with the group.
7. Ask participants to stay with friends, if possible, and try to accommodate any remaining participants at the homes of volunteers or Young Greens.
8. Ask speakers to participate for free, if possible. Invite speakers and trainers from the Green Party/Young Greens.

THINK ABOUT:
Fees for the speakers

Should your budget include fees for the trainers and speakers? This depends on who you want to invite. People from the Green Party are often willing to provide an input for free. Also, if the speaker comes from an organisation where she/he can use work time for the training, there is no need for an extra fee. However, professional trainers often ask for a fee and if you want to involve them in your programme you should also factor that in when preparing the budget.

Balancing the budget and using high-quality trainers is difficult. One possibility may be to invest in one high-quality trainer in performing and speaking skills and to use trainers and speakers from inside the Green family for the rest of the training.

THINK ABOUT:
Participation fees

Charging participation fees is an easy way to support the training financially. Young participants often have few financial resources so the participation fee should not create an obstacle to anyone's participation. However, charging a small participation fee can serve as a guarantee that participants will actually take part in all the activities. It is a balancing act to determine a fair participation fee.

However, even in the case of a small fee, we suggest always offering participants the option to apply for an exemption.

Fundraising

Green organisations seldom have enough resources which means they usually have to fundraise for their projects. If fundraising is necessary, it can be carried out by applying for different project funds or looking for donors interested in supporting the project. However, before applying for a fund, always make sure that the main criteria of that specific funding line corresponds with your already established objectives. If this is not the case, you might want to adjust expectations within the training team before proceeding with the funding application.

Here are some possible sources of external funding:

1. Green European Foundation (GEF)

As a European political foundation, GEF allocates part of its budget in a decentralised way. A call for project proposals is sent out every year and Green Foundations from across Europe can propose projects.

2. Heinrich-Böll Foundation (HBF)

HBF is the Green political foundation which maintains close ties with the German Green Party and serves as a catalyst for Green visions and projects. The HBF supports projects that prevent destruction of the ecosystem, strengthen gender equality, secure peace, and defend the freedom of individuals against excessive state and economic powers.

3. European Commission

Funding through the European Commission can be relevant for Green Foundations, although your team might need training first on how to access these funds. In 2015, one of the most relevant funds for national Green actors was Erasmus+, Key Action 1, Youth Exchanges and Strategic partnerships.

Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. Running from 2014 until 2020, it invites organisations in school education, further and higher education, adult education and the youth sector to apply for funding to undertake their project activities. From the total budget of €14.7 billion, 10% is allocated to providing funding for youth projects, which fall into three areas:

- Mobility of young people and youth workers, which supports exchanges or volunteering abroad for young people and training for youth workers;
- Strategic partnerships which aim to develop innovation and the exchange of good practices;
- Structured dialogue to support young people to meet with decision-makers in order to shape youth policy.

BEST PRACTICE: Fundraising for the Institute for Active Citizenship in Czech Republic

The IAC funded the training with support from the Green European Foundation (GEF) and the Institute's previous cooperation with the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation (HBF). Supported by the GEF, the Accumulator training was granted a budget for organising a training on EU topics. The GEF's support and open attitude towards HBF, whose project manager had been involved in developing the idea since the beginning of the training, opened doors for the IAC and subsequently it was possible to raise the required sum to organise the weekend-long training at the HBF's Prague office. A private donor from the Czech Republic Green Party also expressed his interest in supporting the training and made a financial contribution to public projects that were implemented by the participants as part of their practice. The field trip to Brussels was the most problematic aspect of the fundraising as there was no representative of the Czech Green Party in the European Parliament who could finance the training trip from the Parliamentary budget. GEF project partners did their best to persuade other MEPs to cover the costs for 20 participants from the Czech Republic. Finally their efforts were rewarded when a German Green MEP supported the Czech group's participation.

HOW ABOUT: Giving them a chance to influence!

Get your donors and partners involved in planning your training sessions from the beginning! They are really valuable sources of experience, contacts and networks for fundraising. If relevant, give them a slot in the programme, involve them in the project team, consult them on relevant topics, ask them if they can provide any relevant training material, and so on.

2.6 Organising a Green event

When organising a project on Green issues, keep in mind that it is not only the project content that should be 'green', but the actual project, too. The event should meet a certain standard of sustainability and social responsibility – for example, travelling by public transport instead of renting a vehicle or providing the participants with local and ecological food.

REMEMBER: Inclusion

Inclusion is an important Green value. Participants might have disabilities, which should not hinder their participation in the training. However, it is helpful to know beforehand what kind of special needs they have. Will a blind person bring his/her guide dog? Will someone using a wheelchair bring a helper? It is important that people with different disabilities can participate, but it is also worth remembering that inclusion and accessibility are not just important for permanently disabled people – for example, there may be someone who has a broken leg and cannot climb stairs or walk long distances. Also remember to take into account any other invisible factors that might prevent someone from participating. Inclusion is there for everyone.

Points to consider:

- In the application form, ask about any disabilities or special needs.
- Always try to choose accessible venues. Check beforehand if lifts are available and, if not, consider an alternative venue.
- Reserve enough time for moving from one place to another, and make sure that walking is not the only option.
- Choose the participation fee carefully to keep the project at a low threshold. Can everyone pay? Create an inclusive support mechanism.

BEST PRACTICE: Vegetarian food policy within the Finnish Green family

The principle is that food served at all the events organised by the Finnish Green Party and its fellow organisations, including Educational Centre Visio, is vegetarian. Many people participating in the Green events know the policy and do not even specify their diet as vegetarian. If the catering company is new, it is important to highlight that vegetable-protein-rich food (e.g. tofu, lentils, beans, tempeh, etc.) is recommended for lunch and dinner to avoid empty stomachs during the training or event.

The Federation of Green Youth and Students (ViNO) has taken it one step further: all the food served at their events is vegan. As ViNO is the co-organiser of Young Green Activist Training together with Visio, the vegan principle is also applied to this training.

This checklist provides some brief guidelines for organising a Green event:

1. **Gender mainstreaming** and diversity should be taken into account during planning and developing the project. Ideally, panels selected for events should have a 50:50 gender balance, and questions on gender should be included when your project is drawn up.

2. If you work with **interns and/or volunteers,** make sure you have well-defined rules on how you value and remunerate their work. While volunteering is normally done according to specific assignments and with a limited commitment to certain tasks, internships usually imply a full-time working day with interns taking specific positions in your organisation as part of an on-the-job-training in view of his/her future career. Greens have always been opposed to unpaid internships and to interns replacing staff positions in organisations.

3. **Transport and travel:** encourage your participants to use public transport, which means keeping accessibility in mind when choosing your venue. If this is not possible, a shuttle service could be provided, car-sharing encouraged, etc. Travel by plane should be discouraged. You can make it easier for your participants to travel Green by putting up signs that will help them to find public transport/bike stands, etc.

4. **Location/energy supply:** if possible, a location should be found where the energy used comes from renewable sources, with suitable provisions to lower energy consumption (e.g. using energy-efficient equipment, turning electronic devices off when not in use, rooms where additional light is not required during the day, etc.).

5. **Catering:** we strongly advise that the refreshments provided are organic, regional and seasonal and/or 'fair traded'; catering should be vegetarian (at the very least, vegetarian alternatives should be provided). Try not to use canned drinks, use tap water as an alternative to bottled drinks; plates and dishes should be reusable, while items such as ketchup or mayonnaise should not be provided in one-portion packages. Make sure that everyone receives a proper meal: the vegan option should not simply be a cold garnish or salad but a substantial warm meal.

6. **Waste management:** bins should be provided to separate waste, and should be labelled in a clear and understandable way; try to reduce waste throughout your project.

7. **Advertising:** ideally, all printed products, such as posters, publications and advertising should be printed on eco-friendly paper or cardboard.

A reminder about diets

- Vegetarians DO NOT eat: any kind of meat (ham, salami, smoked meat, fish, chicken, fat, bacon, meat broth or meat gravy). Vegetarians also need a balanced diet (legume, grains, fresh vegetables, seeds, tofu and tempeh).
- Vegans DO NOT eat: any animal products: meat (see above, milk products, eggs, cheese or honey).
- Gluten intolerants DO NOT eat: any form of gluten, a protein ingredient in all types of grains (except millet); rice or corn products can substitute grains.
- Lactose intolerants DO NOT eat: milk or cheese with lactose; try to provide lactose-free milk (for example, made from soya or rice).

2.7 Make it visible

When you plan the project, do not overlook the visual aspects of it. You might need to present the project to your donors or other stakeholders who are interested in following its progress, or you might want to promote the training while looking for participants. A visual message is often the strongest!

Take photos

No matter how small your training session is, always take pictures, although do not forget to ask the participants for their permission to use the pictures. Explain how the photos will be used: are they only meant for the organisation's internal communication or will they be published on the website and social media?
Social media is a very good tool for spreading a positive visual message as images can be processed much quicker than plain text and, by its very nature, the use of social media is often fast. If participants are okay with the photos being published on social media, you can update the organisations' Facebook, Twitter or Instagram page with the photos from the training sessions. The photos can be also used on the organisation's website and via internal communication channels. In the public sphere, high-quality photos showing energy and good spirit during the training provide very good PR for the organisation and the training in particular.
Encourage the participants to be active in social media, too, as they are the best way of promoting your training!

Make a video

If you want to publicise and spread the 'Green message' to a wider audience, you may want to make a video during your training. A good documentary video requires specific preparation – here are some useful tips:

- Make sure speakers and participants agree on their faces and voices being recorded, edited and broadcast.
- Remember that the video camera is much slower than the eye, it can only shift slowly from one speaker to another, and needs to focus. If you have two speakers, they will need to sit near each other so that you can film them both at the same time. Think about different camera angles that best suit filming your training.
- Video recording is not only pictures – it is sound, too! The built-on camera microphones can provide fairly good sound quality, although they record audience and background noise, too. Therefore, a designated microphone or, better still, a micro port is advisable. At public events, a microphone must be used at all times, even for questions from the audience, for instance.
- Take additional footage such as short interviews, activity shots and background scenes in addition to filming the main event. The camera should be rolling in the coffee breaks, too!
- The final edit of the video will include opening and end scenes and credits, the speakers' names and titles, and perhaps the most important one-liners highlighted. Add some music, a few funny cuts and you will have a good promotional video!
- Finally, when training sessions are video-recorded, the trainers must be subservient actors: the crew, whether organisers or camera staff, must set and direct the show.

