



# HANDBOOK

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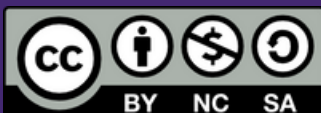
co-creating social  
sustainability



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I want you to see us, like actually us. Not just a group of young people without job or studies that needs directions.[ ...] We are all different, all humans but different shapes. Its not easy for a square shaped figure to get along well in a circle shaped society [.]

-Noel Berglund, NEETs for NEETs participant from Sweden

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## Introduction

“I can’t tell who in this inspiring international training group is a highly qualified staff member and who is a so-called NEET (i.e., a young adult Not in Education, Employment or Training)“

This statement from a participant in one of the learning, teaching, and training (LTT) activities of the NEETs for NEETs (N4N) project indicates that the European project partners have achieved precisely what they intended and perhaps even exceeded expectations: all target groups of the project collaborated on an equal footing and with enthusiasm - the latter being the most unexpected outcome of the ERASMUS+ cooperation partnership forming the foundation of this handbook.

### Project Purpose

The N4N project embarked on a mission to address social issues collaboratively with, rather than for, young adults experiencing marginalisation. Delving into the perspectives of these individuals regarding their social standing, the project sought ideas from NEETs on constructing a more inclusive society. The co-creation process, facilitated by specially designed tools, engaged both staff and NEETs. The subsequent section details the tools employed, illustrating how NEETs and staff collaborated on innovative solutions. NEETs played a pivotal role in expanding and developing relevant activities, including job counselling, adult education lecturing, and civil society initiatives tied to marginalised young adults, ultimately boosting their confidence.

### Handbook Purpose

This handbook serves a dual purpose: firstly, to describe tools that can be effectively utilised by young adults and staff members within organisations dedicated to working with them to foster co-creation. Secondly, it provides an account of the project's tools, sharing partners' experiences at local and international levels. Readers will gain insights into the rationale behind co-creating with NEETs, access tools developed during the project, and explore results showcasing specific NEETs collaborations. This handbook provides a deeper understanding of NEETs-related challenges and a toolkit to actively address them.

### Structural Layout

The handbook strategically places tools and exercises with immediate applications in the initial section. Subsequently, it outlines how the project developed and utilised these tools, providing a context (for the reader). This section offers valuable insights from project partners actively involved in working with the tools throughout the project.

## Authors

The authors, comprising both NEETs and staff members connected to the handbook's partners, present the project's work and outcomes from their unique perspectives. The evaluation of project results is expressed in co-creatively composed texts and findings. The collaborative effort is evident as all project parties have contributed, with the Norwegian team compiling the handbook.

## Why did we name it NEETs for NEETs?

The choice of the name aims to convey a clear message that young people facing educational and employment challenges (NEETs) possess the potential to alter conditions for future generations sharing similar circumstances. The goal was to empower NEETs, encouraging them to influence staff members and reshape their perspectives not only towards the current cohort but also for young people in the future. Through training staff, NEETs played a crucial role in changing mindsets, ultimately contributing to enhancing our staff's ability to engage with NEETs effectively. In essence, it symbolised a supportive cycle where NEETs are actively aiding their peers. The project name NEETs for NEETs seemed therefore fitting.

However, early in the project, we observed that the youths were uncomfortable with the term NEET. The NEETs had diverse backgrounds, including students at Folkehøyskole (activity-based high school, also often labelled as non-formal adult education), language learners, adult elementary school attendees, unemployed individuals, and those on their way to education and employment. The group comprised both minority and majority backgrounds. Many were unfamiliar with the NEET abbreviation, and when explained, it became evident that they didn't appreciate being categorised solely based on this label. Numerous participants did not see themselves as NEETs, as they maintained strong motivation to achieve personal goals, and the abbreviation seemed to suggest a phase of "in-limbo". Consequently, the terminology was adapted, more frequently using terms such as 'young adults,' 'youth,' 'job seekers,' 'students,' or 'participants' instead of NEETs. As a result, the project title was toned down throughout the project duration.



## Basis for the project: ReACT-model

Support Group Network (SGN) and Save the Children Sweden established the ReACT model as a self-empowerment practice aimed at supporting self-organisation and strategic collaboration for better integration. Initially used by SGN in asylum-seeking accommodations in Sweden, the ReACT model mobilised refugees living in reception centres to initiate, implement, and coordinate activities independently. Before the NEETs for NEETs project, the ReACT model gained acceptance in Stuttgart, embedded in activities within previous Erasmus projects to enhance integration and social inclusion (such as the FIER project mentioned below).

Since its inception, the NEETs for NEETs project has learned from these experiences, adapting to the challenges and possibilities of the target group (NEETs). This adaptation process has enhanced the ReACT model by making its co-creative and innovative approach applicable to new segments of disadvantaged people throughout Europe.

The development of the ReACT model within the NEETs for NEETs project was led by Save The Children and the Support Group Network. This co-creation process involved anticipating the need for revisions upon entering the NEETs for NEETs project. While NEETs share similarities with previous target groups, their unique challenges, particularly their resistance to traditional learning environments, necessitated a refined ReACT model.

### How the NEETs for NEETs developed the ReACT-model:

The intricate and complex process of addressing this question and creating a refined ReACT model specifically tailored for NEETs was carried out through a co-creation approach, which included the following steps:

- **Identification of Needs:**
  - Identify the specific needs and challenges faced by young adults and professionals.
  - **Example: Understand the unique challenges and requirements of NEETs.**
- **Research and Analysis:**
  - Conduct thorough research and analysis to understand the factors contributing to status, barriers to engagement, and potential solutions, and identify the change that we want to see after the project training.

- **Example: Investigate the underlying issues affecting NEETs, analyse barriers to their engagement, and define desired outcomes after project training.**
- **Young adults as Stakeholder Involvement:**
  - Involve young adults directly in every step and in the development process to ensure that their perspectives, experiences, and expertise are considered.
  - **Example: Engage NEETs actively throughout the project to incorporate their insights, experiences, and expertise.**
- **Collaboration:**
  - Collaborate with the project partners, including government agencies, NGOs, community organisations, and experts in the field.
  - **Example: Work collaboratively with various stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, and community organisations to enhance the project's effectiveness.**
- **Design Thinking:**
  - Utilise design thinking principles with young adults to envision and prototype potential solutions through gamifying, simplifying, and changing ReACT tools and training to make the experience more relevant, youth-friendly and fun.
  - **Example: Apply Design Thinking concepts with NEETs to generate creative ideas, prototype solutions, and adapt ReACT tools to be more engaging, accessible, and enjoyable for young people.**
- **Pilot Trainings:**
  - Implement pilot training to test the effectiveness of different components and tools of the new model.
  - **Example: Conduct trial training sessions to evaluate how well various elements and tools in the refined ReACT model work in practice.**
- **Feedback and Iteration:**
  - Gather feedback from participants, stakeholders, and experts and use it to iterate and refine the tools in the model after each pilot implementation.
  - **Example: Collect input from NEETs, stakeholders, and experts, and use this feedback to continuously improve and modify the tools in the ReACT model throughout the project.**
- **Scalability and Sustainability:**
  - Ensure that the new tools developed in the model are scalable to reach a larger audience and designed for long-term sustainability, by ensuring that trained young people can still train and use the tools in their own way.



- **Example: Plan for the ReACT model's scalability and long-term impact by ensuring that trained NEETs can effectively share and use the tools, reaching a broader audience over time.**
- **Documentation and Sharing:**
  - Document the development process, key learnings, and successful outcomes. Develop this handbook to contribute to knowledge sharing.
  - **Example: Record the entire development process, document key insights, and successful outcomes. Use this information to create a handbook that contributes to sharing knowledge and best practices.**

### What is the goal of the handbook?

The goal of the handbook is multi-faceted, catering to various audiences:

The handbook aims to serve as a comprehensive resource facilitating positive change for NEETs (young adults Not in Education, Employment, or Training) and those working with them. It aspires to be a catalyst for empowerment, offering practical tools and insights that can be adapted to different situations. The overarching objective is to initiate a transformative journey for NEETs, fostering improvements in their own status as well as contributing to the well-being of others.

### Target Audience

#### NEETs:

NEETs reading this handbook are expected to acquire the skills to enhance their own competence and that of their peers. They will see examples and description of tools that can be used for co-creation. The toolkit provided empowers them to tailor strategies based on their unique situations. Essentially, the handbook functions as a practical toolkit for NEETs who aspire to transform their own situations and make a positive impact on the well-being of others.

#### Staff:

For staff members, the handbook serves as a source of inspiration, encouraging a more co-creative approach when working with NEETs. It acts as a reference guide for teaching and guidance through the diverse tools and activities outlined in the handbook. Staff members will learn how to facilitate workshops based on the ReACT-model and teach the different tools to other staff members and NEETs.

#### Regional Policy Makers:

Regional policy makers can utilise the handbook to inform and shape NEETs-related policies. The practices outlined in the handbook, derived from project results and

experiences, provide a valuable foundation for regional policies that support and empower NEETs.

### Research:

The project, which engages with NEETs and their challenges, has tested and developed new methods that can inspire future research projects. Researchers reading this handbook can gain insights into effective ways of working for and with NEETs, potentially paving the way for further exploration and academic investigation.

### Future Projects:

Building upon existing networks and project results, such as FIER and ReACT, NEETs for NEETs anticipates similar positive outcomes. The project has demonstrated the scalability of the ReACT-model to different target groups, highlighted the benefits of international cooperation for young people, and laid the groundwork for future Erasmus projects and local initiatives. The handbook, through its results and methodology, is intended to serve as a guide and inspiration for future innovations in the realm of youth empowerment and support.

## Introduction to the tools and exercises

This introduction to the tools and exercises is intended to provide handbook users with an understanding of the context in which these tools were developed and improved. We strongly encourage you to read this introduction, as it will provide valuable insights for the meaningful use of the tools and exercises.



One of N4N's primary objectives has been the development of tools tailored specifically for young people in our target group. These tools aim to cultivate understanding, to empower, equip, and contribute to a transformative shift in the mindset of both young people and the staff who engage with them in diverse capacities. The tools draw inspiration from a multitude of sources, notably the ReACT model and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Nevertheless, the development and continuous utilisation of these tools represent an ongoing process. Our objective, therefore, is to present the tools in a way that fosters and inspires prospective users to pose questions rather than supplying definitive answers. Our tools are crafted to stimulate inquiry and cultivate problem-solving

strategies within a collaborative framework, rather than providing immediate solutions to young people, staff, and decision-makers.

The development of tools and exercises has been an ongoing process throughout the project. Initially, a focus group of six young people collaborated with STC and SGN staff in workshops to determine the tools and settings that should be included in the process. Key insights from the focus groups emphasised the importance of making the tools and associated processes both enjoyable and intensive, incorporating exercises and interaction. Communication, social media, and opportunities for personal growth were also identified as crucial components. While the selected tools can be used individually, their combination offers a holistic approach to achieving the project goals.

The subsequent phase in improving the tools and exercises included the implementation of five pilot programs conducted in collaboration with our partners. Each pilot generated distinct perspectives on the tools, transforming them into resources that could be efficiently utilised by both youths and staff members within the N4N context.

Ultimately, the youths embraced the tools and exercises in our Learning, Teaching, and Training activities. Even at this stage, the tools and exercises underwent further adjustments in collaboration with the young adults, ensuring personalisation and effective management without compromising the fundamental essence of each tool and exercise.

### **Here are some valuable tips to consider before reading and using the tools:**

- **Understand the Meaning:** Take the time to comprehend the meaning of each tool. Encourage discussions within your specific context to ensure a comprehensive understanding.
- **Address Language Barriers:** Simplify language to avoid barriers. If necessary, utilise translators to facilitate clear communication and understanding.
- **Active Use of Exercises:** Actively engage with the exercises provided. Remember that having fun is crucial to the effectiveness of the tools.
- **Youth Empowerment:** Entrust the young people with the responsibility for setting up and using the tools and exercises. Allowing them to take charge enhances engagement and minimises the likelihood of failure.

## What is Leadership?

Leadership is a process designed to influence the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours of others, inspiring collective efforts towards the accomplishment of a shared objective. In an organisational context, management revolves around guiding individuals to attain specific goals, motivating them to enhance their performance, while fostering an environment where they thrive and find fulfilment in their work.



In essence, leadership style includes how leaders behave, their priorities, and their interactions with employees. **There are three primary types of leadership:**

**Autocratic:** Characterised by absolute control and authority held by leaders in decision-making and supervision, with minimal or no input from others. Also known as authoritarian leadership.

**Delegative:** This leadership style is hands-off, allowing group members to take charge of decision-making processes.

**Democratic:** Democratic leaders actively seek feedback and input from subordinates, encouraging open conversation and participation in the decision-making process.

## Why did we use Leadership as a tool?

**Using leadership as a tool with young people provides numerous benefits and positive outcomes:**

- **Skill Development:** Leadership development provides young people with essential skills such as communication, decision-making, problem-solving, and teamwork, which are crucial for personal and professional growth.
- **Empowerment:** Leadership programs empower young adults by fostering self-confidence, self-efficacy, and a sense of responsibility. They learn to take initiative and make positive contributions in their communities.
- **Character Building:** Leadership experiences contribute to the development of strong character traits such as resilience, adaptability, and integrity. Young people learn to face challenges with confidence and integrity.
- **Community Engagement:** Leadership initiatives encourage young people to engage with their communities, fostering a sense of social responsibility and a commitment to making positive contributions to society.

- **Goal Setting and Achievement:** Leadership training helps young people set and achieve goals. They learn to create a vision, plan strategically, and work collaboratively to accomplish objectives.
- **Communication Skills:** Leadership programs emphasise effective communication, enabling young people to express themselves clearly, listen actively, and collaborate with diverse groups of people.
- **Critical Thinking:** Leadership development encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Young people learn to analyse situations, make informed decisions, and navigate complex challenges.
- **Preparation for the Future:** Leadership experiences prepare young people for future roles in academia, the workforce, and community leadership. They gain valuable insights into their strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Building Confidence:** Leadership roles provide opportunities for young people to take on responsibilities, make decisions, and lead initiatives, contributing to the development of confidence and leadership identity.
- **Civic Engagement:** Young people engaged in leadership activities are more likely to become active and informed citizens, participating in civic activities and advocating for positive change in their communities.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Leadership programs often provide networking opportunities, connecting young people with mentors, peers, and professionals who can offer guidance and support in their personal and professional development.
- **Promoting Diversity and Inclusion:** Leadership training fosters an appreciation for diversity and inclusion, helping young people develop the skills to lead inclusively and create environments that celebrate difference.

In summary, using leadership as a tool with young people contributes to their holistic development, preparing them for future challenges, and empowering them to become responsible, confident, and engaged members of society.