2.8 Project plan

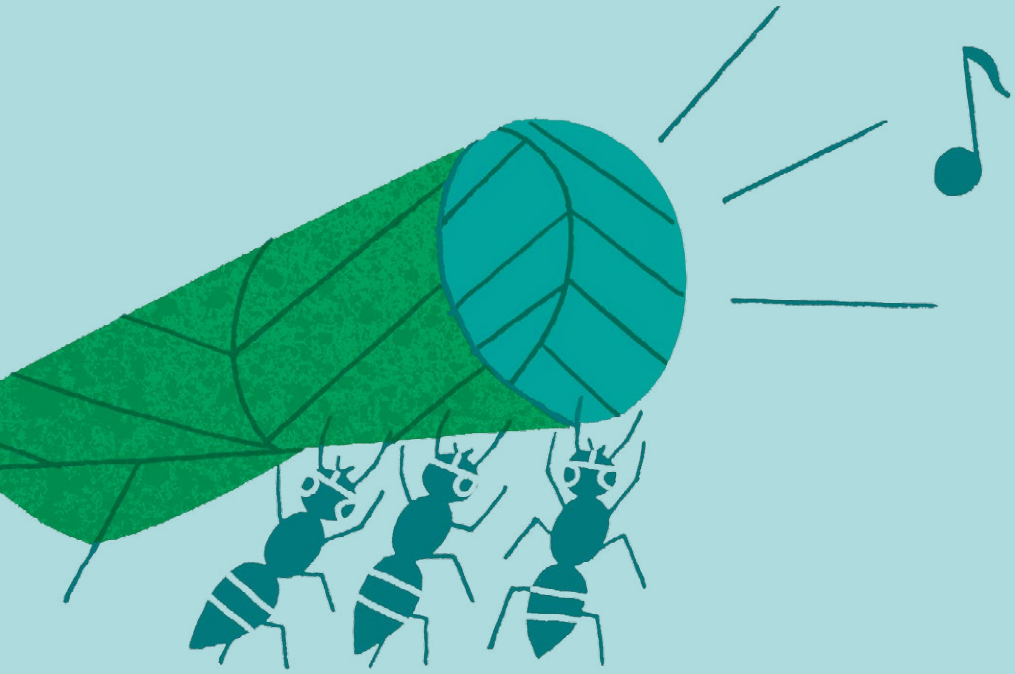
The final phase of the planning is to write down everything in one project plan, which is the best way to manage the project. It describes:

- How the project will be divided into phases;
- What sessions will be carried out in each phase;
- Who will carry out each session;
- How long will each session take;
- When the sessions will start and finish;
- What deliverables or end products will come from each session;
- The overall project budget.

A plan can be as simple as a list of tasks with names, dates and deliverables written on a sheet of paper, or a complex matrix of phases, tasks, dependencies, responsibilities, dates and costs. With good planning, you are ready for action!

3. Ready, steady, **implement!**

After extensive preparation, you are now ready to bring your training programme to life! In this phase, it is important to always keep in mind the objectives you have set out for your training programme. Whenever you are faced with a choice or dilemma, such as which topics to include in your training, or which criteria to focus on in the participants' selection process, going back to your main objectives will ensure that whatever choices you make, you will not compromise the original aim of the training. Ready? Steady? Implement!



3.1 Call for participants

It is time to take action. First, you need to find potential applicants and attract their attention through the call for participants. This call should sound appealing and present the training programme as a huge opportunity – and good fun, too!

Each call may vary, but certain things should always be included:

- Content of the training: what will the participants gain from the training?
- Duration of the training: how much time does it take, and when?
- Training fee: how much does it cost to participate?
- Participant criteria: who can apply?
- Instructions for applying: how can the application form be accessed and submitted?
- What is the application period?
- What is the preliminary agenda for the training?
- Who is organising it?
- What is the contact person for more information?

REMEMBER: Participants should know the dates of the training before applying, so include them in the call.

BEST PRACTICE:
Example of an e-application form

First name:
Last name:
Postal address:
Phone number:
E-mail address:
Date of birth:
Gender: Male | Female | Other | do not want to answer

Remember: when asking for gender, include the option to answer "other" or to not answer at all.

Main activity (choose):

- Student at comprehensive school
- Student at secondary school/high school
- Student at vocational school
- Student at university of applied sciences
- Student at university
- Working
- Other (for example, at home with children, unemployed, etc.)

Place of main activity (school and main subject, employer, etc.):

Describe your experience with the Greens:

Describe your experience with other NGOs or activism:

Tell us why you should be chosen to participate in the training *(for instance: why you want to participate and what you think you would gain from the training; where your motivation to participate comes from)*

Is there something else we should know?
(such as, disabilities, special diet, etc.)

Can we give your contact details to the local Green youth organisation to contact you?

Yes | No

By stating "yes", you confirm that everything you have written above is correct and that you commit to paying the participation fee, should you be accepted for the training. Similarly, you commit to participating in all the training sessions.

Send!

Confirmation page:

Thank you for your application! We will inform all applicants about the final selection by e-mail no later than date-month-year!

3.2 Promoting the call

The call must be promoted if you are to find the right people to participate.

Here are some suggestions on the best channels to reach out to the people you are looking for:

- **Mailing lists:** Green Party, Young Greens, regional Green Party organisations, Green Foundations.
- **Newsletters:** as above.
- **Facebook:** advertising through targeting, relevant Facebook groups, Facebook event.
- **Twitter:** advertising through targeting.
- **Green-minded NGOs:** environmental, equality and gender issues, relevant student groups.
- **YouTube:** produce a short video to advertise the call with known Green faces, and publicise it on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. If possible, show the video you filmed during the last training programme, too.
- **Direct marketing to potential participants:** if you know people who fit the participant profile, contact him/her directly.
- **Other social media channels:** Snapchat, Instagram, Periscope, etc.
- **Posters:** libraries, youth hostels, public spaces, etc. Public schools often have a policy of not accepting political marketing on their premises, but this must be checked on an individual basis.

HOW ABOUT: Create a promotion list

When organising Green Activists Training for the first time, it is worth creating a marketing list which can be used to promote the call. It should include all the relevant mailing lists, NGOs with contact details, student groups and other relevant interest groups, as well as other marketing channels. If you use paid marketing, for example on social media, also include the costs in the list. Once you have created the marketing list, the promotion will be much easier next time, as long as you remember to update the list from time to time.

BEST PRACTICE: Spreading the call for participants for the Accumulator training in the Czech Republic

Planning process

The contact list of umbrella organisations, where young people matching the participant profile for the Accumulator training could be found, was created. It included:

- The name of the organisation
- Website and Facebook page
- Name, email and phone number of the contact person
- Name of the person who recommended this organisation
- Information about feedback from the organisation

The list included high-school and university student clubs, environmental, human rights, volunteer and educational organisations, youth NGOs and

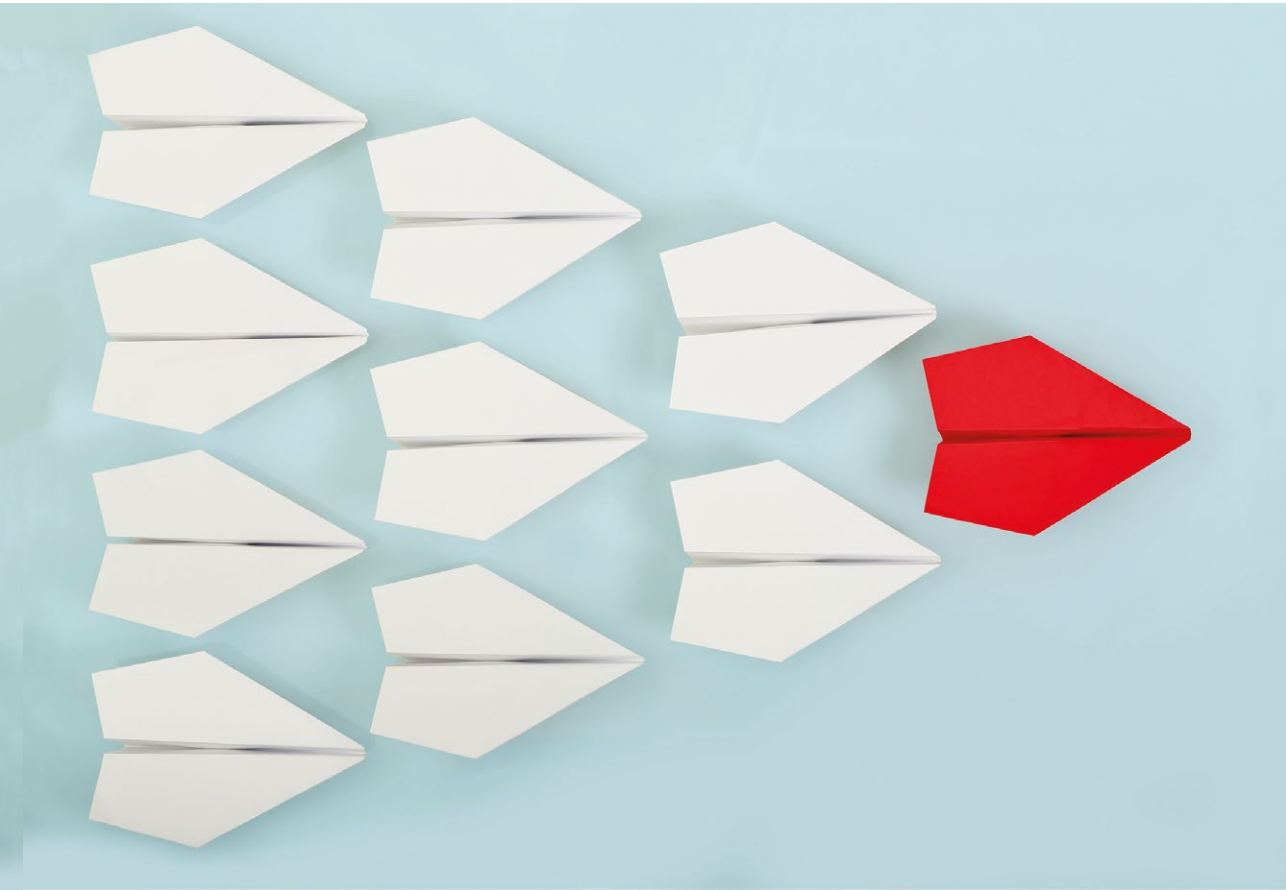
youth groups, NGOs working with migrants and other minorities, as well as networks for teachers.

The call for participants was published on the IAC website where all the necessary information could be found. At the same time, a paid Facebook advertisement on the Green Party Facebook page was launched.

Dissemination process

We asked the organisations to spread the call among their target group, and emphasised the need to identify specific individuals who might be interested in our training. The most effective way of promotion the call came from the Facebook advertisement, direct headhunting and contact with the project coordinator's colleagues from other training programmes.

The project coordinator spent a total of four hours each day for one week to promote the call for participants. As a result, we received 62 suitable applications for 20 places on our training, which is a very good result for our first attempt at training!



3.3 Selecting participants

This phase of the project could prove to be the most difficult. If you are lucky, you might receive over 50 great applications, all of whom fit perfectly into the desired participant profile and provide impressive motivation letters. Ranking people and then rejecting them is never easy, but is often necessary. The selection criteria and methods should be clear to all participants and other stakeholders to avoid confusion throughout the procedure.

Selection criteria

Selection criteria may include:

1. Motivation: this must come first. All the Green Activist Training programmes require participants with a great potential to learn and to play an active role in the Green movement.

2. Age: if the training is targeted at young people, the age limit could be defined between 15 to 25 years old. One aspect to keep in mind is the group dynamics in relation to age: if the age gap among your participants is quite high, you will need to be extra creative in your training methods in order to ensure that everyone can be addressed at their own level.

3. Previous experience: are you targeting complete newcomers or will the participants already have some political experience? If some experience or party membership is required, remember to state that in the call for participants.
Regional balance: do you want to involve people from smaller towns who may not have other channels to join the Green movement?

4. Gender balance: although there may be more applicants from one gender, balancing the group gender-wise is recommended – for instance, adhering to the principle that 40% of the participants should be either men or women. Always allow participants to choose "other" when enquiring about gender on your application forms.

5. Under-represented groups: one option for achieving a more diverse group of participants could be to target immigrants, the unemployed, people with vocational education, or those with disabilities. Your training is an opportunity to break stereotypes and reach out beyond your usual network.

Who selects the participants?

It is important to state clearly who has the right to select participants. Is it the coordinator, staff from your organisation, or are volunteers or stakeholders included in the selection process?

BEST PRACTICE: Selection of participants for Young Green Activists Training in Finland

The working group, which includes the coordinator, is responsible for the selection of participants. Following a meeting with the working team, the coordinator suggested the selection criteria, such as inclusive criteria of underage applicants, applicants from the regions, representatives of minorities and those with special needs, and motivation and aspiration for becoming active in solving problems within society.

During the selection process, working group members individually ranked each applicant on a scale from 0 to 3 according to the extent to which they matched the selection criteria (3 being the best, 0 the worst). Then they compared the rankings and negotiated which applicants would be selected. In cases where there was no agreement, the working group voted.

REMEMBER: Do not forget about rejected applicants

Unfortunately, not all applicants can be accepted on training programmes. Use a friendly tone when writing rejection letters while, at the same time, doing your best to inform them about other ways of being engaged in a Green context. Send them the contact details of the local Green Party organisation or Green Youth group, as well as information about upcoming events and activities that might be of interest. Never leave enthusiastic activists without any contacts!

3.4 Content

At the beginning of the project, you will have already set the objectives for the whole training programme. Now you need to do the same for each training session. What knowledge and skills do you want the participants to gain from it? What do you want to achieve with this one specific training session?

EU training sessions

Within the framework of the GEF project "Europeanising Green Activist Training 2015-2016", the partners organised simultaneous training sessions on the European Union in Finland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Austria. The idea was to equip the participants with the same level of knowledge before their international trip to Brussels.

Here are some of the objectives formulated for the EU sessions and the Brussels study tour:

- To gain general knowledge on EU decision-making and its institutions before the trip to Brussels;
- To get to know the Green Party family at the European level and understand the international nature and history of the Green movement and politics;
- To understand European identity and what it means to be an EU citizen.

From these objectives, the following content packages were identified for the national EU training sessions. The aim was to ensure that this content was similar in all the project countries, while also allowing for some national variations:

- **'What is Brussels?'** – structure of institutions, decision-making process, EU values and freedoms, EU history in a nutshell;
- **EU institutional triangles and main stakeholders;**
- **History of Green movement in Europe** and main Green actors at the European level;
- **Areas of competence:** understanding the activity areas in the European institutions and those dominated by national politics. This also includes a discussion on the EU budget and its implications for the country in question;
- **Understanding levels of policy-making** from grass-roots to regional, national, European and global level. Interactive session with an example from climate politics and different levels of activism related to it.
- **Active citizenship:** how can I influence policy-making? Empowering youth participation, especially at the European level.

BEST PRACTICE: The EU session of the Young Green Activists Training in Finland, 6-7 November 2015

Venue: Green Party office in Helsinki

FRIDAY

9.00 Warm-up (1 hour)
10.00 The Greens on a European level, Laura Nordström, Assistant to MEP Heidi Hautala (1.5 hours)
11.30 EU in a nutshell: decision-making within EU institutions, Nora Westerlund, former Assistant to former MEP Tarja Cronberg (1 hour)
14.00 Visit to the Finnish office of the European Commission, presentation on EU budget and competencies (2 hours)
16.30 The EU and refugees, Susanna Mehtonen, Amnesty international (2 hours)

SATURDAY

10.00 Climate politics on a global, European, national and local level (interactive session), Jonas Biström, Climate Advisor from Kepa (2 hours)
13.30 Youth & Active Citizenship: how can I influence policy-making? Christian Beck, Assistant to German MEP Sven Giegold (1.5 hours)
15.00 Being a Finnish young Green in Europe, Teo Kortman, Spokesperson of the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG) (1 hour)
16.00 Reflection and closing remarks (0.5 hours)

HOW ABOUT:

When you invite a person from the Green Party with long-term experience in European politics, allow her/him not just time to give a speech, but also factor in some spare time for interactive workshops, comments on real-life stories and discussions. If possible, invite the guest to attend other sessions on the training, too, so that they can enrich the overall programme.

HOW ABOUT:

Try including the European aspect in each national training day as Europe is not just a remote concept but also affects almost all local policy issues.

Training methods

1. Try effective but fun learning methods

The training is designed for young activists and the organisers are there to support the participants' learning in every possible way. You can ensure participants get the most from the trainings by reflecting on their learning needs and different learning styles by employing a rich variety of experiential, inclusive, participative and challenging methods.

2. Choosing the best method

We can choose from a rich variety of methods that will encourage participants to be more engaged, responsible for their learning and supportive during teamwork. But what is the best method?

David Kolb studied learning cycles and came up with a theory of different learning styles. According to Kolb's theory, we can assume there will be different types of people in each participant group: activists, pragmatists, reflectors and theorists.

- **Activists** learn best through active experimentation when they plan or try out what they have learned. They like to experiment, solve problems and seize new opportunities. They love to be part of games, teamwork or role-play. They do not like passive learning styles and individual work.

- **Pragmatists** need concrete experience of practising learned things. They need to see connections between the specific content of an activity and the reality whereby they can implement what they have learned. They get frustrated during theoretical and not practically oriented learning.

- **Reflectors** want to review and reflect on their learning experience. They love to look back and think about what they have learnt and they are not okay with concise conclusions and interrupted activities.

- **Theorists** require abstract conceptualisation, which enables them to make conclusions from their experience. They need a system, model situations and theories which frame their learning. They do not learn easily from emotional situations –in fact, such situations can be hard for them to handle.

In reality, each of us applies a combination of learning styles. By presenting different methods and enabling participants to reflect on their individual learning habits, you give them the opportunity to recognise and develop their own preferred learning style and empower their crucial learning-to-learn lifelong key competence.

Non-formal Education Methods and Activities

	Energiser activity	Name game activity	Ice-breaker activity
Short description	Very short activity for energising participants or interrupting a distracting process in the group.	Short activity for learning the names of each participant.	Helps participants to get to know each other and bring the group closer together. At the same time, it enables the participants to introduce themselves.
Example	**Tornado** When the facilitator says "tornado", participants must change seats very quickly under certain conditions such as not sitting next to the same person as before/a participant from the same country, etc..	**Name and adjective** Each participant says her/his name and adds an adjective which starts with the same letter as their name, e.g. creative Clara. They proceed one by one, the next person repeats names and adjectives of those who have already spoken and adds her/his name and an adjective to the list.	**Speed dating** Participants are given an interesting question to answer in pairs for a few minutes, e.g. "What is your secret dream?" – then they change the pair and discuss another interesting question.
When to use this method or activity	Before a session or after it, not in the middle of the learning process. Recommended for use every time before you start a new session.	Ideally at the beginning of the training, or alternatively in the morning of the second day of training to refresh the names. The game can also be played each time someone new joins the group.	At the beginning of the programme, before you start with the training content, when the participants in the group still need to get to know each other.
When not to use this method or activity	Be sensitive about the level of formality in your group. It is important to ensure a safe and relaxed environment in order to enjoy playful energising. Do not start with singing and dancing energisers in a group where people do not know each other.	Name games can become irritating in the middle or at the end of the training when participants already know everyone's name.	Ice-breakers can become irritating in the middle or at the end of the training when participants want to get more information about the topics and content of the training.