## What is Communication?

Communication is, in this context, a vital skill employed by young people to engage with their peers and communities. It serves as a means for them to articulate their challenges, propose solutions, and communicate their needs.

Communication and leadership are connected and often presented together in this project, as they are both essential skills





in any workplace. Individuals with strong communication skills are more adept at expressing themselves and effectively conveying their messages. Notably, communication is recognised as one of the top 10 soft skills essential for individuals seeking new employment opportunities.

**The presenter will cover various types of communication and provide insights into their effective use:**

- **Verbal Communication:** Focus on spoken language, including the tone, pitch, and choice of words. Emphasis will be placed on clear and articulate verbal expression.
- **Nonverbal Communication:** Explore the nuances of nonverbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and gestures. Understanding how to interpret and use nonverbal signals is a key skill.
- **Visual Communication:** Highlight the power of visuals, including images, charts, and graphs, in conveying information. The presenter will discuss how to effectively integrate visual elements for enhanced communication.
- **Written Communication:** Delve into the nuances of written communication, including the use of language, structure, and style. Strategies for crafting clear and impactful written messages will be addressed.

By covering these different communication types, the presenter aims to equip the audience with a comprehensive understanding of how to leverage each form for effective and meaningful communication.

### Why did we use Communication as a tool?

The significance of communication tools in today's workplace cannot be overstated; they are a necessity. Ranging from communication apps to well-being software, these tools are a response to the expanding array of needs voiced by young people. Communication tools play a crucial role in fulfilling these evolving expectations and contribute to a more dynamic and connected work environment.

The implementation of this approach as a tool in this project has proven to be valuable, assisting young people in learning and recognising various communication styles. It highlights the importance of learning, teaching and training young people the fundamentals of communication. By doing so, it equips them with essential skills, fostering their ability to communicate effectively and navigate various communication scenarios.



## What is Co-Creation?

Co-creation stands as a collaborative form of participation, uniting young people, and staff as equal learning partners. This approach involves creating practices where both youths and staff draw inspiration and learn collaboratively. By prioritising equality, co-creation eliminates the need for a dichotomy between the authority of staff and the empowerment of young people in the realm of participation.

Moreover, co-creation serves as an innovative model incorporated by organisations in their work and development processes. This approach enables organisations to collaborate with other institutions, fostering the generation of innovative ideas and encouraging the shared contribution of all parties involved. Through co-creation, organisations can harness collective creativity and knowledge, leading to more inclusive and impactful outcomes.



## Why is it important to learn about Co-creation?

Creating new solutions with people, not for people, can help to drive innovation and find better solutions in the public sector. Embracing Co-Creation is vital as it enables organisations to tap into a wider spectrum of ideas by fostering collaborative efforts with diverse groups and institutions. This approach not only promotes diversity but also propels innovation. Co-Creation opens doors to the creation of enhanced projects that cater to specific needs, often giving rise to unforeseen concepts. By actively engaging target groups in the creative process, organisations can guarantee heightened relevance and inclusivity in their initiatives.

## Why did we use Co-creation as a tool?

**The use of co-creation as a tool with youths - grounded upon several key reasons:**

- **Inclusivity and Participation:** Co-creation ensures that young adults actively participate in the process of designing, developing, and implementing initiatives. It values their input, experiences, and perspectives, fostering a sense of ownership and inclusivity.
- **Empowerment:** Co-creation empowers young adults by giving them a voice and agency in shaping projects and activities. This approach recognises their

capabilities, strengths, and contributions, promoting a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy.

- **Tailored Solutions:** Involving young adults in the co-creation process ensures that the resulting solutions, strategies, or interventions are better aligned with their needs, preferences, and aspirations. This enhances the relevance and effectiveness of the initiatives.
- **Skill Development:** Co-creation provides an opportunity for young adults to develop valuable skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication. These skills are transferable and contribute to their personal and professional growth.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Youth involvement in co-creation helps ensure that projects are culturally sensitive and contextually relevant. By understanding and incorporating the cultural nuances, the initiatives are more likely to resonate with the target audience.
- **Ownership and Commitment:** When young adults actively contribute to the creation of projects, they feel a greater sense of ownership and commitment. This increases their motivation to engage, participate, and contribute to the success of initiatives.
- **Innovative Solutions:** Co-creation fosters a collaborative environment where diverse perspectives come together. This diversity often leads to the generation of innovative ideas and solutions that may not have emerged through traditional top-down approaches.
- **Building Trust and Relationships:** The collaborative nature of co-creation builds trust between young adults and facilitators or organisers. It establishes a foundation for positive relationships, creating an environment where open communication and mutual respect flourish.
- **Adaptability and Flexibility:** Co-creation allows for adaptability and flexibility in response to evolving needs and challenges. It ensures that projects can be adjusted based on real-time feedback and insights from the young adults involved.

In summary, co-creation with young adults is a strategic approach that values their contributions, respects their agency, and enhances the overall quality and impact of initiatives by tapping into their creativity, insights, and experiences.

## What is Forum Theatre?

Forum Theatre involves the enactment of stories centred around injustice and oppression. Participants share experiences of being treated unfairly or engaging in unfair treatment. The dynamics of oppression often arise when the person feeling unfairly treated lacks significant power.



## What is the aim of Forum Theatre?

The aim of Forum Theatre is to actively engage participants in exploring and addressing social issues, injustices, and oppression. The primary objective is to generate effective solutions to oppression depicted in pre-created performances emerging during the session. The unique effectiveness of this theatre form lies in the active involvement of spectators, who can influence and engage with the performance. Forum Theatre typically addresses issues related to social justice, aiming to explore solutions to oppression portrayed in the performances.

## Why did we use Forum Theatre as a tool?

**Forum Theatre is an impactful tool for youth development for several reasons:**

- **Empowerment and Expression:** Forum Theatre provides a platform for young people to express their experiences, concerns, and feelings related to injustice and oppression. It empowers them to articulate their thoughts and emotions in a supportive environment.
- **Interactive Learning:** The interactive nature of Forum Theatre engages participants actively. Young people can directly influence and participate in the development of solutions to the issues portrayed in the performances, promoting experiential learning.
- **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:** Young adults are encouraged to analyse and address social justice issues depicted in the theatre. This stimulates critical thinking and problem-solving skills, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities of real-life situations.
- **Social Awareness:** Forum Theatre raises awareness of social issues and injustices. By actively participating in discussions and exploring solutions, young adults gain insights into the broader societal challenges and learn how they can contribute to positive change.

- **Building Empathy:** The process of stepping into the shoes of characters facing oppression enhances empathy among young adults. It helps them better understand the perspectives and experiences of others, promoting a more compassionate and inclusive mindset.
- **Communication Skills:** Forum Theatre hones communication skills as participants engage in dialogue, express themselves, and collaboratively work towards solutions. This can be particularly beneficial for improving interpersonal skills.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Youths learn constructive ways to address conflicts and oppressive situations, fostering skills that are crucial for navigating challenges in various aspects of their lives.
- **Positive Social Change:** By actively participating in Forum Theatre, youths are encouraged to become agents of positive social change. The experience motivates them to contribute to creating a more just and equitable society.

In summary, Forum Theatre serves as a powerful tool for youths by providing a dynamic, participatory, and reflective space that fosters personal growth, critical thinking, and a commitment to social justice.

## What is interculturality?



Interculturality, as a tool, is a mode of dialogue and communication between distinct cultural groups. It provides an avenue for individuals to exchange ideas, fostering mutual understanding of each other's values and perspectives. By elucidating the concept of interculturality and comprehending the factors that shape individual cultures, people can enhance their understanding of diverse

backgrounds. As a tool, interculturality serves as an empowerment mechanism for youths, facilitating meaningful interactions and promoting a more inclusive and harmonious coexistence among culturally diverse communities.

## Why did we use Interculturality as a tool?

Interculturality in the N4N-project is a strategic tool employed to create an environment that values and celebrates diversity, promotes cultural exchange, and facilitates



effective communication among individuals with distinct cultural backgrounds, ages, and life experiences.

### **Using interculturality as a tool with young adults offers several advantages and positive outcomes:**

- **Cultural Awareness:** Interculturality promotes awareness and appreciation of different cultures, helping young adults to understand and respect diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
- **Promoting Inclusivity:** Interculturality encourages inclusivity by fostering an environment where young adults from various cultural backgrounds feel valued, acknowledged, and included.
- **Communication Skills:** Young adults engaged in interculturality activities develop effective communication skills, enabling them to interact respectfully and collaboratively with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
- **Global Competence:** Interculturality prepares young adults for a globalised world by cultivating the skills needed to navigate diverse cultural contexts and work collaboratively in an increasingly interconnected society.
- **Breaking Stereotypes:** Through intercultural experiences, young adults can have the opportunity to challenge and break down stereotypes, promoting a more accurate and nuanced understanding of different cultures.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Interculturality provides young adults with the skills to navigate cultural differences constructively, fostering conflict resolution and the ability to address misunderstandings diplomatically.
- **Promoting Social Harmony:** Engaging in intercultural activities contributes to social harmony by promoting understanding, empathy, and positive relationships among individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Interculturality facilitates cultural exchange, allowing young adults to share their traditions, values, and customs with others, enriching the collective cultural tapestry.
- **Enhancing Empathy:** Exposure to different cultures through interculturality builds empathy as young adults gain insights into the experiences and perspectives of individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- **Cultural Competence:** Interculturality enhances cultural competence, equipping young adults with the skills needed to navigate and thrive in multicultural environments.
- **Building Tolerance:** Participation in intercultural activities fosters tolerance, encouraging young adults to appreciate and celebrate diversity rather than view it as a source of division.

- **Personal Growth:** Interculturality contributes to the personal growth of young adults, expanding their worldview, and fostering a sense of curiosity and openness to different ways of life.

In summary, using interculturality as a tool with young adults contributes to the development of well-rounded, culturally competent individuals who are better equipped to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

## What is Strategic planning?

Strategic planning is a systematic and structured process that organisations and leaders utilise to identify their goals, prioritise objectives, and determine the current phase of their initiatives. This tool is designed to help young adults understand the significance of establishing a plan and systematically tracking each step in their work. It



involves a comprehensive approach to decision-making, resource allocation, and goal-setting, ensuring alignment with an organisation's mission and vision for effective implementation and success.

## Why did we use Strategic planning as a tool?

**Learning about strategic planning as a tool is beneficial for young adults in several ways:**

**Goal Setting:** Strategic planning teaches youths the importance of setting clear, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals. This skill is valuable in both personal and professional contexts.

- **Time Management:** Young adults learn to create timelines and schedules for their plans, helping them develop effective time management skills. This is crucial for prioritising tasks and meeting deadlines.
- **Decision-Making:** Strategic planning involves making informed decisions about priorities, resource allocation, and actions. This skill is essential for young adults as they navigate various aspects of their lives.
- **Action Planning:** Youths gain experience in developing action plans and tactics to achieve their goals. This involves breaking down larger objectives into manageable tasks and steps.



- **Adaptability:** Through strategic planning, young adults understand the importance of flexibility and adaptability. Plans may need adjustments, and learning to adapt is a valuable life skill.
- **Critical Thinking:** Strategic planning requires critical thinking to analyse situations, identify challenges, and formulate effective solutions. Young adults develop problem-solving skills that can be applied in diverse scenarios.
- **Ownership and Accountability:** Learning to create and execute strategic plans instills a sense of ownership and accountability among young adults. They become more responsible for their actions and outcomes.
- **Long-Term Vision:** Strategic planning encourages young adults to think about the long-term and envision their desired future. This forward-thinking approach helps in setting ambitious but achievable objectives.
- **Resource Management:** Young adults learn to manage resources efficiently, whether it's time, finances, or other assets. This skill is valuable for personal and professional success.
- **Project Management Skills:** Strategic planning introduces young adults to basic project management principles, helping them organising and executing tasks effectively.
- **Self-Evaluation:** Through the process of setting milestones and assessing progress, young adults develop the ability to reflect on their achievements and areas for improvement.
- **Empowerment:** Strategic planning empowers young adults by providing them with a structured framework for achieving their goals. It boosts confidence and self-efficacy.

In summary, learning about strategic planning equips young people with practical and transferable skills that are essential for personal and professional development. It empowers them to take charge of their lives, make informed decisions, and work toward their aspirations with purpose and efficiency.

## What is Storytelling?

In the context of N4N, storytelling deviates from the conventional understanding. This tool involves taking a young person's story and situating it within a potential change of scenario on a broader scale. The Storytelling tool emphasises specific elements of a narrative: the challenge, change, action, and outcome. It serves as an instrument for inspiring change through personal experiences or life challenges. By narrating personal stories, this tool aims to illuminate



strategies and practices for effecting societal changes on a larger scale. It transforms individual narratives into catalysts for broader social transformation and inspiration.

Storytelling can be a very powerful tool. When the workshop environment fosters a sense of safety and security (depending on group dynamics, etc.), there is a likelihood of more individual, personal narratives emerging. These personal stories can then be elevated to a collective level, transforming participants' individual experiences into public stories that inspire and fortify others facing similar challenges. Storytelling serves as a catalyst for action and change, commencing with modest everyday challenges and potentially culminating in significant global movements.

### Why did we use Storytelling as a tool?

Storytelling is employed as a tool in the N4N project for several compelling reasons:

- **Amplifying Young peoples' Voices:** Storytelling provides a platform for young adults to share their experiences, challenges, and perspectives, amplifying their voices and allowing them to be heard.
- **Building Empathy and Understanding:** By sharing their personal stories, young adults can foster empathy and understanding among their peers, project staff, and the wider community. This contributes to breaking down stereotypes and promoting a more compassionate society.
- **Highlighting Challenges:** Many young people in the project face substantial challenges, such as forced migration, educational disruptions, health issues, and more. Storytelling is a tool to shed light on these challenges and increase awareness about the unique circumstances they navigate between.
- **Inspiring Change:** Storytelling serves as an instrument of change and inspiration. By narrating personal stories, young people can inspire others and potentially influence broader societal changes.
- **Empowerment Through Expression:** The empowerment of young adults is facilitated through the expression of their stories. It allows them to take ownership of their narratives, fostering a sense of empowerment and control over their life stories.
- **Community Building:** Storytelling contributes to the creation of a supportive community within the project. It encourages a culture of openness and shared experiences, fostering a sense of belonging among young people facing similar challenges.
- **Learning and Reflection:** The storytelling tool encourages young people to reflect on their own experiences and learn from the stories of others. This

process of reflection can be a valuable aspect of personal growth and development.