Group-building activity	Group-work method	Buzz-group method	Role-play method
Activity for connecting and forming the group. Participants learn about their role and role of others, and rules of cooperation are being established.	Method which enables fruitful participation of everybody, and supports sharing and learning from each other.	This is a group method which enables the full participation of each member of the group. There is no facilitator and no presentation is required after the buzz group method; each group is fully responsible for what happens in the process.	Participants are given some roles and a plot for the story is set out. Participants read the description of their roles and their tasks and act accordingly.
Mission impossible Participants get several tasks to solve in a very limited time, usually 30 minutes (e.g. compose a song about the training topic, take pictures with five local people or places, draw a map of the area, etc.). They need to do it as a group. After 30 minutes, they present their results to the organisers. A reflection on the roles and the strategy of the group is recommended after the activity.	**Learning puzzle** Each member of the participants´ 'base' group represents a different number, e.g. 1, 2, 3 or 4. There are four study groups, the same numbers form a new group and study a piece of content together. After some time they come back to their original base group and share with the others what they have learned in their study group.	**World café** Several stations are set up; the participants come to each station in small groups and spend several minutes discussing the task in their area. After they complete one task, they move to another station and, one by one, all groups explore all the stations. This method enables them to systematise, summarise and clarify what they have learned.	**Can I come in?** Role play about a group of refugees trying to escape to another country. A storyteller reads the story and gives participants the roles of refugees, border police or observers. Participants are given time to act according to their roles, develop the story, and to interact with each other. A debriefing of the activity follows the role play.
At the beginning of the training or any time you need to ensure trust and cooperation within the group. These activities can be followed by working on the learning agreements, which will be formulated by the participants and displayed in a visible place in the seminar room.	At any time, but be careful that the method of group work is combined with individual work and work in a big group.	Use this method in the second half of the training. Buzz groups require responsibility and no interference by the facilitator. Consider whether or not participants are dedicated to the learning process and if they will use the freedom of learning by themselves responsibly.	When the group has been created and a safe environment is ensured. Make sure that everybody understands that it is only a simulation and that the role play process is rounded up well and every participant handles his/her emotions appropriately.
Group-building activities can become irritating in the middle or at the end of the training when participants prefer to get more content on the training. If the group is going through a storming process, consider them carefully. Always make sure that the group understands why this type of activity is important for their fruitful cooperation.	If the content is too heavy or the task to complicated, it might be better to facilitate and guide the process. If the group is going through a brain- storming process, ensure that all the energetic people are not in the same group, and that some rules of cooperation are known and respected by everybody.	Not recommended during the group's brain-storming process.	Do not use this method at the beginning of the training, when the participants have yet to trust one another. Be careful about unexpected disturbing moments, rooted in a participant's past, and think about all the possible developments within this activity. A facilitator with qualifications in psychology is recommended to implement to role play.

Simulation method	Presentation method	Field-trip method	Discussion method
Simulation is similar to the role-play method but enables participants to choose the role, and develop the role's character and behaviour. Simulation can be used as a laboratory for practising situations, reactions or skills.	Known particularly as a PowerPoint presentation on a particular topic. The presenter delivers a huge amount of content using prepared material. It is a frontal way of delivering information when one person speaks and the others listen.	Practically-oriented fieldwork visit where participants meet the experts and practitioners, listen to presentations about their work and observe their work.	Activity which can be used for any kind of co-creation or feedback moment in the project.
Campaigning simulation Participants are given the task to choose a topic they would like to campaign for. They spend two hours preparing to campaign on this topic in public. They are taken out of the seminar room and given the opportunity to practise in a simulated environment. Afterwards, a reflection on this activity is essential for them to realise what they have learned.	**Presentation on European history** An expert describes and explains fundamental events in the history of the EU.	**Visit to the European Parliament** Participants visit the European Parliament and meet the MEPs who talk about their very own experience. Space for commenting, challenging and shaping opinions, clarifying presented tasks and theories. Everybody involved in the discussion should be aware of general recommendations for keeping the process fruitful, such as listening to and respecting each other, not being afraid to ask, articulating (only) the essential information, etc.	**Discussion in small groups** Participants are divided into small groups and given a task to discuss e.g. "Come up with five essential rules for our group work".
In the second half of the training when participants feel confident about themselves and are ready to face challenges.	In the first half of the day when participants are not too tired to focus on the presentation.	When going on a field trip, make sure that the group is aware of what they have learnt and that they understand what they can get out of the field trip.	Any time and very often: make sure participants respect each other, are not shy and are ready to contribute with their opinions.
Definitely not recommended at the beginning of the training.	Do not use the presentation method too often as this form of delivering information can get very tiring. Ensure some follow-up such as a discussion or teamwork so that participants can get to know the topic and experience it by themselves.	At the beginning of the training when you should give the group more space to develop and let the participants set their own learning goals.	When a discussion does not fulfil the objective of the activity, it is misleading and participants will not listen to or respect each other.

Brainstorming method	Open-space activity	Self-reflection method
This method is focused on gathering as many ideas as possible. Everybody contributes, and the facilitator writes everything down without commenting or evaluating the given suggestions. In the second phase, the group can analyse and choose the best ideas.	Very participative and democratic method whereby participants are facilitators at the same time. Open space enables them to share their personal experience and is based on peer-to-peer learning. Participants suggest workshops they would like to run and put them in a time schedule. There are several workshops running simultaneously. The other participants then choose which one they want to attend.	Looking back and reflecting on learning experience. Participants get time for themselves to evaluate what they have already learned.
Brainstorming about the character of the ideal politician "What would the ideal politician be like?" Participants formulate their ideas then group them and create a profile of their ideal politician.	**Open space about media competences** The first participant suggests a workshop on writing a press release, a second one on critical reading and a third one on public speaking. As mentioned above, all the workshops run at the same time but in different spots and the other participants are able to choose which one they want to attend.	**Reflection groups** Reflection groups meet in the evening and check what they have learnt: "What did you learn today? What do you need to learn to understand the EU better?"
Appropriate at the beginning of a session and in the first half of the programme.	At the very end of the training when the group is well prepared and confident enough for peer-to-peer learning.	Very useful at the beginning and end of the learning process. At the beginning, participants realise what they need to learn, and after the activity they evaluate their learning.
Brainstorming will not work in a group of participants who are not motivated to contribute with their own ideas and share them in a big group.	Do not apply this method at the beginning of the training. As a facilitator you should be aware of the sharing potential of the group and motivate the group to suggest their own sessions.	Reflection should take place when the activity is finished in order to have the full experience with the topic and the possibility to evaluate individual learning.

Important to take into account:

- **The training programme comprises many activities.** Therefore, the educators should ensure that various methods are used during the activities and that they present a dynamic and entertaining programme to the participants. The road to success is a diversity of methods!

- **You can innovate and shape the methods by using different techniques** (artistic techniques, outdoor activity, games and other tools, sport, music, etc.). For example, you can implement the methods outside, perhaps in a garden and task the participants with expressing the outcome of their discussions through land art techniques; alternatively, you can use flip-chart papers, etc.

- **Methods are not universal or redemptive.** You need to choose them carefully according to your participants' needs and the learning objectives of the training in question. Unfortunately, it often happens that the facilitator chooses a specific method she/he personally likes, without checking whether or not the method corresponds with the learning objectives of the training. The chosen method should always reflect the needs of the group and enough time or the required environment should be made available for the chosen method. If the objective of one session is, for example, to make the participants think about their role in hate speech situations and the method chosen is the role-play method, acting out a scene on discrimination in the classroom, some participants might be personally affected should there be socially excluded youngsters in the group. As a result, not only would the objective of the training session be missed, but certain participants would also be upset.

HOW ABOUT:
Practise the methods

Using a new method requires a lot of practising. Go through the method initially as a participant and explore its dimensions, strengths and weaknesses, understand its timing, the required environment and all the conditions for reaching your learning objective by applying this method. It is recommended to think about hiring a professional who could facilitate the activities for you and ensure that the best methods for supporting your participants' learning will be chosen.

Trainers and speakers

Once the agenda has been set up, it is time to find the best trainers and speakers. As the content is often related to Green politics, it is worth considering Green specialists, although professionals outside the Green family should also be kept in mind. Here are some suggestions:

Finding trainers and speakers

- **MPs and MEPs and their staff, Green politicians:** know-how on activism and decision-making at the national and/or European level, political topics;
- **Green Party staff with different know-how:** media relations, political secretaries, campaigning, etc.
- **Board/council members of the Green Party:** how does the Green Party work, how can Green politics be influenced;
- **Green local councillors:** how to be influential at the local level, local political topics;
- **Green Youth staff and members:** Young Greens often attend and organise various events based on non-formal and peer-to-peer education (Green topics, political skills and competences);
- **External experts,** such as European Commission officials, national government or local city personnel, professionals from NGOs, trainers for speaking and performing skills, and so on.

HOW ABOUT: Creating a trainers' database

Every organisation offering education to Greens should have a trainers' database with contact details, training topics and profiles of the trainers. Creating one takes some effort, but once it has been set up it will be a lot easier to find the right speakers – especially external coordinators who do not necessarily have knowledge of all the trainers your organisation has worked with in the past. The database also functions as the organisation's memory, since from time to time its employees might change.

The Green European Foundation (GEF) maintains the European trainers' database, which includes trainers from different European countries. The database is shared with all the GEF partners, and is well worth checking when searching for international speakers.

Training materials

When choosing the material on which to base your training content you could consider some of the following sources:

1. Green European Foundation publications

The GEF regularly publishes information on European topics, as well as books and articles which provide insight into the most pressing issues in the Green family in Europe. Tools you could use in your training include: *Europe for Beginners, A Green Guide to the EU*: available in several languages, this guide will lead your participants through the European institutions and history of the EU to help them better understand how it functions. Furthermore, the publication highlights the Greens' alternative proposals and actions that could make the EU a more democratic and transparent project. Europe for Beginners is available in English, Spanish, German, French, Hungarian and Czech.
The Green European Journal is published by the Green European Foundation which was launched at the beginning of 2011 with the aim of providing a space for discussion within the European Green movement, and a way of engaging the public in the wider debate about the future direction of Europe. The journal can be used as a source of information, analysis and as a potential pool of experts on a specific topic.

2. Heinrich-Böll-Foundation

Likewise, the German Heinrich-Böll-Foundation produces various publications, videos, research items and articles on its website. Most of the publications are in English, but some include translations into other languages. One example is the Meat Atlas - Facts and figures about the animals we eat, available online or in a printed version in Spanish, Czech and French.

3. Official EU information packages

The European Union offers a wide range of official publications and visuals on the EU. All publications can be found, downloaded and ordered from the EU Bookshop; most include translations in various languages. They can be ordered directly from the EU Bookshop or from national EU offices – the latter also publish their own material.

4. EU studies in universities

The International and European Studies Departments in national universities provide excellent teaching materials. Here are a few selected examples where free-of-charge studies can be downloaded:

- Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)
- Institute for European Studies (IES)
- University Association for Contemporary European Studies
- EU laws and publications.

Warming-up

Once the participants have been selected and you are awaiting the first training session, it is time to organise a warm-up to break the ice and inspire participants before the first meeting:

1. Sending a 'welcome' email is a must: introduce yourself and the team, tell participants how happy you are that you will be working together and increase the sense of responsibility by explaining the selection process and reasons why you preferred them to other participants. We do not put participants' email addresses into blind carbon copy but make them visible to others. Participants will soon meet face-to-face and this is a simple way to step away from anonymity and initiate a small community.

2. Create a social media platform (Facebook group): this is an easy way to bring participants together before the training starts. You can use email to share important information, while a closed Facebook group can be used as a space for sharing less formal content. Within the group, you can share information about the places you are going to meet, profiles of the guest speakers, pictures and reports from previous projects, etc.

3. Ideas for warm-up activities include:
- Ask participants to share small profiles of each other on Facebook or via email;
- Encourage participants to think about their motivation to become active change-makers. You can give them the task of bringing something that symbolises active citizenship or ask them to send you a photo of them being active in their society;
- Prepare participants for the programme and encourage them to think about their experience with active citizenship. Tell them to create a list of the community activities they have participated in and ask them to identify and describe their role in these activities. You can also ask them about the issues that most outrage them. During the training you can follow-up on these preparations and let them build on their experiences by using the training content;

4. Invite participants to present the region they come from through local and homemade products which can be shared during the training breaks. This activity gives participants an opportunity to present the area they come from, which can be a very enriching experience.

5. Ask participants to fill in a questionnaire about their arrival and departure times and enquire (sensitively) about their special needs (e.g. dietary needs, needs connected to practising their religion, physical challenges, etc.);

6. Send a detailed information package to participants at least a week before the training. Remind them about the task(s) which have already been allocated, repeat important practicalities, make them curious about the training programme, and share contacts of those responsible for the training.

3.5 Communication

A great deal of your success will depend on the communication you have with the various stakeholders, such as:

- **Your project team:** making sure that everyone's goals are aligned until the end of the project, that your volunteers are still motivated even after a more intensive work period and that unresolved tensions do not appear in the team are key to success. One idea could be to take time out for team meetings – this could be more formal, or simply going out for a lunch regularly – to get an idea about everyone's feelings and to stimulate communication;

- **Participants:** regular communication with participants is not only a must when it comes to transmitting relevant information on the training, but it can also play an important role in motivating them. If they have to wait for a few weeks between the selection and the actual training, communicating with them and providing a platform where everyone can communicate with one another can also help to maintain their engagement and motivation;

- **Funders:** keeping your funders informed about your project development is extremely important. Do not wait until they come to you asking for information, but establish (possibly with them) the level of detail they require about this project.

3.6 Administration

Venue and catering booked, participants informed, everything's ready ... no, not quite. Administration might be boring, but without it the training will surely fail.

Set up the venue

Some aspects should be planed beforehand concerning setting up the training venue. If you are going to record the training, check the section on making a video on page 27. Otherwise, here are tips for creating a pleasant venue:

- **Frontal lectures** take place in a classroom setting, the audience looks in one direction at the trainer. Make sure they can see the stage well with the blackboard, flip-chart or projection screen. Visual support must be large enough to see and simple enough to comprehend.

- **Non-formal education trainers** usually prefer a circular setting where the speaker is part of the group and everyone can maintain eye contact. Try to avoid a second row in a circular setting. Also, when sitting in a circle, the visuals must be visible for everyone so some may have to move their chairs.

During a training session, all participants must be able to see and hear each other. Sound amplification, microphones or loudspeakers could be needed, depending on the group size and venue. Ideally, the room should be comfortable, light, inspiring and able to steer the participants' attention inwards. The world outside the windows may divert their interest: you could sit out in a quiet park or on a terrace, but not next to a playground.

Think about accessibility: make sure the lifts work and the venue is easy to reach. Check the venue beforehand! Never leave this task until the training day.

Checklist for administration

The training is about to start – have you remembered everything? Here is a checklist:

- Have you asked about special diets and informed the caterer accordingly?
- Have you sent the participants the necessary information on how to get to the venue? Is it easy to find with your instructions or should you point out something else to aid their journey?
- Have you checked whether the venue is accessible?
- Have you checked if the venue has all the equipment you need (video projector, printer, enough chairs, markers, post-its and flip-chart)? Remember to bring along those items not included in the room rental.
- Remember to print and place signs outside the venue to indicate the exact meeting place.

- Have you printed the hand-outs and prepared all the material that will be distributed to participants?
- In the case of multiple locations, have you checked that there is enough time in the programme for moving from place to place? With a large group, for instance, lunch in a restaurant might take some time. Are there participants with disabilities for whom you need to make special arrangements?
- Have you gathered the phone numbers of speakers and participants in case you need to contact them?
- Are you going to prepare name tags for everyone?

REMEMBER:
In case of emergency

Check the emergency issues at the venue beforehand: where is the first aid kit? Do you have several taxi numbers if you need to call one? Are you familiar with the safety instructions at the venue, and do you know where all the exits are? If you need to assist a person in case of emergency, is there another person to take care of the group in your absence? You might also consider the possibility of participating in a basic first aid course.

3.7 Training day!

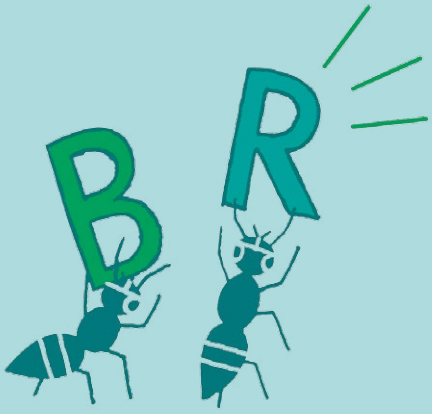
Finally, training day has arrived! Everything should be planned beforehand so that the day runs as smoothly as possible. However, something unexpected may happen: a speaker may cancel at the last minute and you might need to rush to find a replacement, or the meal order is not correct and some participants do not have anything to eat. You never know what might happen!

You should ensure that there are enough organisers present to help with any unexpected events. Helping hands are often necessary at the beginning, when you need to prepare the coffee or coordinate the caterer, arrange the meeting room, welcome participants and speakers and so on. This is a good job for volunteers, if you have any.

If something unexpected does happen and there are not enough helping hands at the time, think about who you could call for help: can you call your colleagues or someone from the project team?

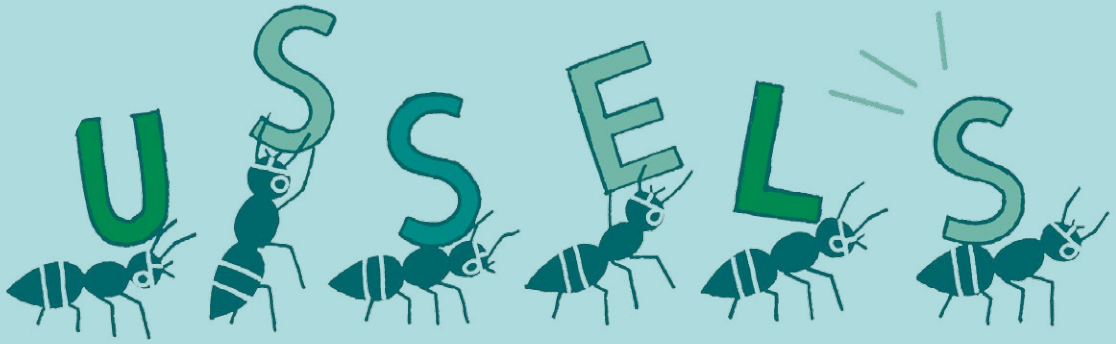
And finally, it is time for some action! Good luck!

4. Guide to the **Brussels study tour**



The Brussels study tour is the pinnacle of the European dimension of Green Activists Training programme. Participants from partner countries travel abroad not only to gain direct experience with the EU, the Green Party and other views but also to network and interact with other young activists in order to deepen their European identity.

National training programmes cover an introduction to EU topics and help participants get a clearer picture of European politics when visiting the European Parliament in Brussels.



Brussels study tour objectives:

- To allow young people from different countries to meet each other and interact on Green topics;
- To provide deeper insights into EU decision-making processes and Green politics in practice;
- To create a true feeling of European identity;
- To get the feeling of togetherness with the Greens, so that participants want to stay in the movement after the training;
- To experience the international aspect of being a Green;
- To get to know other viewpoints outside of the Greens, providing a toolkit of information for creating valid arguments;
- To explore Brussels in an international context and, last but not least, to have fun!

4.1 Planning the study tour

Start planning the study tour as early as possible, preferably at least six months beforehand. This is particularly important for getting the financial support needed and for booking the venues and speakers.

BEST PRACTICE: The organisers visited the main venues in Brussels ahead of the actual trip, which contributed towards identifying any potential challenges and making the experience a success!

When and for how long?