- **Advocacy and Awareness:** Personal stories can be powerful tools for advocacy and awareness-raising. They can draw attention to specific issues, mobilise support, and influence decision-makers to address the needs of vulnerable young people.
- **Catalyst for Change:** Storytelling transforms individual narratives into catalysts for broader social change. By connecting personal stories to larger societal issues, it becomes a vehicle for advocating for systemic changes.

In summary, the use of storytelling as a tool in the N4N project is driven by the desire to give voice to young people who are facing substantial challenges, to foster understanding and empathy, inspire change, and create a supportive community which empowers individuals to share their experiences for collective growth and advocacy.

## Exercises

### Circle Theatre

Time

10 minutes



Purpose

- This exercise serves as both a neutral presentation and an icebreaker.
- It is commonly employed as a general presentation activity.
- The exercise effectively showcases the depth of human imagination.
- It is designed to be performed collectively with the entire group, fostering a sense of togetherness and engagement.

Steps

1. All participants arrange themselves in a large circle, leaving an opening that serves as the stage.
2. A participant steps onto the "stage" and performs a charade, gesture, or movement while saying, "I am...(description)." For instance, "I am a tree," with the person shaping their body like a tree.
3. The next participant goes to the "tree" on stage and makes a related gesture next to it, saying, "I am... related to the tree." For example, "I am the bird that flaps around the tree and flits about."
4. The following participant takes the stage, building on the previous characters. They make a gesture and say, "I am..." in relation to the first two characters. For example, "I am the hunter who shoots down the bird!"
5. The cycle continues as each participant takes the stage, replacing the character who has been on stage the longest. The new participant contributes to the evolving story, and this rotation continues until everyone who wishes to participate has had a turn.

### The Introduction Game

Time

10 minutes



## Tools

Can be used as an icebreaker.

## Purpose

This exercise serves as an excellent icebreaker and enjoyable method for participants to become acquainted with each other.

## Steps

- 1. Introduction Exchange:** Each participant begins by introducing themselves to another person in the group.
- 2. Sequential Introductions:** Participants then seek out a new person to introduce themselves to, but with a unique twist. This time, they present themselves as the person they last interacted with.
- 3. Continual Exchange:** The cycle continues as individuals repeatedly introduce themselves in the persona of the person they last conversed with.
- 4. Goal:** The engaging activity persists until the moment when someone introduces themselves, and it turns out to be you – completing the loop of introductions.

# Bingo



## Time

15 minutes

## Tools

The exercise is a good icebreaker and a fun way to get to know each other.

## Purpose

A prewritten bingo sheet is designed to make the bingo game more organised and straightforward. It is prepared in advance with specific statements or items, ensuring that everyone follows the same criteria for marking their boxes. This is especially helpful when customising the game for a specific theme, topic, or group. Using a prewritten sheet makes the game more intentional, improves the overall experience, and makes the gameplay smoother.

## Materials

- Prewritten Bingo-sheet
- Pen

## Instructions

- Create a 5x5 table on paper with brief statements in each box.
- Alternatively, you can hand-draw the table with pen and paper.
- Move around the room, approaching people to see if they align with any statements on your paper.
- The first person to complete a line and shouts "Bingo" wins.

## Steps

1. Get a Bingo-sheet and a pen.
2. Walk around and ask people if they match your boxes. If they do, mark the box.
3. Repeat with different people.
4. Continue until you fill a row or column with marked boxes.



# The Art Project



**Time** 15 minutes

## Tools

- Can be used for Co-creation.
- Performed in pairs.

## Purpose

The basic idea is to take what the other person draws or writes and add to it. You cannot control exactly what will come out, but you can shape it with your input.

## Materials

Pen and A4 Paper

## Instructions

### 1. Collaborative Drawing Silence:

- In pairs, individuals engage in drawing a picture together without verbal communication. It is essential to refrain from asking questions or discussing strategies during this activity.

### 2. Sequential Line Drawing:

- Each person contributes one line at a time to the drawing, alternating turns. The pen is passed between partners until there is a mutual sense that the drawing is complete. Prolonged hesitation indicates the conclusion of the drawing.

### 3. Naming the Artwork:

- Following the drawing phase, participants take turns naming the artwork. Each person contributes one letter at a time, with the process continuing until hesitation occurs. Hesitation marks the completion of the jointly decided name for the artwork.

## Reflections

What was it like to draw together without talking?

What lessons were learned from this exercise?

# The Car



**Time** 15 minutes

## Tools

- Can be used for Co-creation or Communication.
- Performed in groups of 3-4 people.

## Purpose

### The Significance of Communication in Collaboration:

Communication plays a pivotal role in collaboration as individuals bring their unique visions of what they aim to achieve. Each person carries a distinct mental image rich with intricate details and crucial components. Acknowledging and effectively sharing these individual perspectives is key to harmonising efforts and achieving collective success.

## Materials

- Post-It
- Marker pens
- Whiteboard pen
- Large piece of paper

## Steps

- 1. Speedy Solo Sketch:**
  - Each participant grabs a post-it and, in complete silence, sketches a car within a swift 10-second timeframe. The drawings are to be kept private.
- 2. Group Car Composition:**
  - The entire group holds a sizable sheet of paper. In a non-verbal collaboration, participants aim to collectively draw a larger car on the paper within a limited 20-second timeframe.
- 3. Assembly and Discussion:**
  - Small individual car drawings are affixed next to the collaboratively drawn large car. This sets the stage for a group discussion where participants can share thoughts, observations, and reflections on the combined artwork.

# Tallest Tower



Time

10 minutes

Tools

Can be used for Leadership and Communication.

Purpose

Build the tallest tower! Encourage participants to work together in groups. It aims to promote creativity, problem-solving, time management, cooperation, and leadership skills (when done in groups).

Materials

Provide materials such as pasta, paper, and cardboard, which should be available before the activity begins. Participants can also use any existing materials in the room to their advantage.

Instructions

Set a time limit of 3-5 minutes for tower construction. Depending on the number of participants, the game can be played either in groups or individually.

Reflection

**Group Discussion:** How was your experience working together with the provided materials and the time limit during this game?

**If you have worked alone:** How did it feel working by yourself with the materials and time limit in this game?

# The Hitchhiker



Time

15 minutes

Tools

- Can be used for Leadership or Communication.
- Performed together with 4 people at a time.

Purpose

The activity is enjoyable because it highlights how we impact each other through our words and actions. It emphasises the contagious nature of emotions, prompting awareness and open discussion. Importantly, the aim is not to convey a message that everyone should always be positive and happy, but rather to acknowledge and understand the dynamics of emotional influence within a group.

Materials

Four chairs arranged to resemble car seats.

Steps

1. Three individuals enter the car, initiating a conversation while driving. After 30 seconds, the car comes to a halt to pick up a fourth person—the hitchhiker. It is crucial that the emotions and mood of the hitchhiker are mirrored by the other occupants. Travel together for approximately 1 minute.
2. One of the individuals in the front seat gets out of the car, signalling the start of a new ride. This prompts the group to pick up another hitchhiker.
3. Repeat the process, allowing anyone interested to take on the role of the hitchhiker and experience the exercise from that perspective.

# Clean Paper



## Time

10 minutes

## Tools

Can be used as an icebreaker or for Communication.

## Purpose

The exercise is particularly enjoyable as it highlights how we influence one another in terms of speech and actions. It underscores the contagious nature of emotions, emphasising the importance of awareness and discussion.

It is crucial to note that the aim is not to convey a message advocating constant positivity and happiness. The exercise encourages an understanding of the dynamics of emotional influence without imposing a specific emotional state.

## Materials

Pen and A4 paper

## Steps

### 1. Paper Protection Challenge:

- Each participant is provided with a clean sheet of paper and a pen.
- In a timeframe of 2 minutes, participants must protect their paper from being marked by others' pens.
- The participant who successfully keeps their paper clean wins the game.

### 2. Discussion in pairs (2 minutes):

- Participants pair up for a discussion.
- In pairs, they explore the question: "Which communication skills do you aspire to develop and utilise more?"
- Following the discussion, each pair briefly shares with the larger group the key points or insights from their conversation.

# Presentation Game



## Time

10 minutes

## Tools

Can be used as an icebreaker.

## Purpose

Presentation game can be used at the beginning of a session or a workshop. The exercise is a good icebreaker and a fun way to get to know each other.

## Materials

Pen and A4 paper

## Steps

### 1. Personalised Box Drawing:

- Distribute sheets of paper and ask participants to draw crosses or boxes on the paper.
- Label each box with different categories such as love, dream, favourite, fear, hope, etc. Adjust the categories based on the group and the specific goal of the activity.
- Vary the number or nature of the squares according to the group dynamics and the intended outcomes.

### 2. Introduction and Sharing (2 minutes per person):

- Invite each participant to introduce themselves.
- Ask participants to share what they wrote in 2-4 boxes on their paper, depending on the available time.
- This sharing session allows individuals to express aspects related to the labelled categories, fostering a deeper understanding within the group.



# The Island



## Time

20 minutes

## Purpose

- Can be used for Co-Creation, Communication, Strategic planning.
- As a group to complete a common task and to understand everyone's importance and challenges.
- Performed together with 5 people in each group.

## Materials

2 A4 papers per person, a blanket, painting tape, 4 pieces of Flipchart paper that form an island and scarfs.

## Steps

- 1. The groups assign the following characteristics to their members:**
  - A. Blindfolded
  - B. Clasped hands
  - C. Not allowed to communicate verbally.
  - D. Restricted from talking or communicating throughout the entire exercise, including planning.
  - E. The last person does not face any restrictions or issues.
2. The fourth person, who is prohibited from talking and planning, must temporarily leave the room. Meanwhile, the remaining team members have approximately 5 minutes to strategise on how to reach the island.
3. Instruct the entire team that their collective goal is to reach the island successfully, and the task is considered accomplished only when the entire team is present on the island. Emphasise that if a participant steps outside their designated area, the corresponding sheet is considered "disappeared".
4. After the planning phase, bring back the fourth person who has been waiting outside. Position the groups approximately 4 metres apart on opposite sides of the island. All team members should commence the activity simultaneously, ensuring that they only step on the designated papers they are allowed to walk on.
5. The team successfully transporting all participants to the island first is declared the winner.
6. Facilitate a reflective discussion, encouraging participants to share their feelings and experiences related to their assigned characteristics, including aspects such as dependency and exclusion during the exercise.

## How to make a good strategic plan

**Purpose:** The strategic planning tool is implemented to empower participants in planning strategically for their individual goals. It guides them through the process of formulating SMART goals, creating timelines, defining actions and tactics, and subsequently incorporating essential milestones. This work sheet serves as a practical resource to facilitate and document the strategic planning process.

<p><b>1. Goal (SMART)</b></p> <p><b>Specific:</b> Clearly defined and focused.  <b>Measurable:</b> Quantifiable criteria to gauge success.  <b>Achievable:</b> Realistic and feasible within constraints.  <b>Relevant:</b> Aligns with organisational objectives.  <b>Timeline:</b> Specific timeframe for completion.</p>	<p><b>What is your goal?</b></p>
<p><b>2. Timeline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly outline the chronological sequence of activities.</li> <li>Specify start and end dates for each phase.</li> <li>Include key milestones and deadlines.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Write here:</b></p>
<p><b>3. Actions and Tactics (Strategies that tie together)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly articulate the steps and strategies to achieve the goal.</li> <li>Identify tactics that align with the overall strategy.</li> <li>Ensure that actions complement each other for cohesive implementation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Write here:</b></p>
<p><b>4. Benchmarks (Milestones)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set significant milestones to track progress.</li> <li>Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for each benchmark.</li> <li>Provide a measurable way to assess achievements and adjust strategies if needed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Write here:</b></p>

# Jigsaw Puzzle



## Time

10 minutes

## Purpose

The exercise can be used with Strategic planning.

The main goal of solving the puzzle is to promote teamwork and have a great time together.

## Materials

A jigsaw puzzle for every group.

Stopwatch on a phone.

## Steps

1. Divide the participants into groups.
2. Provide each group with a jigsaw puzzle.
3. Instruct the groups not to begin until you say "ready, set, go."
4. Groups place the puzzle pieces on the table and strategise on how to complete the puzzle.
5. The activity concludes when all the puzzle pieces are assembled.

## Tennis Ball



### Time

15 minutes

### Purpose

Can be used for Storytelling or Strategic planning.

Ideally, it's done with 5-8 people in each group.

The exercise demonstrates how we can enhance and change our work methods, avoiding the limitations of old ways. It also illustrates the positive impact of encouragement and monitoring on our overall performance.

### Materials

4-5 tennis balls

Use your mobile phone to time the group.

### Steps

- 1. Give instructions:** Everyone in the group must touch all the balls and then drop them on the ground. Take your time! The timer stops when everyone has touched all the balls. Report the time taken.
- 2. Motivated Challenge:** Share with the team that you believe they can complete the task faster. Allow the group to communicate for 20-30 seconds. Perform the challenge again and report the new time.
- 3. Repeat Motivated Challenge:** Repeat the previous step for a second attempt. Report the time once more.

# Forum Theatre



## Time

45 minutes

## Tools

Forum Theatre

## Purpose

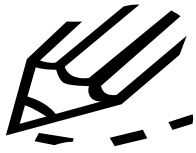
The primary aim is to collaboratively explore and find solutions to societal problems through the Forum Theatre experience. Forum Theatre is a theatrical technique where a group presents a short play focusing on a situation involving oppression. It allows the audience to interact and change the course of the narrative to address social issues. Please find a low threshold introductory video in the N4N compendium number 4, presented together with this handbook.

**Oppression Definition:** Oppression is the unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power, leading to the mistreatment or subjugation of individuals or groups.

## Steps

### Rules of Forum Theatre:

- **No Physical Contact:** Physical contact is not allowed during Forum Theatre performances.
- **Inclusion of Oppressor and Oppressed:** The play must involve at least one person in the role of the oppressor and at least one person being oppressed. However, there can be multiple characters in each role.
- **Power Imbalance:** There should be an imbalance of power between the oppressor and the oppressed, with the oppressor holding control in the situation.
- **Role of the "Joker":** A designated person, known as the "Joker," guides the audience through the play. The "Joker" welcomes the audience and explains the rules of the theatre.
- **Two Presentations:** The group initially presents the play to the audience, who only watch. The second time, the audience has the opportunity to intervene and alter the storyline to address injustices.
- **Audience Participation:** To join, individuals raise their hands and inform the "Joker" of the character they want to play. The new actor can replace an existing character or introduce an entirely new role.
- **Ongoing Oppression:** The oppressor should continue oppressing to the best of their ability, even if a new actor tries to intervene.



## Storytelling: Explanation

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The storytelling tool is designed around a form that each participant will complete. This form comprises four distinct sections for participants to describe and elaborate on.