The best time to go to Brussels and visit the European Parliament is when the MEPs are there. There are two possible weeks out of four European Parliament schedule weeks: the "Committee week" and the "Group week". During the remaining two weeks, the MEPs are either in Strasbourg or visiting their home countries. However, bear in mind that during the Committee week it is very hard to reserve rooms for a large group since the committees need them. During the Group week, it is best to visit the European Parliament on Thursday and Friday which leaves the possibility to do other visits at the beginning of the week, such as visiting the Parlamentarium, Green organisations or NGOs.

The study tour should last long enough for training sessions as well as evening activities and free time: three to five days is highly recommended in Brussels, excluding travel time.

THINK ABOUT: Length of each group's stay

If possible, try to fix the same arrival and departure dates for the whole transnational group, to facilitate the common sessions and to strengthen relationships among the participants. However, bear in mind that the holiday, work and exam periods may vary among the participating countries, which will make unification of the dates harder.

Finances

The MEPs sponsor groups visiting the European Parliament. This support is **essential** for the Brussels study tour since it covers travel and accommodation costs. Contact MEP offices early and ask for your group to be sponsored.

How does MEP sponsoring work?
MEP sponsoring for a visitor covers €60 for accommodation and €40 for meals per participant (in 2016). In addition, each participant's travel costs are covered based on the distance in a straight line from the point of departure is covered at a rate of €0.18 per kilometre. The distance is calculated on the average distance of the whole visiting group.
The support depends on the number of people checked in during the European Parliament visit. Thus, it is crucial that every participant is present at the official presentation of the European Parliament.

The payment is made on the day of the visit to the European Parliament, for which the documents listed in the confirmation letter are required. The payment can be made to a non-political account or in cash. Transfer to an account requires a certificate of the ownership of that account.

REMEMBER:

When you put register participants' names with the European Parliament, remember to include their **postal addresses**, as the money will come accordingly!

BEST PRACTICE: Finding a MEP to sponsor you

If the participating country does not have a Green MEP, as was the case for the Czech Republic group in 2016, it is possible to get support from other Green MEPs. In 2016, German MEP Sven Giegold funded the Czech participants.

Preparation before the trip

To make it possible for everyone to participate in discussions with MEPs, experts and activists, it is essential for all the participants to reach the same level of knowledge. Content of the national training sessions on European topics should be refreshed just before the study tour to Brussels.

REMEMBER: Refresh shared knowledge

Provide participants with the GEF publication "Europe for Beginners" and share more about the speakers they are going to meet. In Brussels, we recommend starting the programme with a visit to the European Parliament's interactive exhibition which guides visitors through the European integration journey and the impact it has had.

Encourage participants to introduce themselves and get to know each other before the tour begins. You can set up the Facebook group for all the participants. The vibes of upcoming meetings can be felt through the info pack, an official document with practical information in English which suggests that this experience will soon become international.

BEST PRACTICE: Austrian preparations for Brussels

Since it was not possible to organise an EU-themed national training session at the same time as other countries, the Austrian participants had a two-day crash course just before leaving for Brussels in 2016. Guests from the European Parliament were invited to the training. First, the participants were given a general introduction to the basic European institutions and instruments, before receiving a brief overview of the history of the Greens at the European level. The following day built upon the input on EU institutions and European asylum politics and policies. The crash course was also a good way to prepare for the actual study tour and to go through the practical details.

The programme in Brussels

Start planning the programme as early as possible, ideally at least six months before. Keep in mind the number of participants when planning parallel sessions and contacting trainers and speakers. MEPs' assistants are very valuable when it comes to planning the practicalities.

HOW ABOUT: Organising a programme outside Brussels, too

If there is time, visit the municipalities around Brussels for a wider viewpoint, as well as a great opportunity to take in some tourist attractions at the same time!

REMEMBER:

Reserve enough time to go through the security check in the European Parliament; mark this in the programme.

REMEMBER: Provide some free time

The programme does not need to be filled with activities – it is important to schedule enough free time for the participants, during the day, too! However, for example, you can encourage the participants to go sightseeing together in transnational groups.

BEST PRACTICE:

Simplified programme of Brussels study tour 2016 (Finland, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic)

	Monday 18 April	Tuesday 19 April	Wednesday 20 April	Thursday 21 April	Friday 22 April
Morning		▸ Visit to the European Parliament ▸ National programme ▸ Meeting the MEPs	▸ Parallel programmes (NGOs) ▸ Ska Keller	▸ Visit to the European Commission	▸ Departure day
Noon		▸ Lunch	▸ Lunch	▸ Lunch	
Afternoon	▸ Arrival in Brussels	▸ European Green Party ▸ Green European Foundation session ▸ Federation of Young Greens (FYEG) ▸ Demonstration outside	▸ Visit to the Parlamentarium ▸ Austrian and Hungarian groups leave	▸ Final reflections ▸ National programme ▸ Free time	
Evening	▸ Welcome drinks + dinner	▸ Party and dinner with FYEG	▸ Dinner with the remaining groups	▸ Free time	

Coordinating the study tour

Divide the responsibility with other coordinators before and during the study tour. Here are some tips for Brussels:

- Coordinators' breakfast: if possible, have a breakfast meeting every day to go through the day's programme and allocation of responsibilities;
- Two coordinators per country if possible – more hands and minds on deck;
- Stick to the plan, be on time and give a good example to the participants;
- Have everyone's phone numbers to hand; consider buying a Belgian prepaid SIM card;
- Reserve enough time for moving between venues;
- Prepare info packs for the participants with the programme, map of Brussels, important addresses and phone numbers, and possibly info about EP and Green organisations.

Rules for the trip

It is important to lay down rules for participants to follow on the study tour. These rules may vary between different training sessions but the following should always be included:

- Be on time;
- Respect the speakers and other participants.

HOW ABOUT:

Set the rules together with the participants. They can come up with different rules or guidelines for the trip in small groups and then share them with others; and everyone can then promise to engage with the rules.

Allowing the participants to take part in the process makes them more committed to the outcome.

4.2 Practicalities

Getting there

The journey to Brussels can be part of the international and Green experience. Experiment with the means of transport and try train, ferry or bus. Flying is fast but not eco-friendly and the group-building aspect is absent in large aircrafts.

BEST PRACTICE: Ferry and bus trip from Finland to Brussels

In 2016, the Finnish group travelled for 48 hours from Helsinki to Brussels by chartered bus and ferry boat. The journey was long but it strengthened the group spirit, and it was also possible to arrange activities during the journey. All expenses were budgeted according to MEP visitors' support so no other funds were needed.

HOW ABOUT: Combining forces!

How about sharing a bus for two groups, to make the trip more international? One group could pick up the other one on the way and participants can start sharing their experiences from the very beginning.

Accommodation

Take the opportunity to share the same accommodation with several groups and book a cheaper hotel or hostel well in advance. Living in the same place supports the project's international dimension and brings participants closer together. However, do not forget that MEP visitors' support is a fixed amount and does not change according to the number of nights stayed. If you are planning to stay in Brussels for several nights and to organise the study tour, the accommodation should not be too expensive. For that reason, hostels or cheap hotels are affordable options.

BEST PRACTICE:
Mix the groups up

Mixing the nationalities in the hostel dorms or even in double rooms enables participants to interact on a daily basis without the involvement of the organisers. This is the most natural way to get to know each other.

Meals

Providing satisfactory meals for your group requires some advanced planning. In Brussels, the same principles apply to the meals as in national training organisation. See page 25 (greening the catering)!
However, when travelling, eating well is crucial, so here is a tip:
Big breakfast, little lunch, slow supper! It is likely that during travelling or the packed study tour days there will be little or no time for a proper slow-food lunch. So even if they are not particularly hungry at breakfast, encourage participants to eat enough to last them until dinner! For a midday lunch, pick a more cost-effective and fast self-service restaurant in advance – there are plenty in downtown Brussels or near the European Parliament that also provide for special dietary needs. The only real slow-food event can be the group dinner, in particular, when buffets are recommended.

THINK ABOUT:
Mix the groups up

A practical consideration: if the study tour organiser is covering the cost of the meal, either a cash/card payment is agreed with the restaurant or an invoice is requested. The participants can also receive a €10-20 lump sum as a meal allowance which is both documentable and reasonable.

Venues

During the study tour the participants frequently need to interact with the hosts and each other, which requires proper meeting rooms. Here are some tips:

- **Early bird catches the worm:** ask for venues in Brussels as early as possible, especially for a large group as the rooms at the European Parliament and in other locations in Brussels may be snapped up before you notice!

- **The ideal meeting room:** check ideas given in the handbook on page 49 (administration), and do not hesitate to use public spaces or venues.

- **Rooms in the EP:** meeting, seminar and committee rooms are available in the European Parliament, although most are furnished with built-in circular desks or theatre sit-up seats. To book, think well in advance and bear in mind that the Parliament's own committees are always a priority compared with your study tour.

- **Check-in and no WANDERING:** the European Parliament building is a huge labyrinth, so parties must arrive well in advance for the security check, and must know exactly where the rooms are booked and the room numbers. Visitors are not allowed to wander alone inside the Parliament building. For a faster check-in a participant list must be submitted two weeks in advance; all participants are required to show an ID card, wear a visitor's badge and also be ready to pass an airport-like security check at the entrance. A participant list is also required for travel reimbursement if the study tour is sponsored through an MEP.

- **Meeting in town:** the hotel lobby or restaurants are not ideal 'classrooms' for training activities. If you are planning interactive group exercises, you will need to find and book special meeting rooms for that. Several NGOs have their headquarters in Brussels, and several co-working or conference rooms are also available.

HOW ABOUT: Use the equipment in the EP rooms and have simultaneous interpretation as in real meetings.

Transport in Brussels

As in all large cities, moving around Brussels in a large group can bring certain challenges. Here are some tips:

- **Take a map!** Trivial – or maybe not – but all participants must carry a proper agenda, address and contact list, as well as a map. Ideally, they should have everything in a small study tour guidebook, and possibly a smartphone PDF version, too. The maps can be created on Google Maps, Yahoo maps or Here Maps/Here Transit.