**Challenge:** Participants are asked to write about a challenge they have encountered in their lives. This challenge can be either a real or a fictional experience. The experience may encompass common challenges, such as joining a new activity or applying for a job, or it can be specific and personal, depending on the emotional needs of the individual and the level of the individual's comfort in sharing with the group.

**Choice:** In addressing the specific challenge chosen by the participant, whether personal or common, he or she made specific choices to overcome the challenge. These choices were often influenced or inspired by others.

**Outcome:** The choices made in response to the challenge led to an outcome, which could have been expected, unexpected, or a combination of both.

**Change:** Collectively, these elements contribute to a change in the participant's life, a change that endures over time (hypothetically or depending on whether the participant chose a real or fictional experience).





## Storytelling: Developing your story

What is the change you want to make in the world: your story of now?

Why are you called to make that change: what specific experiences have shaped your story of self?

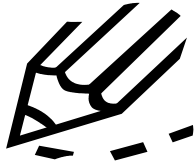
What personal story can you tell that will help others understand why you want to make that change?

CHALLENGE:	CHOICE:	OUTCOME:

Originally adapted from the works of Marshall Ganz,

Harvard University 10

When listening to the stories of others, listen and pay attention to how the story resonates within you. During the feedback portion, comment on the following.



## Storytelling: Instructions for self-facilitation

### Public Narrative #1

What connects with me?

be specific: choices, feelings/values, images.

What would I like to know more about?

- focusing in: what details and moments do you want to hear more about?
- bridging parts of the story: what gaps in the story did you want to know about?

### Public Narrative #2

What connects with me?

*be specific: choices, feelings/values, images*

What would I like to know more about?

- focusing in: what details and moments do you want to hear more about?
- bridging parts of the story: what gaps in the story did you want to know about?

### Public Narrative #3

What connects with me?

be specific: choices, feelings/values, images

What would I like to know more about?

- focusing in: what details and moments do you want to hear more about?
- bridging parts of the story: what gaps in the story did you want to know about?

### Public Narrative #4

What connects with me?

What would I like to know more about?

- focusing in: what details and moments do you want to hear more about?
- bridging parts of the story: what gaps in the story did you want to know about?

## BARNGA

### Overview

BARNGA is a simulation game that encourages participants to critically consider normative assumptions and cross-cultural communication. It was created by Sivasailam “Thiagi” Thiagarajan in 1980, while working for USAID in Gbarnga, Liberia. He and his colleagues were trying to play Euchre, but all came away from the instructions with different interpretations. He had a ‘Eureka’ moment, realising that conflict arises not just from major or obvious cultural differences but often from subtle, minor cues. He created the game to tease out these subtleties. In this activity, students play a card game silently, each operating with a different set of rules, unaware of them.

### Goals

- 1) To learn to communicate effectively across cultural groups.
- 2) To help students interrogate assumptions they may have about group norms and to critically analyse where those norms have come from, determining whether or not they continue to be useful in new contexts.
- 3) To understand what happens when we are not utilising the same “rules” or “norms” as others in the group.
- 4) To interrogate what the role of communication is in helping us either be confused or understand one another.

### Implementation

This exercise is best implemented early in the semester when students are first learning how to communicate effectively with one another. It illustrates what happens when that communication breaks down.

It is also effective for first-year seminar courses with students who are transitioning to the university with new norms and rules, different from what they are used to.

	<p>Finally, this is great for building intercultural awareness. We tend to make a lot of assumptions about other groups based on our norms.</p>
<p><b>Challenges</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) BARNGA is complicated. For further insight into the game how it is played in a classroom, please <a href="#">view this video</a>.</li> <li>2) The game will require most of a class period (roughly 45 minutes to an hour) for students to complete and debrief.</li> <li>3) Consider the special restrictions of your class. BARNGA will require that students be able to move around and sit around tables or clusters of desks. It will not likely be a doable activity in lecture halls.</li> <li>4) Students with disabilities that affect their ability to move around the room or hold cards may have difficulty taking part in this activity.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Materials</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <a href="#">BARNGA Game Rules</a></li> <li>2) <a href="#">Tournament Guidelines and Discussion Guide</a></li> <li>3) Shortened deck of cards, enough for each group (2-7 and Aces)</li> <li>4) Table Marker for grouping</li> <li>5) Scrap Paper</li> <li>6) Pens or Markers</li> </ol>
<p><b>Citations</b></p>	<p>Sivasailam “Thiagi” Thiagarajan with Raja Thiagarajan, <i>BARNGA: A Simulation Game on Cultural Clashes</i>, Boston: Intercultural Press, 2006</p>

## Session Sequence

Lesson Structure	Time <i>(Estimated amount of time for each component)</i>	Activity Content and Instructions
<b>Introduction</b>	3 mins	The instructor welcomes the class and provides an overview of the activity: In this activity, you will learn a new game but learn how to communicate effectively through playing the game. We will also learn how to work well in a cross-cultural group.
<b>What is BARNGA?</b>	5 mins	<p><b>Give a brief overview of the game and how it will be played</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Today we will be playing a simulation called BARNGA. The name BARNGA comes from the name of a town in Liberia, where the game originates.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide a brief history of the game, as outlined in the overview, if necessary</li> </ol> </li> <li>2) In small groups, you will receive some rules for BARNGA, which no one has played before. You will get a few minutes to study the rules and practice playing the game at your table.</li> <li>3) After a few minutes, the rules will be taken away and from that moment on, there will be no verbal communication – that means no speaking, no writing out words, and no signing of words.</li> </ol>

		<p>4) A tournament will begin, and people will be moving from table to table.</p> <p>5) After a few rounds, we will discuss what happened.</p>
<p><b>Practice and Simulation</b></p>	<p>25-30 mins</p>	<p><b>Break students into small groups (4-6) for the simulation</b></p> <p>1) Reiterate rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. You will have 5 minutes to study the rules and practice 5 tricks.</li> <li>b. The rules will then be taken away and NO verbal communication will be allowed. You may gesture or draw pictures (No Words!) but you cannot speak, draw, or write words.</li> <li>c. The tournament will begin, and you will have a few minutes to play at your home table in silence.</li> <li>d. Tournament scoring is explained in the guide.</li> <li>e. Each round will last a few minutes and at the end of each round players should move as outlined on the tournament guide.</li> </ul> <p>2) Give students time to review the rule sheets, ensuring that the different rules are distributed evenly among the groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Have them take rule sheets from under the table tents, look them over, and then begin practicing. Have them try to deal the cards out while they are looking over the rules.</li> <li>b. After a few minutes of practicing, collect the rules. Do not make a big process out of this; just say it is time to start playing and they no longer get to have the rules in front of them.</li> </ul>



		<p>3) Announce the start of the tournament:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Continue to tell students that they keep score as explained in the guide. (Do not respond if they ask for your interpretation of the guide, politely encourage them to read the guide sheet, which they are able to keep throughout the game duration).</li> <li>b. Remind and reinforce – no verbal communication!</li> <li>c. End round one after 5 minutes</li> <li>d. Hold 3 or 4 rounds, but do not announce this – just end after 4 rounds.</li> </ol> <p>4) Announce the end of the tournament.</p>
<p><b>What is a Debrief?</b></p>	<p>5 mins</p>	<p><b>Bring the class back together for a large group debrief and use the first few minutes to explain what a debrief entails.</b></p> <p>1) Set up the class in a circle or other arrangement for debriefing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Do not let them start talking about how things went until they have calmed down.</li> <li>b. Many students may be frustrated, others will be laughing and wanting to share, but explain that we want to hear everyone so hold onto your thoughts.</li> </ol> <p>2) Explain what debriefing is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A time to discover together what happened and what it all means. We will examine all the pieces of the puzzle, and such process takes everyone's participation.</li> </ol>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Debriefing gives us a chance to reflect on a common experience, in this case playing BARNGA.</li> <li>c. Debriefing helps to make the discussion as rich as possible and helps us to collectively learn from each other.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Let's Debrief P. 1 (Descriptive)</b></p>	<p>10 mins</p>	<p><b>Lead the first debrief</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What was going through your mind when...? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. BARNGA was introduced?</li> <li>b. You first began the game?</li> <li>c. The rules were taken away from you?</li> <li>d. You had to swap table?</li> <li>e. You were playing with a crowd from a new table?</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) What were you thinking during the game? Did your feelings change?</li> <li>3) What were your greatest successes and frustrations?</li> <li>4) If the rules come up here, do not stay there. Encourage them to mention other frustrations, too.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Let's Debrief P. 2 (Applied)</b></p>	<p>20 mins</p>	<p><b>Lead the second debrief</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Some possible problems to highlight that arose during the game: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Each group did its best, but all had different sets of circumstances and ground rules.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- b. Most of the participants discovered different rules but did not know exactly how they were different.
- c. Even if you knew how rules were different, it was not clear how to bridge those differences.
- d. Communicating with others is difficult and requires sensitivity and creativity.
- e. When the differences are hidden or few, it may even be more difficult to resolve them than if they were many and obvious.
- f. Despite many similarities, people have differences in the way they do things...you have to understand and reconcile those differences in order to function effectively in a group.

2) Ask students: Were there any other problems that arose while playing this game?

3) Split students into groups of three and let them take 10 minutes to answer the following questions:

- a. What specific “real-life” situations does BARNGA simulate?
- b. What does the simulation suggest about what to do when you are in this situation in the “real world”?
- c. What were the underlying causes of the problems that arose in this session?
- d. Have you ever had an experience where there was a rule difference that you did not know about? How did your view of things change once you became aware of it? In retrospect, how would you do things differently if you knew what you know now, in this game?
- e. When are you all likely to encounter situations in the real world like BARNGA? What would you like to happen when you experience ‘rule differences’ in the future? How will you increase the likelihood of having a positive experience?

		<p>4) Bring the class back together as a full group and have students share their thoughts from the group conversations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What interesting things did you discuss? What was surprising?</li> <li>What did you think the simulation suggests about the “real world”?</li> <li>What do you think the simulation teaches us about communication and conflict?</li> <li>Ask - How is BARNGA related to this course?</li> </ol>
Let's Debrief P. 3 (Takeaways)	5 mins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give each student an index card and have them write down one important thing they learned from BARNGA.</li> <li>Collect cards and re-distribute them randomly.</li> <li>Go around and ask each student to read out loud the card they now have.</li> </ol>
Closing	5 mins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank everyone for their participation in playing BARNGA.</li> <li>Reiterate certain points and takeaways from the debrief.</li> <li>Emphasise applicability to the course.</li> </ol>

**Table 1**

<b>Cards</b>	You have 28 cards to play the game: cards from each suit between 2 and 7, and the <b>ace</b> . <b>The ace is the weakest card (lowest).</b>
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<b>Starting the game</b>	The person who is at the left of the dealer plays first. The others take turns laying down one card each. These cards together make what is called a trick. It is possible that some players may not have any cards left to play for the last trick.
<b>Taking a trick</b>	The person who has played the strongest card takes the trick and sets it aside face down.
<b>The next round</b>	The person who took the trick starts the next round. Do it again until all cards have been played.
<b>Following suit</b>	The person who starts the round can play a card of any suit. The other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit if they have one). If a player does not have a card of the same suit, (s)he plays any other card. The trick is taken by the strongest card of the correct suit.
<b>Trump</b>	<b>Diamonds</b> cards are trump. If a player does not have a card in the requested suit, (s)he can play a Diamond. However, some other player may also play a trump, because this player does not have a card of the first suit. In this case, the HIGHEST TRUMP wins the trick.
<b>The end of the game- Win/Lose</b>	The game ends when all cards have been played. The player with the most tricks win the game. The player with the least tricks loses.

## Table 2

<b>Cards</b>	You have 28 cards to play the game: cards from each suit between 2 and 7, and the <b>ace</b> . <b>The ace is the strongest card (highest).</b>
<b>Starting the game</b>	The person who is at the left of the dealer plays first. The others take turns laying down one card each. These cards together make what is called a trick. It is possible that some players may not have any cards left to play for the last trick.
<b>Taking a trick</b>	The person who has played the strongest card takes the trick and sets it aside face down.
<b>The next round</b>	The person who took the trick starts the next round. Do it again until all cards have been played.
<b>Following suit</b>	The person who starts the round can play a card of any suit. The other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit if they have one). If a player does not have a card of the same suit, (s)he plays any other card. The trick is taken by the strongest card of the correct suit.
<b>Trump</b>	<b>Hearts</b> cards are trump. If a player does not have a card in the requested suit, (s)he can play a heart card. However, some other player may also play a trump, because this player does not have a card of the first suit. In this case, the HIGHEST TRUMP wins the trick.
<b>The end of the game- Win/Lose</b>	The game ends when all cards have been played. The player with the most tricks win the game. The player with the least tricks loses.



### Table 3

<b>Cards</b>	You have 28 cards to play the game: cards from each suit between 2 and 7, and the <b>ace</b> . <b>The ace is the weakest card (lowest).</b>
<b>Starting the game</b>	The person who is at the left of the dealer plays first. The others take turns laying down one card each. These cards together make what is called a trick. It is possible that some players may not have any cards left to play for the last trick.
<b>Taking a trick</b>	The person who has played the strongest card takes the trick and sets it aside face down.
<b>The next round</b>	The person who took the trick starts the next round. Do it again until all cards have been played.
<b>Following suit</b>	The person who starts the round can play a card of any suit. The other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit if they have one). If a player does not have a card of the same suit, (s)he plays any other card. The trick is taken by the strongest card of the correct suit.
<b>Trump</b>	<b>Spades</b> cards are trump. If a player does not have a card in the requested suit, (s)he can play a Spade card. However, some other player may also play a trump, because this player does not have a card of the first suit. In this case, the HIGHEST TRUMP wins the trick.
<b>The end of the game- Win/Lose</b>	The game ends when all cards have been played. The player with the most tricks win the game. The player with the least tricks loses.

## Table 4

<b>Cards</b>	You have 28 cards to play the game: cards from each suit between 2 and 7, and the <b>ace</b> . <b>The ace is the strongest card (highest).</b>
<b>Starting the game</b>	The person who is at the left of the dealer plays first. The others take turns laying down one card each. These cards together make what is called a trick. It is possible that some players may not have any cards left to play for the last trick.
<b>Taking a trick</b>	The person who has played the strongest card takes the trick and sets it aside face down.
<b>The next round</b>	The person who took the trick starts the next round. Do it again until all cards have been played.
<b>Following suit</b>	The person who starts the round can play a card of any suit. The other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit if they have one). If a player does not have a card of the same suit, (s)he plays any other card. The trick is taken by the strongest card of the correct suit.
<b>The end of the game- Win/Lose</b>	The game ends when all cards have been played. The player with the most tricks wins the game. The player with the least tricks loses.