- **Brussels on foot, or by metro-bus-tram!** The public transport system in the Belgian capital is very well developed. Ideally, all participants should receive a prepaid plastic MOBIB CARD. Transport in Brussels is just as safe, comfortable and reliable as in any other European city – just keep in mind that the group can go only as fast as its slowest member can or feels safe to go.

HOW ABOUT: Getting more tips on Brussels on use-it! http://brussels.use-it.travel/

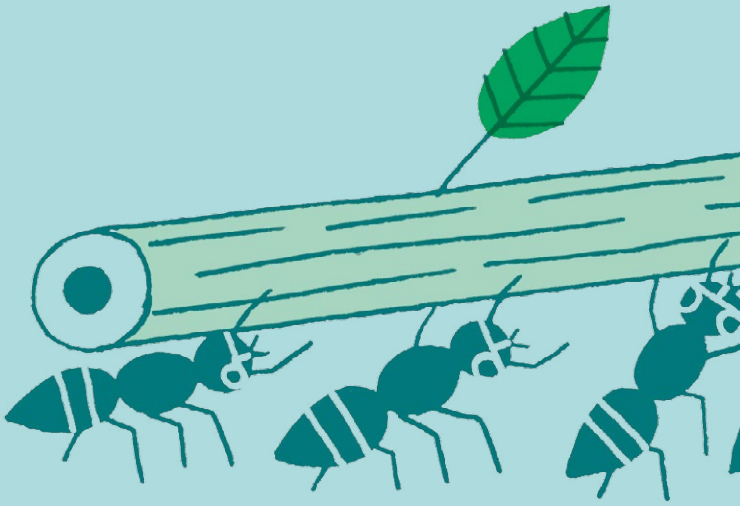
Evaluation

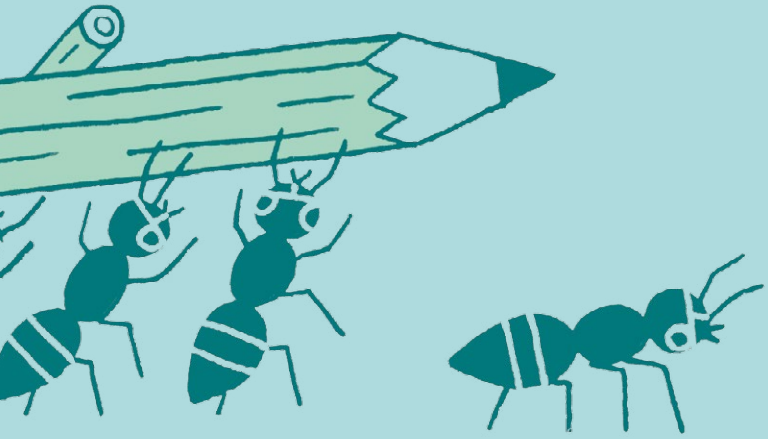
After the study trip, a final evaluation is necessary. A rich variety of evaluation methods make it possible for each participant to reflect on learning, group, practicalities, organisers and overall satisfaction with the study tour. Check out the different evaluation methods in Chapter V and learn how to select the right method. Do not forget to share the result of the evaluation with your organisation, write a well-prepared report and to use your knowledge as the basis for improving future training.

HOW ABOUT:
Go out and evaluate!

If the weather is pleasant, go into the park next to the Parliament building for a final evaluation with the participants. YES and NO boards could be installed for participants to use according to their opinion on the evaluation statements presented. Sunshine and an informal environment usually make it easier for participants to express themselves.

5. Evaluation





5.1 Evaluation with participants

As a team of organisers and facilitators, we need to know what it means for us to be successful in educating the participants, which is why it is essential to develop measurable indicators of success (see Chapter II on specifying the objectives).

Furthermore, it is very important to know how to ask the right questions. If you ask your participants if they liked or disliked this activity, you will not find out anything about their learning. A person does not need to feel comfortable with a challenging method to learn a lot from it. During evaluation, give participants enough space to reflect on what they have learnt so far. What did they discover about the training topic? Ask them to be as specific as possible.

Evaluation during the training day

The evaluation of the entire project has to be made separately from the actual training sessions. It is advisable to take time for reflection with the entire group at the end of each session. Here are some creative tools for non-formal education evaluation that help evaluate whether or not the learning objectives are being reached:

- **Evaluation pizza:** learning objectives are divided into several segments in a similar way to how a pizza is cut! The middle part of the pizza stands for 0%, while 100% is at the edge. Participants are asked to draw a dot in each "pizza slice" according to how they feel about reaching learning objectives.

- **Where do you stand:** a sign with "YES" is placed on one side of the room and one with "NO" on the other. Participants are given statements (e.g. "I know how to meet local politicians and start cooperation with them") and they distribute themselves within the room according to how they feel about the statement – those who disagree with the statement approach the "NO" sign, those who agree approach the "YES" sign. Those who are not sure remain in the middle of the room. When looking at the group's response, the facilitator can ask participants to explain why they took a certain stance. You can ask them more questions, such as what would help them to improve their position?

- **Drama methods:** participants should prepare a short theatre performance on the theme of the most important learning moment in this training, the so-called "AHA effect".

- **Hyde Park:** a chair is placed in the room representing Hyde Park corner in London. One by one, participants stand on that chair and speak about their learning (it can be one or more sentences). If the others agree, they support speakers by clapping, whistling or shouting. If they disagree, they boo or make other disapproving noises.

- **Thermometer scale:** participants are asked to show how they feel about the learning impact of the training. They use their hands for the temperature scale – 0°C is near the ground and 100°C near the ceiling. Participants are asked to close their eyes (so as not to be influenced by the scaling of other participants) and place their hand on a scale according to their feelings. When all the hands are placed on the scale, everybody can open their eyes and look around them. Facilitators can ask additional questions to clarify participants' scaling.

- **Contribution graph:** a graph is drawn on a flip-chart: axis X represents the names of participants, axis Y the percentage of their contribution. Participants are given the task of finding their name and drawing a line from axis X up to the percentage which corresponds to their feelings of having contributed to the group and the learning of others.

- **Burning match:** participants stand in a circle. A box of matches is passed around and everybody takes one. The match represents the time limit of their verbal evaluation of their learning. Participants speak one by one during the time it takes for the match to burn.

- **Letter to yourself:** participants are given an opportunity to write a letter to their future selves. The task is to write about the changes that will happen in their lives based on this learning experience, e.g. what kind of activities they will carry out in the coming six months. They write their thoughts down on a sheet of paper, place it in the envelope, close the envelope and write their address on it. Organisers are strongly recommended to put the date of sending these letters in their calendar or notebook so as to remember to send these letters to participants in the future.

- **Reflection groups:** in the evening, after a full day of activities, participants can be divided into small reflection groups which would be facilitated by the trainers. Fundamental questions, such as "What did you learn today? or What do you need to learn more about in order to feel confident about being an activist?", could be asked of every participant. Alternatively, you can divide the participants into small reflection groups which would be facilitated by trainers. Questions like "How beneficial was the training for you? Did you gain new skills and knowledge to help you become an activist? Did the training meet your personal needs?" could be asked of every participant.

- **Dixit cards:** Put Dixit cards in the middle of the circle, encourage participants to choose one which reflects their learning and let them speak individually about their learning.

- **Opinion line:** tell participants to imagine an invisible line across the room, which is long enough for all the participants to stand on. The ends of the line are 'very good' and 'very bad'. The facilitator asks questions (for instance: "Did you like the training venues? Did you feel that you gained new knowledge and skills concerning Green politics? How did you feel about the international part of the training?). Participants stand on the line according to their own opinion. Afterwards, the group discusses the experience.

Anonymous evaluation after training day

An opportunity to give feedback anonymously should be provided right after the session as some participants might find it difficult to give the trainer negative feedback directly. Collecting anonymous feedback is possible, for instance, via an online form with closed and open questions. Closed questions are connected to the specific activities implemented during the programme with answer options on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 could stand for "a lot" and 5 for "not at all"). In open questions, participants are encouraged to explain why they choose this number. In the online questionnaire there should be a space for further suggestions and tips for improving the next training and evaluation of the place, food, group and team of organisers.

BEST PRACTICE: Evaluation form for training session from Finnish Young Green Activists Training

Evaluation is anonymous. If you were not present during an activity, do not answer the questions related to that activity.

Communication before and during the training session
Scale from 1-5 (1=bad, 5=excellent)
To what extent did you like the following activities?
Greens at the European level: scale from 1-5 (1=bad, 5=excellent)
All the content blocks listed separately here have a similar scale.
What was especially good in the programme and why? Answer in your own words!
What was less positive in the programme and why? Answer in your own words!
Questions concerning the EU
EU as a topic is broad and there was a lot of content provided during the session. If something was left unclear, write your question here and we will answer you as well as we can!
Comments or requests for the coordination team

Final evaluation

Once the training has been completed it is important to reserve time to evaluate it together with the participants. First, leave time at the end of the last training session to reflect with the group. Try to create a calm, unhurried atmosphere based on trust so that everybody has a chance to speak and share their thoughts.

REMEMBER: Written evaluation

It is advisable to collect a final written, anonymous evaluation after the training. However, it might be best to wait a few days so that the participants have some time to process the entire training experience. On the other hand, if you wait too long, the response rate might drop rapidly. Once again, use both closed and open questions.