# National and International Activities

## Local pilots

Each partner organised local pilots to test the different tools on a group of staff and NEETs who were not familiar with the tools. The training for these pilots was held by the Support Group Network.

## Before the pilots

### NEETs

Most of the NEETs in the pilots were linked to the partners' educational systems. Some were recruited through voluntary sectors and work guidance counsellors. Even though a few were in education, many showed typical NEETs traits and were not employed or at risk of leaving their enrolled educational programs.

### The recruitment of NEETs

Partners used different methods to find NEETs for the pilots, like visiting classrooms, talking to people they knew, using social media, and calling them directly. It is important to mention that some partners had a hard time getting NEETs to join the pilot even after recruiting them. This happened arguably because the target group is not easy to engage, and sometimes partners were new to working with them at the beginning of the project.

### Preparation for the Pilot

Several partners found that the material and flyers provided by the project were too complicated to distribute to NEETs without additional context. Partners spent time communicating with the target group, but this was challenging due to the limited experience of staff with the tools. While this lack of experience was beneficial during the pilots, it posed an obstacle in recruiting and preparing the participants.

## The Staff

The staff participating in the local pilots across partner countries included teachers, assistants, former NEETs, administrative staff, project leaders, and work counsellors.

### The Recruitment of Staff

The partners used various approaches to bring in staff for the workshops. Some were picked because they already worked with the target group, others because they were

available, and some were chosen to enhance skills in their organisations. In general, recruiting staff was a lot easier than recruiting NEETs for the pilots.

### **The experience of NEETs**

Although there were some differences between the partners, the overall feedback from the pilots indicates that NEETs preferred the more practical tools in the ReACT model. The tools that were heavier on theory seemed to be more challenging for NEETs to use. In some cases, a few NEETs did not show up for the second day of the first pilot or left before the pilot sessions were completed. Possible reasons for this include language barriers, organisers not effectively conveying the value of the pilots to NEETs, and an overload of information in a short timeframe. However, adjustments were made based on the second national pilots and activities arranged after the initial pilot, indicating a better alignment of tools and activities with the preferences and needs of NEETs.

### **The experience of staff members**

The consensus among partners is that staff members benefited more from the pilots and appreciated the value of engaging with NEETs on a more personal level. Staff, mostly highly educated personnel, also found value in tools that were heavier on theory.

### **Tools of the LTT (Learning, Teaching, and Training)**

While there were variations in the tools present at different pilots, efforts were made to cover all tools. Based on feedback, a few tools stood out as more popular choices for NEETs, with Forum Theatre being the most popular, followed by Storytelling, Strategic Planning, and Interculturality.

### **Learning Points**

According to partner feedback, the general learning point from the pilots is that theory-heavy tools need adjustments to better suit NEETs, although they still hold value for staff members. The data also suggest that partners who customised activities based on their knowledge of “their” NEETs (e.g., translations, selecting specific tools) achieved more meaningful learning. This implies that facilitators may need some experience with the tools before they reach their full effectiveness.

### Reflections of the NEETs after the Pilots

The NEETs had varied experiences in the workshops. Some of the NEETs dropped out of the pilots, and did not see the value, while others became more engaged in the project. Several partners reported that NEETs expressed interest in applying the tools to other aspects of their lives and different projects, whereas some of the NEETs who attended the pilots did not stay throughout the sessions.

### Reflections of the Staff after the Pilots

Similarly, staff members had diverse experiences in the pilots. Most reports suggest that staff recognised the benefits of the tools but needed active participation in the pilots to comprehend the project fully. Initial lack of understanding made it challenging for staff to recruit NEETs and advocate for the project effectively. However, post-participation, staff acknowledged the value, and in some cases, involved NEETs in other aspects of their work. Certain tools also triggered strong emotions, prompting staff to express the need for better preparation to handle such situations.

## International Activities

The NEETs for NEETs (N4N) project focused not only on local and regional accomplishments but also on creating European added value through international activities. These activities encompassed transferring the ReACT empowerment method from Sweden to other European countries, fostering international mobility and exchanges, and establishing concepts for European mobility schemes.

- **Adapting the ReACT Empowerment Model: International Co-Creation to Improve the Concept:**
  - The ReACT model and the "NEETs training NEETs on the local level" concept were initially developed by Swedish partners in collaboration with a group of NEETs.
  - Local workshops in Sweden piloted the ReACT empowerment methods and analysed their adaptability to the new target group of NEETs, forming an initial draft of the concept.
  - Local pilots were subsequently conducted in Oslo/Norway and Stuttgart/Germany. The Swedish N4N project team collaborated with local teams to ensure a high-quality transfer of the concept to other European countries.
  - Collaborative online meetings identified the needs of the target group in Oslo and Norway, leading to the definition of learning goals, content, and methods for the local pilot trainings.

- Learning materials were produced in local languages, online learning environments were created, and the concept was piloted in Oslo and Stuttgart, followed by evaluation processes and feedback analysis.
- The finalisation of the compendium included the description of the training concept, curricula, hybrid training methods, and learning materials.

### **Main Pillars of Successful Co-Creation:**

- The Swedish partners created a comprehensive training model with a toolbox for ReACT trainings.
- Collaborative online meetings identified the needs of the target group in Oslo and Norway.
- Definition of learning goals, content, and methods for the local pilot trainings in Oslo and Stuttgart.
- Production of learning material in local languages.
- Creation of an online learning environment.
- Piloting of the concept in Oslo and Stuttgart, including evaluation processes.
- Analysis of feedback from the evaluation process.
- Amendment of concepts.
- Finalisation of the compendia, including a detailed description of the training concept.

The international co-creation and piloting in three different countries showcased the European added value, enhancing the quality of learning and teaching through diverse training contexts.

### **International Learning, Teaching and Training Activities (LTTs)**

The N4N training concept and the associated compendium focused on providing training for the target group of NEETs, involving participants from various European countries. These international trainings adhered to the same principles as local trainings but necessitated a special approach due to challenges such as language barriers and intercultural differences. The so-called Learning, Teaching, and Training (LTT) activities, integral to the N4N project, were designed to address these unique circumstances. The N4N international trainings enriched the project with diverse European experiences, broadening perspectives for both NEET participants and pedagogical staff in the field of adult education involved in transnational trainings.



## LTT Stuttgart:

The first Learning, Teaching, and Training activity (LTT) took place in Stuttgart, Germany, organised by VHS. The three-day Train-the-Trainer workshop, facilitated by representatives from SGN and STC, drew from the ReACT model and local pilot training experiences.

NEETs from Stuttgart, Region Västra Götaland, and Oslo actively participated in the LTT, contributing to a co-creative environment. Co-creation activities involved both NEETs and staff, with mixed training sessions and separate groups for reflections and meta-level analysis after the training. Approximately 40 staff members and



NEETs underwent training in Stuttgart, guided by Support Group Network (SGN) and Save the Children Sweden (STC) using the co-creative ReACT model. Findings from the first LTT formed the foundation for subsequent training activities within the project.

## The recruitment of NEETs

The recruitment of NEETs for the LTT in Stuttgart was primarily done through the local pilots and vigorous recruitment through meetings, digital information and follow ups with the NEETs. Two of the partners in the project were unable to recruit NEETs for the LTT, due to NEETs dropping out. This might also be due to the international aspect of travelling for the NEETs, which some of the participants were quite unfamiliar, and comfortable with. Some local NEETs from Stuttgart faced the problem that they were part of an educational programme financed by the German national level. Quality rules connected to the funding did not allow too many absences from classes that took part daily. Only some students from the programme got the allowance to participate in the LTT in Stuttgart.

## Preparation of NEETs for the LTT

The NEETs attending the LTT Stuttgart were heavily prepared by the partners, especially the NEETs travelling from Sweden and Norway since they also had to prepare for a journey abroad. The staff spent hours in meetings with the NEETs to prepare them for facilitating workshops during the LTT. Before the LTT took place, participants from Sweden and Norway had the chance to get to know each other more by attending virtual meetings on Microsoft Teams.

## Learning points

Properly engaging NEETs in the project requires investment in time in both recruitment and preparation for holding workshops in the ReACT tools.

## The Recruitment of staff

Partners recruited staff with close connections to NEETs, including both individuals who had been involved in the project previously and new participants. The aim was to have NEETs train the trainers and ensure the project's scalability within the partner organisations.

## During the LTT

### Experience of the NEETs

NEETs reported a sense of ownership and pride, with partners noting overwhelmingly positive and potentially life-changing experiences for the youths involved. The findings indicate a significant outcome, as NEETs expressed a strong desire to continue working with the tools presented during the LTT.



### Experience of the Staff

Staff members participating in the LTT generally had a positive experience and expressed increased motivation to integrate the tools into their workplaces.

## Tools of the LTT

The LTT covered a broad range of tools, and interestingly, NEETs showed a preference for continuing to work with the tools they presented during the LTT. This suggests that working with specific tools creates a sense of ownership among NEETs.

## Learning points

The level of NEET engagement with specific tools correlates with a stronger connection to the learning outcomes. Engagement outside the project indicates that the tools empower NEETs.

## After the LTT

### Reflections of the NEETs

Post-LTT reports suggest that NEETs are feeling positive and empowered by the workshop, with some expressing a desire to continue working with the tools in the future. However, there is a common thread indicating that NEETs could have been better prepared for the workshops, and with more preparation, they could have facilitated the tools independently.

## Reflections of the Staff

Staff members reported a positive impact from the LTT and expressed a desire to become even more engaged with the ReACT model. They are also more open to adopting and using the methods in their own organisations.

## INTERVIEWS WITH LTT1 PARTICIPANTS

### *Salem's Experience*

Salem is 24, living in Oslo and is currently taking Norwegian courses. He participated in the Stuttgart training in November, after joining the project in the autumn of 2022. EARLALL spoke with Salem about his experience on December 22, 2022:

#### ***Salem, how did you get involved in the Stuttgart training?***

It was an unexpected opportunity! One of the staff members told one of my friends, who told me about it, and I knew that I really needed to be involved once I'd heard about it.

#### ***What did you learn in the training, and how might that help you with your future plans?***

I want to study interior design and I am currently doing Norwegian classes. It will be hard because everything will be starting from the beginning. From the training, I learnt so many different tools, particularly forum theatre. For the forum theatre, I liked the way that the idea of the 'oppressors' was brought up and it was very eye-opening. I also learnt how to make strategic plans from the group from Sweden. That's the main tool that I could take interest in because I wanted to focus on my future and strategic planning is so important, like learning about timelines and showcasing. I wasn't expecting that I would take such a lesson back, but I realised that that was what I needed, and that feels good.

I want to learn how to use the tools that I learnt about and to hold a workshop for others, either in forum theatre, or strategic planning.

#### ***What did the experience bring you personally?***

It was a fun and interesting experience. When I started, I didn't know the other staff. When I went to Stuttgart with the trainers, we met other people and that's when we got to know each other better. I did make friends too, particularly from Sweden and



Germany. Our communication as a group was so good, in the way we were working together, or the way we woke up early in the morning and had breakfast and went to the sessions. I hadn't travelled much before, besides a few times to Sweden. I want to travel more now, to learn about different cultures.

***Would you try to bring more young people on board for the project?***

I spoke to one of the staff members that I know well after the training. I visited her and told her that we need to get more students to take advantage of this and of what we learnt. So, we are actually doing it, hopefully!

***Jasmina's experience***

Jasmina is living in Sweden and attended the 'Train the Trainer' workshop as a staff and an active participant. EARLALL spoke with her about her experience on December 23, 2023:



***Jasmina, how did you get involved in the project?***

I got an email from my boss saying that I was nominated to go on the training. I didn't really know about the project as I only found out about it at a late stage. But I was very enthusiastic, and I read a bit about it online and wanted to be involved.

***What do you think the main purpose or benefits of the project are?***

It's both about empowering youths, and about empowering professionals to change their mindset in seeing the potential of youths in new ways – at least that is what happened to me. I got a completely new mindset from the project. I saw how I wanted to work, and it was very inspiring.

***What was the most interesting tool that you learnt about from the training?***

The forum theatre was my favourite tool we learnt about! We did forum theatre on two different days. I didn't know about the method before. It was interesting to learn about the method, and to really *do it*. We used forum theatre to practice identifying situations of oppression and understanding the mechanisms of oppression and practising how to react in these situations. Creating our own plays and acting gave us ideas of what to do and what to say in these situations. It was very empowering to do that.



### ***How was the experience personally?***

We travelled for 30 hours from Sweden to Stuttgart, via ferry and train. The best part of this was just spending time with the youths and colleagues. We became a group and we got to spend time with one another and get to know each other in a non-hierarchical situation. On the way back, on the last night on the ferry, we were just playing games in the restaurant and people were looking at us, but we were just enjoying our time! Everyone came with an open mind, and everyone wanted to be there. Of course, it was a long journey and people got tired and that is normal, but from my point of view, it was really very nice.

### ***How do you plan to build on your experience in the training?***

Currently, I am planning a youth forum in a reception centre. This was already planned before the training, but the execution of the forum is now way clearer for me. The training was really useful in helping the planning of the forum because I got inspired and I hope that I can give the same feeling to the youths. I took the idea that the forum must be co-created equally, and I should only support this as the forum leader. We are working now on the idea of including youths in all steps of the process.

My colleague and I are also planning on giving a little workshop to our colleagues who were not there, just to share a little bit about our experience and lessons learnt.

## **LTT2 Borås**

In LTT No. 2 in Borås, participating youth took on the role of trainers, conducting co-creative, self-empowering activities for new NEETs and staff members working with NEETs. This marked a reversal of roles, where experienced NEETs became the new "experts," a key objective of the N4N project.



## **Preparing the NEETs**

NEETs functioning as instructors were well-prepared, with many having participated in LTT1 in Stuttgart or actively worked with the tools locally before LTT2. They were briefed and could engage in discussions with the "expert" staff working with the tools.

## Recruitment the NEETs

Recruiting NEETs for LTT2 was reported to be easier, as more individuals were familiar with the project. The larger number of NEETs and staff members in LTT2 was a result of combining participants from the last LTT with newly recruited ones. Some partners also leveraged contacts working with NEETs to ensure participation.

Two partners did not bring NEETs to LTT1 in Stuttgart, and some partners introduced only new NEETs to Borås. The participants in LTT2 were a mix of those new to the LTT and others with experience from LTT1 in Stuttgart.

## Preparation for the LTT

Although a lot of the NEETs recruited for the LTT were experienced with the tools, partners report having spent a lot of time preparing the NEETs. Since the NEETs were expected to hold the trainings, they were in need of support before the LTT. This was done through physical meetings, digital meetings, and phone calls. For the more inexperienced NEETs, the preparation consisted of preparing the NEETs for what they were expected to do, travelling and practical matters. The “new” staff were minimally prepared for the LTT.

## The Staff

The staff joining the LTT in Borås were both new and experienced with the tools. Some had previous experience from local pilots and LTTs, while some staff members had not participated in earlier activities. Partners recruited based on interest, relation to work with NEETs and strategic competency building. A few of the partners reported slight challenges with recruiting the expected number of staffs for the LTT, due to time restraints and other priorities. This may also be due to the partners’ number of eligible staff that had not previously attended pilots or the LTT1 in Stuttgart.

## Learning points

There is a diversity of experiences among the project partners regarding recruitment challenges.

Some partners found it relatively easy to recruit both staff and NEETs, often through workshops and connections to work tasks. In contrast, other partners encountered difficulties in recruitment.

Recruitment was generally smoother when the tasks and objectives of the LTTs felt directly related to the participants' work. Timing also played a significant role, as recruitment was more successful when it did not conflict with other fixed deadlines or obligations, such as application dates, budget deadlines, or exams.



## Experience of the NEETs

During the three days of the LTT2, the NEETs had the opportunity to engage in various activities, such as scriptwriting and performing scenes, as well as listening to personal stories about life struggles. For many NEETs, presenting in front of a group was a new and challenging experience. Some had prior experience teaching the tools to new groups in their native or second languages, but this time, it was all in English.



The "expert" NEETs took charge of different activities, creating a mix of roles where they alternated between being instructors and learners. Some of the instructors had not attended the previous LTT in Stuttgart but had experience from local activities. Additionally, there was a group of NEETs who participated primarily as learners. The NEETs had varied reactions to the tools they were introduced to. Overall, they found it enjoyable to be instructed by their peers, and the "experts" felt confident in gaining experience in instructing a group and speaking in front of others.

## Experience of the Staff

Staff members who were already familiar with the tools were impressed by the NEETs' confidence and clear development during the activities. Many of the "new" staff members described their observations of the youths instructing in a group as an "eye-opener." They found that the youths were capable of taking a greater leadership role, instructing others, and being more active than many teachers and social workers typically expect from this target group.

## Tools of the LTT2

During the LTT in Borås, several tools were presented, including storytelling, forum theatre, strategic planning, and co-creation, which are described more thoroughly in the tools section.

## Learning Points

Compared to Stuttgart, the LTT in Borås was twice the size. Participants found it more challenging to absorb and process information within these larger groups. Moreover,

the increased group size posed difficulties in terms of leadership and adherence to instructions, resulting in misunderstandings and causing discomfort for some instructors.

The larger group did not have the same opportunities to bond as the smaller Stuttgart group. Additionally, participants had varied reactions to the tools; for example, storytelling triggered old traumas for some youths while inspiring others and boosting their creativity.

The program's tight schedule often limited our opportunities for explanations, reflection, and processing. To ensure sufficient time for these aspects, it is preferable to have a more relaxed schedule that allows for discussions, explanations, and processing. Additionally, dividing the group and including more social activities alongside the program can enhance group cohesion.

### AN INTERVIEW WITH AN LTT2 PARTICIPANT

EARLALL interviewed Noel Berglund, 17 and from Sweden who aspires to be a policeman in the future about his experience in the training and in the NEETs for NEETs project:

#### **Tell us what you did during the workshops in Sweden...**

“During the LTT, we took part in loads of activities and games that mostly involved the theme oppression/oppressed. That was an excellent opportunity for us to build trust and relationships with both the other people representing the youths as well as all the staff. But performing these games we didn't have just fun and get to know each other, but we also had this feeling of why we were doing them. Most of them presented the theme of oppression in a very straightforward way, which made it really easy for us to all get in the same mindset on what we are there to learn and do. One very structured way to show great examples of oppression in our society was when we were all put in different groups and got the task to write a full script and perform a planned-out scene on the theatre stage. We had to include some sort of oppression happening. The person who led the workshop, called the “joker”, were then encouraging people from the crowd to help us solve the issue and help the victim/victims. All these activities and stuff we did were semi useful for what we were learning about but I have to say from personal experience that I got the most out of just listening to other human beings talk about their experiences about



oppression in their life, how they got oppressed from anxiety and depression as an example as well as how they were solving/dealing with them.”

### **Tell us about what you learnt...**

“From these wonderful days, the most important things I took with me was how oppression looks from other perspectives and how it affects other members in society. I got the chance to listen to other people share their feelings of oppression and how they dealt with them, or how some people just learned how to live with them. **I'm so grateful for all the interactions we had about the theme**, but also all the thoughts and feelings I got to take part in. I found that how things affect our feelings and how we feel is what truly makes us human.”

### **Tell us how you took responsibility over the few days...**

“By allowing us to express ourselves and use our voices to enlighten others about what we had on our minds and what we felt, then I feel we took a lot of ownership over what we did. We were all our own leaders with a unique voice and thoughts **that all contributed to really interesting conversations with mind opening subjects**. I feel like everyone did their part of making the activities interesting enough for us to learn something from them or just bond with other people. **Yes, we took ownership, and we made a change. A change in other people's way of thinking.**”

Words of wisdom from a youth from Borås, Noel Berglund, who participated in the Borås LTT:

Please allow me to speak freely from my own perspective:

I was a lost soul wandering our beloved earth with no objective or finish line in sight. But one sunny day, this saviour from above presented this LTT project for me and I couldn't help but to be curious about what it had to offer.

What did I think of the LTT project? I genuinely think the event was thought through and well put together. There was a structured plan and foundation throughout the project to follow but also room for improvising. Just overall a pleasant experience, a memory I would choose to relive again with no hesitation. But the most valuable thing is of course none other than the interactions between everybody, that's something I believe is a big part of life. All the people you get to meet, all the lives you get to take part of. Why just live one life, your own life when you can live multiple with the help of other human beings. And now, please do me a favour and appreciate all the people you are surrounded with. While you are doing that, take also into consideration the odds that you actually met these people throughout your journey in life when there's almost an endless amount of human beings wandering this earth. I just think the human being is such a beautiful concept, all different but we all have one thing in common. We all share a soul. And when we make meaningful and lasting relations, I would like to think our souls make a connection that lasts forever. Maybe there is an afterlife, or we pass to heaven, what do I know? I may perhaps only be a young and dumb teenager, but I want to believe our souls will live on but just not our actual physical body. You could go through life thinking to yourself "ah, why bother forcing myself to meet and interact with all these people when I could just save myself the trouble?" But it's such a beautiful aspect to life and I really do think it's something we take for granted, we don't have forever and that's something that gives our interactions and relations with people so much more value. If we had forever, an infinite supply of time then there wouldn't be a good reason to appreciate all these things. People say death is their biggest fear and so on, but the truth and reality is the fact that death gives life meaning. Death gives life a purpose, a clock that is always ticking to remind you that you need to appreciate the small things in life while you still can.

Please allow me to share a beautiful quote I like to live by that plays a role in this, “Don’t cry because it’s over, smile because it happened”. Why this is so touching to me is simply because we like to mourn stuff that’s over or gone, for an example: “Man, the fact that LTT project only lasted for 3 days makes me so sad”. Yes, there is nothing wrongful with being in a negative mood based on the fact that it’s over and not coming back but consider being thankful for the opportunity to actually take part in it. And I would like to think about life as a whole with this quote, we are sad about stuff that also includes something worth appreciating. So my advice to you as a stupid kid, appreciate things more because there will not always be a tomorrow.

NEETs’ dream scenario, as regards the learning points of staff in this project

Some more words of wisdom from Noel Berglund, who participated in the Borås LTT:

I want you to see us, like actually us. Not just a group of young people without job or studies that needs directions. Please see us in a way that you would look at anyone else. Lets compare it to a race, you adults with your fancy jobs are already at the finishing line while others are just simply not as fast or just taking a little water break along the way. While you may stand at the finishing line looking back at us, thinking, where did it all go wrong ? Perhaps we were all meant to finish as well but just needed that extra bit of support. We are all different, all humans but different shapes. Its not easy for a square shaped figure to get along well in a circle shaped society, and then its very easy to point and laugh at the odd one not fitting in. Plus all shapes doesn’t want to rot away in a 9-5 office employment, just because we are young doesn’t mean we also have our dreams and passions. While approaching us, don’t see us as a potential slave to some scummy company but instead another human being, just like you.



## Brief description of partners and regional cooperation

The NEETs for NEETs project partners are regional stakeholders from Germany, Norway, and Sweden who work with NEETs in various projects, service offerings, and educational programs. These partners have diverse backgrounds, including labour market services, adult education providers, municipalities, NGOs, and migrant organisations. They share the ability to involve both staff and NEETs in project activities. Additionally, the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL) was part of the consortium, serving as a bridge to other regions, countries, and the European level. EARLALL also contributed with effective communication and dissemination tools to enhance the project's visibility.

The following organisations were partners in the NEETs for NEETs project:

### Region Västra Götaland

Region Västra Götaland (VGR) is the county council governing the territory of Västra Götaland with 1.6 million inhabitants, being one of the twenty fastest-growing European regions. The region's most important growth dynamo is the cross-sectoral collaboration between industry, education and other stakeholders. The administration of folk high schools in Region Västra Götaland (VGR) was established as a regional body in 1999 with the aim to facilitate the coordination between folk high schools administered by the region. The VGR administration of folk high schools is the head of six regional folk high schools, whose area of responsibility is to conduct primary education, upper secondary education and post-secondary education with different specialisation. For individuals not being familiar with studies, nor receiving the right adaptations based on their needs, the folk high school's individualised treatment and pedagogy are often crucial. The administration of folk high schools in Region Västra Götaland (VGR) is also involved in multiple projects, where the main aim is to stifle exclusion of marginalised groups in society. A handful of these projects are, and have recently been, coordinated by the administration of folk high schools. Our international collaborations are done together with a myriad of different actors, including, but not limited to, counties, other regions, public administrations at European and national levels, companies, and educational institutions.

Among relevant projects, we have chosen to highlight the following: VGR, through our administration of folk high schools, was during 2020-2022 the project coordinator for a project financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), called the We-project (Vi-projektet). The aim of this project was to reach improvements of 1000 NEETs in approaching work or studies and gaining increases in their health, feeling of coherence and empowerment. More than 30 partners were involved, municipalities,



associations of local authorities, universities, folk high schools, and civil society organisations. The total budget of this project was 10 million euros, approximately. The results from this project are of high relevance for carrying out our key activities in NEETs for NEETs.

### **Work tasks of Dalsland Folk High School**

The Dalsland Folk High School works with many different vulnerable groups. Many NEETs, or people in the risk of becoming NEETs, are to be found among our participants. At our school, we often put emphasis on the importance of an increased “sense of coherence” among both our participants (students) and teachers as well as other staff members – something that arguably is needed for everyone’s wellbeing in an existentialist perspective, i.e., finding a deeper meaning in life.

The Dalsland Folk High School in Trollhättan is a folk high school located in both weak and average socio-economic neighbourhoods. The social pedagogic education branch of our folk high school works to strengthen people by enacting group processes resulting in the students themselves gaining the capability of strengthening others in their professional role. These initiatives of ours are based on a salutogenic approach - where we focus on strengths of the participants – so that they themselves become able to use their strengths as a method in their professional role.

### **Work tasks of Gothenburg Folk High School**

Gothenburg Folk High School is a folk high school located in both in socio-economic “strong” neighbourhoods (Nya Varvet) and socio-economically “challenged” neighbourhoods (Biskopsgården) of Gothenburg. At Nya Varvet, we work with NEETs who are mostly characterised by their mental illness (disorders, social phobia, not leaving their homes, gaming, alcoholism or other addictions). We try to create a window of opportunity for them; giving them a chance to enjoy the environment of folk high schools, without pressuring them too much by giving them curriculums, homework, etc. We invited these ones to the first pilot of NEETs for NEETs. In Biskopsgården, we are working with NEETs with more self-confidence, generally speaking. I.e., they have motivation, and are not that troubled by mental illness – compared to our hand-picked NEETs from Nya Varvet who participated in Pilot no. 1. However, the NEETs from Biskopsgården are still facing problems and obstacles in society, due to language barriers, discrimination because of ethnicity and/or culture, etc. We invited these ones to the second pilot of NEETs for NEETs.

The main task of the administration of folk high schools in Region Västra Götaland (VGR) in this project has been to coordinate the project. That is, to safeguard that the project management, monitoring, quality assurance and implementation of activities & project results are put in place and delivered according to plans & expectations. With

that being said, VGR has been highly engaged in project activities as well, not only operating as manager, witnessing the project from a far. VGR has brought both staff members and learners to all international events (Learning, Teaching & Training Activities, LTTs), Transnational Project Meetings, as well as Multiplier events, e.g., the final dissemination conference in Brussels.

As mentioned above, we have coordinated previous projects where co-creation and empowerment have been main components. In the aforementioned We-project, we got to learn more about the skills and experiences of Save the Children & Support Group Network, as regards these thematic fields. We saw efficiency and decisiveness in their work in empowering asylum seekers in Sweden, and we wanted to learn from their approaches. Would there even be a possibility to apply their approaches and tools on other individuals with fewer opportunities in society? - we asked ourselves. We therefore decided to ask Save the Children & Support Group Network to embark a project focusing on empowering young people Not in Education, Employment or in Training (NEETs). Thus, the project idea behind NEETs for NEETs was created.

For our organisation, we have gained many lessons learned out of this project. Some of them are highlighted below:

- \* We have learnt that youths do not appreciate to be labelled NEETs. Mainly, according to us, due to two reasons: 1). The label (abbreviation) is invented by the adult world, and 2.) the characteristics embedded in the NEET-label are not desirable ones. Seemingly none of the youths who participated in the project felt any sense of acknowledgement or belonging by being lumped together with other youths under the NEET-labelled umbrella. This was a big lesson for us (despite the somewhat obvious predictability, one could argue). Therefore, our project name was not emphasised in any of our local project activities (Pilots, LTTs or Multiplier Events). For example, our local conference was instead called: Youth Power for Change!

- \* The NEET category obviously entails a diverse, heterogenous group of youngsters. We knew that on beforehand. However, before this project, we were not aware of possible distinctions to be made within this diverse group – especially the distinction between A). NEETs who have been excluded from the labour market due to discriminatory practices, and B). NEETs who have not been able to adapt to studies or the labour market due to mental health aspects. Furthermore, we noticed in our first local pilot that the ReACT tools were empowering group A, whereas a majority of the tools were not applicable for empowering group B. This is an important insight, since we now, thanks to this local pilot, have become wiser in trying to figure out how to support NEETs struggling with mental health. That is; we now know that they need something else than tools being presented in big classrooms, despite the co-creative dimensions of the tools. After discussing with these youths, a month after the pilot, it became clear to us that the number of presenters, combined with the pace of the

workshop and the number of ideas & theories being presented, became too overwhelming for them.