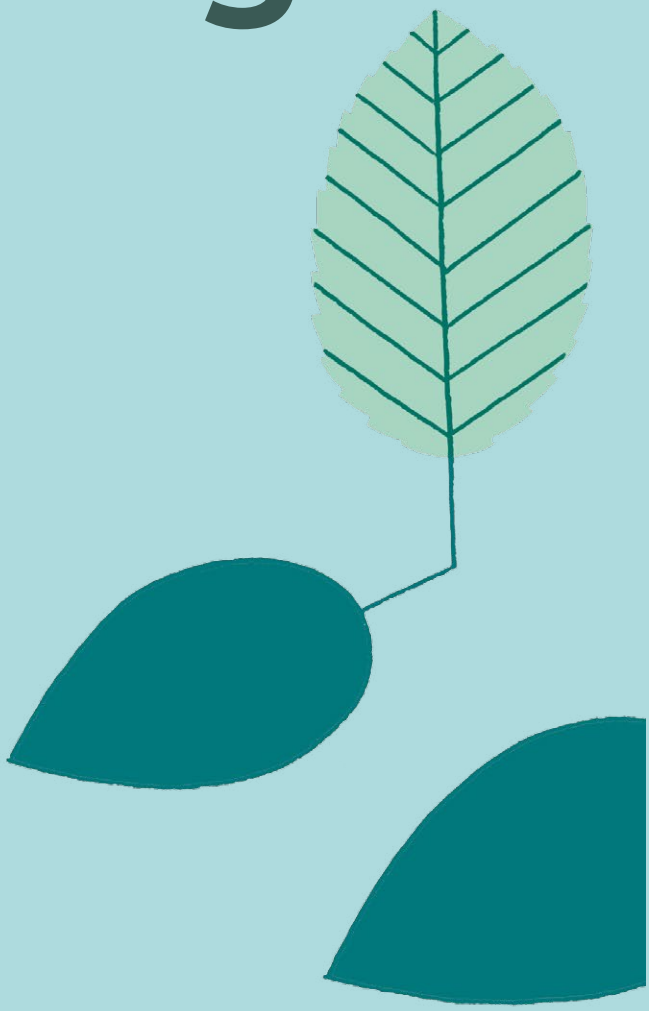
5.2 Evaluation with the project team

Evaluation with the project team should be done soon after the training. When you start the evaluation, you need to go back to the training objectives you set out at the very beginning. What did you achieve and to what extent did you meet your goals? For this you will need the indicators you created at the same time as the objectives.
For instance, if one of your objectives was that participants gain a basic knowledge of European institutions, decision-making and the European Green political family, the output for evaluation would be the EU training session programme, as well as participants' self-evaluation concerning their gained knowledge.

BEST PRACTICE: Evaluation with the project team of the Czech Accumulator training:

At the Institute of Active Citizenship, outcomes of the training are gathered and presented to the Green Accumulator programme team which comprises five people who are given the possibility to read the outcomes and send their suggestion to the trainers. At the end of the week following the training, the trainers will put the entire evaluation together and draft a programme according to all relevant inputs for the next training.

6. After the training



6.1 Keep the activists involved

What happens to the participants after the training? Will you ever see them again? This is a crucial question as the aim of the training is often to encourage activism within the Green movement and to promote the emergence of future Green politicians. You might want to think about how you will follow up with the recently trained activists.

BEST PRACTICE: Activist tracking after the Finnish Young Green Activists Training

The Federation of Green Youth and Students (ViNO) is responsible for the follow-up of the youth activist training. As the training includes a lot of involvement from volunteers, the follow-up is initiated during the actual training. After the training, participants can join the working group responsible for planning the next Young Green Activists Training. The chairperson of that working group will join the Brussels trip as a second group leader.
The ViNO office always sets up a Facebook group for participants, and they can form a WhatsApp group and other groups on social media themselves. The Facebook group can be used for communication after the training. The participants are encouraged to keep in contact after the training, although this usually happens in any case. Many groups have organised get-togethers, without any intervention from ViNO.

HOW ABOUT: Alumni network

How about setting up an alumni network for participants of all Green Activists Training you have organised? It could be a simple Facebook group with limited involvement from your organisation, or it could take the shape of yearly alumni get-togethers. It would help the organisation to follow the participants afterwards to see if they maintain their motivation to participate in the Green movement. On the other hand, it is often important for participants to keep in touch with their own group, which they may do anyway, with or without your intervention. Whatever the situation, it might be worth trying to keep the alumni network alive!

6.2 Documentation

How can you make sure that the project can be replicated in the future, without repeating the same mistakes? How can you avoid reinventing the wheel over and over again? For the transfer of knowledge and experience it is very important to document the project. A presentation to the stakeholders of the project outcomes is often required, so spend some time thinking how this can be done.

First, a report must be written based on your experience – it might take some time but it is worth doing! It ensures that the project group and coordinator, either internal or external, know what elements proved successful and what should not be repeated. If you are hiring an external coordinator, tell her/him from the very beginning that writing a report is one of the duties the coordinator is expected to carry out.

REMEMBER: Keep the report in mind from the beginning

Make sure that you are aware of all the requirements needed for the reporting at the very beginning. This means you can focus on preparing and collecting all the relevant documents during all the phases of the training and prevent mistakes.

Include the entire process in the report, from planning, implementation and follow-up. After each chapter, make a list of recommendations for the future. Be honest regarding the achievements as well as the obstacles and challenges you faced – the purpose of the report is both to document the process and to help future organisers. Remember to use photos in the report to show exactly what happened and how much fun it was!

For the visual documentation, check the chapter "2.7 Make it visible" where you will find tips on how to make a video of the training, for example.

BEST PRACTICE: Video documentation of the Hungarian Green Activists Training

Filming a video was a central part of the documentation of the training. For the training, Ecopolis used a simple sit-in-circle setting, but for the video recording the lecturers had a small studio-stage, with GEF and Ecopolis banners behind them. The video crew used two cameras, a small Go-Pro on a tall tripod for a bird's-eye view and a HD video camera for the eye-level and face footages.

Each lecture lasted for 90 minutes and they were uploaded on the Ecopolis' YouTube channel so that everyone interested could watch them. However, for promotion and outreach purposes, 5 to 8 minutes long TED Talk type presentations are ideal. As a TED Talk is a strictly condensed and focused stage act, and not a real lecture or training, such a video would require more preparation on the lecturer's side.

Besides the recorded lectures, Ecopolis also shot a short promotion video. During the breaks in training, mini interviews were shot with the participants in a separate room, using a microphone and good lightning. The 'talking heads' said one to two sentences about the training, their motivation to participate, and they also encouraged the viewers to apply. The mini interviews were cut and edited as a news report, combined with footage from the training day.

REMEMBER: Anonymity of applicants

When documenting the project, remember to respect the anonymity of the training applicants and participants. Once they have submitted their application, the organisers have their contact information. This information should not be spread and forwarded to any third party. For instance, if you store the information from the previous trainings in a shared database, remember to delete the contact information of previous applicants before you share the database with any new people. Also, when communicating with the participants, do not share all e-mail addresses without asking for permission. And remember that party membership is a private thing and you should not address anyone's membership within the group.

6.3 Dissemination of results

It is now time to disseminate the documented results among stakeholders and other relevant target groups. Dissemination of the project results is very important for two reasons: first, it will encourage more potential participants to enrol and engage in upcoming training, and second, it is an opportunity for sharing Green views with a wider audience. The dissemination activities have to be geared to the different target groups.

How to disseminate the results

- Written report with photos: send the report to relevant stakeholders who need to know about the training from A to Z. Describe in detail the whole process of planning, implementation and follow-up, including any challenges which may arise.

- PowerPoint presentation: create a visual presentation with a lot of photos and emphasise the participants' learning outcomes. Also be prepared to explain in brief the key points to the stakeholders.

- Use the organisation's regular communication channels: newsletters, website, blog, social media, etc. Make sure you keep your stakeholders and followers informed on the training outcomes and how successful it was.

- Use Green communication channels: could a local Green journal publish an article about the training? What about the local young Greens' blog? Could you ask one participant to write a travel blog from Brussels? The whole Green family should know that the training exists.

- Social media: a video is a good way of visually documenting the project, and social media is the channel to spread the message. Encourage participants to be active on social media and share their experience.

REMEMBER: Create a hashtag for the training

Direct contact: which target groups should you inform directly about the results? It might be good to set up a meeting and be prepared to illustrate the project results.

- Word of mouth: participants' friends and families are the best potential target audience. The better the training is and the happier the participants are, the better and greater the outreach will be.

BEST PRACTICE: Storing the experience of the Young Green Activists Training in Finland

The Young Green Activists Training has been running for several years so a lot of information has been gathered from previous trainings. The organisers use Google Drive for storing the information. In the Young Green Activists folder there are separate sub-folders for each year's training programme. All the material, including calls for participants, contact details of speakers, training agendas, evaluation forms, summaries of participants' feedback as well as minutes from working group meetings are saved in the folders. At the end of the training, the coordinator writes a report and makes suggestions for upcoming training. When a new working group starts to plan the next training, they go through the previous report and its recommendations.

There is also a Google Drive folder for the participants where all the material used during the course is uploaded, including the information letters sent before every training weekend or session.

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Green European Foundation

GREEN EUROPEAN FOUNDATION

Vihreä Sivistysliitto ry (Visio), Finland

VISIO

Grüne Bildungswerkstatt (GBW), Austria

DIE GRÜNE BILDUNGSWERKSTATT

Ökopolisz Alapitvany / Ecopolis Foundation, Hungary

Ökopolisz alapítvány

Institute for Active Citizenship (IAO), Czech Republic

INSTITUT AKTIVNÍHO OBČANSTVÍ

Heinrich Böll Stiftung

HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG PRAGUE

Some of the texts in this publication were created within the scope of a project organised in cooperation with the Prague office of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Enthusiastic activists are a driving force for the Green movement in Europe and beyond. Providing information and training on European policies in a Green context is part of the Green European Foundation (GEF) mission.

In 2015, GEF and its partner Green foundations from Hungary, Austria, Czech Republic and Finland organised for the first time a project entitled "European Green Activists Training". In the course of the project, the five partner organisations planned and organised trainings which explored the history, functioning and institutions of the European Union in a Green context. The training programme at national level was complemented by a common European study tour to Brussels in spring 2016.

Considering the unique character of the European Green Activists Training programme, the project coordinators have decided to develop this handbook, disseminating good practice for future editions of the training within their own foundations, as well as among other organisations interested in training programmes for young activists.

This publication is therefore aimed at all organisations involved in educational activities for Green actors, such as Green foundations, Green parties, Green youth organisations and Green study centres in European countries, who are interested in discovering practical tools and tips on organising trainings which empower young people with the ambition to change Europe for the better.