## **Borås Stad**

The Working Life Department at Borås Stad works to ensure that individuals who are far from the labour market achieve self-sufficiency. The department's mission is to enable citizens to partake in working life and to become integrated and included members of society, and to ensure personal economic sustainability. The department consists of different fields of activities including Jobb Borås, Integration and services for National Minorities, Safe Neighbourhoods Program and NEETs and youth summer employment.

Jobb Borås serves as a centralised gateway to the city's entire labour market initiatives, including all labour market internships, and manages the city's labour market employments. In each case where the participant relies on financial assistance, Jobb Borås will investigate and, if possible, enable the individual to obtain labour market employment in collaboration with the Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen). Social Sustainability involves working according to the Preparation for Employment Action Plan.

### **Prioritised target groups are:**

1. Individuals' dependent on social welfare support
2. NEETs and young adults with disabilities in particular
3. Ex-convicts and sober addicts
4. Individuals with limited language skills and low education levels in need of coordinated interventions.

Jobb Borås offers the following interventions based on individual planning:

1. Job focused interventions
2. Competence enhancement
3. Socially strengthening interventions
4. Health-related interventions

The Working Life Department's tasks were directly related to project result number 4. The task was to equip NEETs with pedagogical and methodological competences, in order for NEETs to carry out, facilitate and lead workshops as trainers. The department also organised two events, the 2<sup>nd</sup> LTT or Learning, Teaching and Training Activity on 25 – 27 April 2023 in Borås and a Local Multiplier Event on 10 November 2023.

New insights into international cooperation and learning from others: Our mission is to work with the NEETs and providing them with meaningful occupation,

which complies with the overall purpose of this project. We want to be involved in developing new ways of working together with others.

The municipal responsibility for activating youth (KAA) is one of the fields of activities at the Working Life Department where the goal is to motivate youths including NEETs back to studies and or work.

**KAA provides:**

1. Placement/youth employment
2. Support in job applications
3. Support before and during studies
4. Study possibilities with adult education
5. Healthy lifestyle activities

The project has created conditions for us to raise awareness and knowledge of what the NEETs do and what they want to do. It has also increased accessibility for the NEETs. The project has given us an insight over different factors that affect vulnerable groups such as NEETs, people with little education, people born outside Europe and people with disabilities. There must be opportunities to complete an education – since this is of great importance for the conditions for establishing oneself in the labour market.

**Oslo Voksenoppl ring Rosenhof (Oslo Adult Education centre Rosenhof)**

Oslo VO Rosenhof, an Adult Education Center is a prominent provider of Norwegian language courses for adults, offering a range of programs from A1 to B2 levels. It is the largest Norwegian language course provider in Norway and offers comprehensive adult education programs, including upper secondary school for adults, the Introduction program for refugees and their families, and various school-based activities aimed at fostering integration through social connections.

The institution has been actively engaged in Erasmus+ projects since 2016, encouraging staff participation in international projects that promote active citizenship, social inclusion, and pathways to employment. In addition, Oslo VO Rosenhof has undertaken the responsibility of achieving the project goal no. 5 of this project, which involves compiling the NEETs for NEETs Handbook with the support of NAV Bjerke.

The school places a strong emphasis on cooperation with civil society and active citizenship. To facilitate this, it has employed a volunteer program coordinator and a project-funded volunteer specialist dedicated to fostering an inclusive culture at the school. Their focus is on supporting local civic organisations in enhancing student participation in volunteer work and related activities.

One of the primary motivations for joining the NEETs for NEETs project was to explore innovative ways to engage students in project work with a student-centred approach. The goal was to empower students and prevent them from becoming NEETs. The exercises based on the ReACT model in the N4N project provided valuable tools that helped teachers recognise the potential in participants, tailor training to individual needs, and connect students more effectively with the right support agencies.

Participation in this project provided Oslo VO Rosenhof with a unique opportunity to test student involvement and co-creation on a small scale. The experiences gained from this project were intended to inform the institution's efforts to involve students more extensively in the future. Student participation has been seen as a means to enhance the understanding of the power of relationships and the importance of building connections between students and teachers, ultimately making learning more personalised.

Initially, the institution focused on one language group, leveraging the bilingual skills of one of its employees (Norwegian and Somali). This approach allowed Rosenhof to test and develop the method with a group of students without language barriers. The group had regular meetings to discuss and develop tools in their mother tongue, fostering strong group cohesion. As the group gained confidence with the tools, they expanded to offer training in Norwegian to other groups, including students with different mother tongues.

Although the institution's experience with the project is qualitative rather than quantitative, it has been a transformative journey in building confident NEETs who have become experts in instructing other students and teachers. This experience has been valuable for understanding student involvement and co-creation, areas that Adult Education Centers in Norway are mandated to improve according to new curriculums. Oslo VO Rosenhof believes that the education sector can offer sustainable social practices by listening to the advice of vulnerable youth experts. The knowledge gained through this experience will serve as an essential foundation for future targeted efforts to prevent student dropouts.

## NAV Bjerke

NAV Bjerke employs a team of resources dedicated to working with different aspects of unemployed young adults, therefore encountering the core group of this project on a daily basis. NAV Bjerke was one of the first offices in Oslo to build a team working with all aspects of the welfare system and therefore has years of experience with working holistically with NEETs. Generally, NEETs will register due to unemployment, and thereby get guidance, and social welfare from NAV Bjerke. However, NAV Bjerke



also has outreach programs targeting NEETs to help them get the services they have a right to.

NAV Bjerkes main tasks in this project has been to contribute to the project goals by arranging pilots and attending LTTs with our staff and NEETs. NAV Bjerke has also had the task of helping Oslo Rosenhof VO to complete project result number 5, finalising the NEETs for NEETs project handbook.

There were many reasons for NAV Bjerke' participation in the project. 1) Due to the innovative approach to user involvement, 2) NEETs are a prioritised group in the Norwegian welfare system, 3) Inspiration and learning from working with other partners facing similar challenges.

Since NAV Bjerke works with NEETs through our primary services, but also through other projects in Norway, we are always striving to learn from others and to adopt best practices.

Throughout the project, NAV Bjerke has struggled to implement the learning from the project, this is primarily due to the way NAV Bjerke works with NEETs on a daily basis. We usually do not directly interact in competency building for the NEETs, so it has been difficult to recruit and keep the NEETs engaged. NAV Bjerke has also had some changes in staff throughout the project. We have however, become more aware on how to work with NEETs rather than for NEETs, and we have built the competency of our staff member participating in the project.

### **Volkshochschulverband Baden-Württemberg**

Volkshochschulverband Baden-Württemberg (vhs BW) is the association of 161 Volkshochschulen in the German Bundesland Baden-Württemberg. Volkshochschulen (vhs schools) are adult education centres that offer a broad range of learning offers in many different sectors of learning. Vhs schools are usually run by municipalities or districts, and they are part of public services in the field of education. More than 2 million participants visit training courses of the vhs schools in Baden-Württemberg every year. They offer a wide variety of courses in the field of continuing education for all groups of the population. Educational programmes range from vocational training to language classes including German as a foreign language, intercultural training and courses in visual arts and creativity, health education, political education, etc. As public schools for adults, Volkshochschulen also host classes to prepare adults for general school exams on all levels (German school leaving certificates "Hauptschulabschluss and Realschulabschluss" (relevant for entering Vocational Education and Training) and "Abitur" (relevant for entering University)). In addition, training in the field of basic education is currently gaining importance including literacy classes and courses supporting basic mathematics, IT and financial skills.



Volkshochschulverband Baden-Württemberg has been active in various programmes, initiatives and projects involving disadvantaged groups of learners including young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEETs).

Examples of relevant projects at national and regional level are first of all the project “Lernen fürs Leben (learning for life)”, funded by the German National Ministry of Education addressing disadvantaged groups with a need for basic skills training. The project combines life skills with literacy, basic mathematics, and IT skills. Participants are, among others, jobless and homeless people. The project “Educational work in focus groups with people in precarious situations” explores the life contexts of the target group by actively integrating people in precarious situations into the project work. The project “BEF Alpha classes” (vocational orientation, language and basic skills training for illiterate refugees), funded by the region of Baden-Württemberg, paves the way to general education, training and employment for young adult refugees.

At European level, the vhs BW coordinated the ERASMUS+ strategic partnerships BRIDGE -Building up regional initiatives to develop guidance for low-skilled adults, as well as the ERASMUS+ KA3 project BRIDGE+, which addressed skills development and educational guidance with the help of innovative technology. The TALENTS project “New talents for companies - developing the potentials of immigrants and refugees”, also coordinated by the vhs association, aimed to increase inclusion through language training and professional training, facilitating fast access to the labour market. The EaSI project “Fast-track integration in European regions” (FIER) also consisted of developing instruments and strategies for a fast-track labour market integration of disadvantaged groups among refugees and asylum-seekers. All European projects had in common that they followed an empowerment approach, enabling responsibility among participants as much as possible.

Vhs Baden-Württemberg’s main task was to develop the N4N project result 3 (PR3) “NEETs training NEETs on a European level “. This activity involved both, conceptual work for the Learning, Teaching, and Training Activities (LTTs) and the development of a concept for European “NEETs training NEETs” mobilities that can be continued after the project ends in the framework of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobilities. In addition, vhs organised the LTT in Stuttgart and – together with the City of Stuttgart – a multiplier event. Vhs also provided its expertise in some administrative project issues.

Vhs's main interest was to establish a European mobility scheme for disadvantaged groups, that can be offered also after the project ends. This interest was closely linked to the LTTs and to PR3.

In the context of the N4N project, vhs established regional as well as European networks of stakeholders that work with NEETs. These networks form the basis for future European mobilities of NEETs and other disadvantaged persons.

vhs could improve its knowledge on how to work with disadvantaged groups learners in general and on how to involve these groups in European activities and exchanges – or not involve them because of diverse barriers. Unfortunately, bad and sometimes frustrating scenarios occurred throughout the project, e. g. that disadvantaged persons could not participate because of missing documents, no option to stay away from a training, financial reasons of children that could not stay at home alone. We also got an intensive insight into other personal barriers that do not only exclude disadvantaged persons from international mobilities but from participation in the labour market or society. This includes a large variety of mental health aspects (traumas, social phobia, disorders, anxiety, etc.) or just personal bad experiences.

During our local pilots, it has become obvious that the methods and tools we work with are important and a good experience for many participants. In other projects, we are dealing with so-called future skills to be acquired by all persons in society – and in fact there are a lot of similarities between the content of the N4N empowerment trainings and the set of future skills described. We need to further test, how the content of the N4N trainings can be even more simplified and thus usable for target groups with disadvantaged backgrounds. Another finding was that only some of the persons who participated in the local pilots could become trainers and teach these methods themselves.

### City of Stuttgart

Stuttgart is the capital and largest city of the German state of Baden-Württemberg. Its area has a population of 605,997 making it the sixth largest city in Germany. 2.8 million people live in the city's administrative region and 5.3 million people in its metropolitan area. 44% of the population of Stuttgart have a migration background representing people from more than 170 nations and 120 languages. The Department of Integration Policy is responsible for the development, management, implementation and quality control of the Stuttgart local authority agenda on intercultural, interreligious and migration matters. The remit of the Department is the technical implementation - in terms of overall integration policy control and quality management - of Stuttgart's integration targets as defined in the "Stuttgart Pact for Integration" strategy document of 2001. This document specifies two goals and priorities on how the peaceful coexistence of a wide range of population groups and intercultural and interreligious dialogue can best be promoted and organised for maximum benefit to the city: 1. Approximation of equal participation opportunities of migrants in the German population, particularly in the fields of education, employment, access to government services, social and political participation. 2. Use of cultural diversity and the skills and competences of migrants for innovative developments in economy and urban society in particular to increase the number of municipal staff with migration background in the municipality and schools but also in political bodies. A recent challenge is the

integration of the approximately 10.000 refugees which are welcomed as Stuttgarters. The city has managed the accommodation issue and is focusing on the daily integration measures and activities to accelerate the further integration of the refugees. The access to the labour market is one of the core issues the city is currently dealing with as a cross-departmental task and responsibility. The Job Center and Integration Department, mainly engaged in the NEETs for NEETs project, are working hand in hand in cooperation with the relevant actors (economy, social partners, welfare organisations, NGOs, civil society etc.) to support the refugees to access the labour market providing traineeships or job opportunities. The relevant working group is the taskforce connected to integration of refugees. The Job Center is in charge of the labour market access of refugees assigned for social benefits. Our main task of this project was to develop the N4N project result 2 (PR2) "NEETs training Experts". This activity involved, mainly, the conceptual work for the Learning, Teaching, and Training Activity (LTT) in Stuttgart, but also partly the one in Borås.

### **EARLALL - European Association of Regional & Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning**

EARLALL is a Brussels-based network of regions aiming to contribute to EU policymaking and cooperate in projects in the field of lifelong learning. Based on the unique strengths of every region and local authority, EARLALL facilitates regional collaborations and partnerships, as well as an open and rapid exchange of knowledge in a context of trust and confidence, between its 12 member regions and 5 associate members, gathering 12 regions in 11 countries.

The network was established in 2001 under the initiative of regional governments willing to build solid cooperation in the field of lifelong learning. EARLALL believes that regions and local authorities have a privileged role in designing and implementing strategies related to it, since they are in direct contact with educational institutions, the business environment and, most notably, citizens.

EARLALL's activities are carried out by means of four working groups that are directly and/or indirectly dealing with the issues tackled through this project. These are Youth Policies, Skills and Labour Market, Mobility, Lifelong Guidance & Ageing Societies. In their context, EARLALL member regions cooperate to produce common position papers and develop initiatives to increase synergies and promote peer learning among regional and local authorities.

EARLALL also counts on a long experience in project dissemination and stakeholder engagement activities, having developed and coordinated the implementation of communication and dissemination activities for projects dealing with lifelong guidance (BRIDGE+), vocational education and training (VET's CLIL, KEYMOB), integration of third-country nationals and refugees (FIER, TALENTS), and local cooperation (VET in Urban Centres). On a policy and stakeholder level, its close contact with other education networks in the European arena is also an asset for this project, facilitating

the involvement and reaching out to a wide targeted audience for project dissemination and research activities.

In the context of NEETs for NEET, EARLALL brought their long experience in project dissemination by leading the communication and dissemination activities. Several communication campaigns on social media have been created to highlight the involvement of NEETs in the project. Furthermore, EARLALL oversaw the organising of the Final Conference in Brussels. The event benefited from the video-participation of the Swedish MEP, David Lega. In cooperation with the rest of the partners, EARLALL has contributed to the collaborative analysis of the main principles of the ReACT model, and participation in the collaborative online focus groups with NEETs. Likewise, EARLALL has contributed to the production of learning materials, supporting the evaluation process of NEETs for NEETs, among other tasks.

One of EARLALL's main objectives is to promote regional cooperation in key strategic areas that are of interest to its members. NEETs for NEETs has offered the opportunity for our network to connect, learn and exchange good practices that can improve life conditions for NEETs and motivate them to finish school or obtain long-term employment. Throughout the life of the project, NEETs for NEETs progress has been shared in our Working Groups meetings and our communication channels. Therefore, EARLALL members' regions are aware of the initiatives that the project has developed. Likewise, this handbook will be shared with EARLALL member regions to improve their regional policies to better integrate NEETs within their regions.

### **Support Group Network**

Support Group Network is a migrant-led organisation initiated by refugees to support refugees on all levels with a special focus on social inclusion, business empowerment, interculturality, and higher education inclusion.

We design and implement initiatives that contribute to better integration and inclusion programs by offering need-based, meaningful projects based on empowerment, self-organisation and strategic corporation.

Encouraging refugees' own initiatives and support them in all fields: (social, cultural, educational, health and psychological care) and gather advocacy for their cases in all levels. The organisation is democratic and independent of political, national, and religious parties. The organisation uses means that operates in line with European and international rules to promote the organisation's goals. Our values are accountability, ambition, collaboration, creativity and integrity.

It all began in August 2014, when Support Group Network (SGN) started, licensed in Sweden. After two years of performing activities and projects at Restad Gård, the biggest refugee camp in Sweden, SGN became an officially licensed non-profit organisation in July 2016.

SGN then joined the ReACT-project, being supported by Save the Children Sweden. Since 2014, SGN has been established in 13 cities and 16 camps, and the SGN concept is continuing to spread throughout Europe.

### **Vision:**

Support Group Network initiate different kinds of programs and projects including women empowerment, business empowerment, academic inclusion, vocational trainings and livelihood support, grass-roots capacity building and development. our project covers all fields: (social, cultural, business, educational, sports, health and psychological care).

### **Main tasks:**

The main task for SGN in this project, together with Save the Children Sweden (STC), is based on the ReACT model. I.e., our aim has been to co-create and adjust the model together with the group of NEETs, in order to meet NEETs' needs and interests and analyse new types of self-organisation, collaboration and learning methods for the target group of NEETs. In the framework of this new training concept, the aim has been for NEETs to become training experts sharing knowledge, experiences, personal goals and development strategies as well as dreams and motivation with other NEETs. Afterwards, our ambition has been to create local pilots where SGN and STC invite staff and NEETs from partners organisations to join a training workshop based on youth empowerment tools in order to be trained. From thereon, youths themselves have trained other youths and staff members.

Support Group Network (SGN) recruited NEETs, staff, and youths to be trained on the modified ReACT model, as well as disseminating projects activities, results, and events on social media platforms.

SGN recruited 4 facilitators to work with other staff members and youths in order to create together the training content and implement local and international pilots on the ReACT model. Another round of second pilots were moreover carried out, in which the NEETs themselves organised a training workshop being a trainer with the support of SGN and STC.

SGN also invited staff members and youths to be trained in both LTTs (Learning Teaching Training Activities) in Stuttgart and Borås. We also invited youths, staff, stakeholders to local multiplier events as a dissemination for the project results.

### **Why we joined N4N:**

We joined the N4N project since we believe in the power of youth and the energy that young people have and based on our previous experience working with EU youth projects that have been influencing our target groups positively and support them by having their voices being heard.



One of our most important focus fields is empowering individuals, especially youths, and creating self-organised groups and the concept of N4N project aims to empower youths.

We have always been working on forming a platform and a place for young people, especially marginalised groups and youths that has been in a phase far from studies and the labour market. Within the scope of this project, SGN's mission has been to engage youths in different activities locally and internationally.

SGN now has a big number of youths who have the experience, ability, and the precious knowledge to be used and improved through this project - especially leadership – since we have trained many youths that now are being able to deliver their experience from different projects.

## Save the Children Sweden

### ReACT:

Save the Children Sweden (also known throughout this application as STC) is working very actively with our ReACT method (within the national Reception program) for empowerment and self-organisation developed by Save the children and Support group Network (SGN). ReACT has three main objectives: A.) to create a “meaningful waiting”, B.) to change the perception of newcomers in society, and C.) to contribute to a social sustainable development.

Our concept is to support self-organisation and strategic cooperation for better reception and inclusion of refugees by working with three pillars: 1.) mobilisation and empowerment, 2.) cooperation through networks, and 3.) inclusion and participation. Through these components, refugees are encouraged to organise themselves in Support Groups and become actors of their own matters.

The ReACT Project continues to work closely with SGN and support them in their own missions, i.e.:

- Empowering and encouraging asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants' own initiatives, supporting them in all fields: (social, cultural, educational, sports, health and psychological care).
- Encouraging communities to explore skills and expertise of refugees and immigrants for the sake of better and colourful intercultural communities that help achieving social sustainability.
- To make refugees become actors and main stakeholders for their own matters.
- Promoting the understanding of society's norms to create a better integration and inclusion of children, young adults, adults and families, and provide them the tools to become active members in society, with focus on diversity, gender equality, women and youth empowerment and the safeguarding of the rights of the child.
- Gathering advocacy for asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants' cases at all levels.

### Local Branches:



Save the Children Sweden is a democratic member organisation just like many other NGOs in Sweden. This means that we have local branches and volunteers working directly with our target groups, but they also work on local impact as regards policies and decisions concerning children's rights.

Our branches support NEETs by working with support, help with homework, networking with other organisations and to create meaningful activities. The activities are based on the expressed needs from the young adults themselves or from the municipality. Right now, many of our local branches are prioritising young adults who are facing rejection and/or expulsion, due to, mainly, the recently statutory Upper Secondary School Act (NGL) in Sweden, supporting them in their search for long-term jobs in order not to be extradited from Sweden.

#### **PLV:**

PLV (On equal terms) is operating in marginalised areas to give a platform to children and youths, as well as working with schools and parent networks.

#### **High Five:**

Save the Children Sweden has successfully been running the national program High Five – Sports for Everyone and the method Five steps to action since 2012. The method entails Sports Clubs going through a training program in which they are provided tools, knowledge and routines to prevent, discover and handle discrimination, violations and sexual abuse.

### **Regional cooperation**

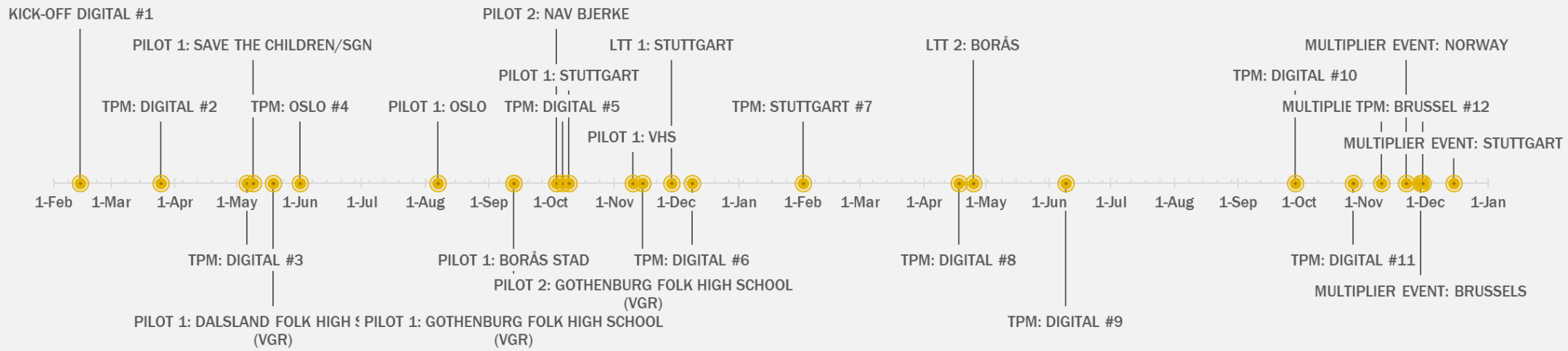
In today's global society, European regions are facing common challenges, from the twin transition and climate issues to social inclusion to demographic challenges. Regions and local authorities are best positioned to provide solutions to these challenges as they are closer to the people and in most cases have competences which affect their personal and professional development. Furthermore, in their capacity, they are in direct contact with social agents, local businesses and education and training providers and are designing and implementing strategies with the current context in mind.

European regions and local authorities should not work alone, and close cooperation among public authorities has become crucial. In this context, the European Commission has recently released a [Communication on Harnessing Talent in Europe's regions](#) (January 2023). Even if the Communication focuses on the situation of those regions with demographic challenges, a message is clear "the need for good skills intelligence and close cooperation between regional and local authorities, social partner organisations, public and private employment services, local businesses and education and training providers, to ensure that the jointly deployed education, training and lifelong learning efforts focus on the right skills needed in a particular region.'

Stemming from the understanding that the acquisition of skills should be understood in a lifelong learning context which includes, but not only, as personal development should be covered as well, responding to labour market needs, the Erasmus+ NEETs for NEETs project is an excellent example of such regional and local cooperation. Partners from Sweden (Region Västra Götaland), Germany (Baden-Württemberg region) and Norway (Oslo municipality) have exchanged best practices and have commonly developed new and innovative instruments and activities together with the young adults (NEETs, Not in Employment, Education or Training) and those who are working with NEETs, and who were main the target group of the project.

Regional cooperation has become crucial to addressing young people's and trainers' needs and finding new tools to support them in improving their living conditions, as different regional and local contexts give way to new solutions. Exchanging on these different solutions has been at the core of the project focused on co-creation.

# Project timeline



<b>Date</b>	<b>Happening</b>
14.02.2022-15.02.2022	Kick-Off digital #1
25.03.2022	TPM: digital #2
06.05.2022	TPM: digital #3
09.05.2022-10.05.2022	Pilot 1: Save the Children/SGN
19.05.2022-20.05.2022	Pilot 1: Dalsland folk high school (VGR)
01.06.2022-02.06.2022	TPM: Oslo #4
07.09.2022-08-09-2022	Pilot 1: Oslo (Rosenhof VO Oslo & NAV Bjerke)
13.09.2022-14.09.2022	Pilot 1: Gothenburg folk high school (VGR) and Borås Stad
04.10.2022	Pilot 2: NAV Bjerke
07.10.2022	TPM: digital #5
10.10.2022-11.10.2022	Pilot 1: Stuttgart
10.11.2022	Pilot 1: VHS
15.11.2022	Pilot 2: Gothenburg folk high school (VGR)
29.11.2022-01.12.2022	LTT 1: Stuttgart
09.12.2022	TPM: digital #6
01.02.2023-02.02.2023	TPM: Stuttgart #7
18.02.2023	TPM: digital #8
25.04.2023-27.04.2023	LTT 2: Borås
09.06.2023	TPM: digital #9
29.09.2023	TPM: digital #10
27.10.2023	TPM: digital #11
10.11.2023	Multiplier event: Sweden
22.11.2023	Multiplier event: Norway
29.11.2023	Multiplier event: Brussels
29.11.2023-30.11.2023	TPM: Brussel #12
15.12.2023	Multiplier event: Stuttgart

## Project timeline terminology

### Kick-off:

First formal event of the project, originally planned to be held physically in Sweden, but due to Covid-restrictions had to be held as a digital event.

### TPM Digital:

Throughout the project there were eight transnational project meetings with all the project partners digitally. These were the basis for how the project was managed by all the different partners.

### TPM

Transnational project meetings were also held in Oslo, Stuttgart and Brussels. These were longer meetings than the digital ones and were instrumental for the project partners to get to know each other and to give each partner a deeper understanding of the project.

### Pilot 1:

Every partner had one pilot arranged for NEETs and staff with the help of SGN and Save the Children Sweden. During the pilot, staff and NEETs were trained in the ReACT model and were prepared to facilitate future events in the project.

### Pilot 2:

Based on the first pilot, every partner arranged one or more workshops for NEETs. These were also the preparation for the NEETs and staff members travelling to Stuttgart for the first LTT.

### LTT 1:

Learning, teaching, training activities in Stuttgart, Germany. This LTT's plan was to have NEETs from the local partners to train new staff from different N4N partners. Therefore, the focus of the LTT was NEETs training "Experts".

### LTT 2:

Learning, teaching, training activities in Borås, Sweden. This LTT's plan was to have NEETs to train NEETs on a European level, by having "expert" NEETs training NEETs without experience connected to the ReACT model.

### Multiplier event:

As part of the dissemination strategy, multiplier events were held in Sweden, Germany, Norway and Belgium. The aim of the multiplier events was to spread the findings of the

project to different organisations working with NEETs and policy makers aiming to make a change for youths in Europe.

## **Project roll-out: NEETs training NEETs on a European level**

### **Context of this part of the project work**

This part of the project is not only relevant for the N4N project partners and participants, it is also a valuable best practice in the context of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility schemes. Since 2021, the ERASMUS+ programme in the field of adult education has been offering the new opportunity for adult learners to carry out international mobilities. Above all, the programme addresses adult learners with fewer opportunities. In Germany, during the years 2021 and 2022, the programme was only opened to this group of learners in adult education. Since the ERASMUS+ mobilities for disadvantaged learners are new and a lot more challenging than mobilities for staff and other groups of learners (see below: Barriers for adult learners with fewer opportunities), the N4N concept of “NEETs training NEETs on a European level” can serve as a model for transnational mobilities of disadvantaged adult learners. Thus, this project result in the N4N project (PR 3 – see the compendiums for more info) has a high transferability potential as it can be adopted or serve as a model for similar initiatives in the framework of individual learning mobilities for adult learners with fewer opportunities.

project result (PR 3) has a high transferability potential as it can be adopted or serve as a model for similar initiatives in the framework of individual learning mobilities for adult learners with fewer opportunities.

### **The N4N training model adapted to a European mobility programme.**

The “NEETs training NEETs on a European level” model is based on the general approach of N4N trainings as piloted during the project lifetime (see chapters on national the local pilots and the LTTs above). This concept comprised:

- Local pilots in which learners with fewer opportunities (NEETs) and staff that works with this group of learners follow parts of the ReACT/N4N curriculum, learn new tools/methods and are ideally prepared to act as a trainer after the pilot.



- In a second step, the participants of the local pilots had the opportunity to participate in a similar training (abroad) with the same target groups but with participants from different European countries. These trainings, the participants with fewer opportunities acted – partly – as trainers themselves.

As described above, this concept was challenging, in particular for those disadvantaged groups with mental problems but also for groups with an educational experience that is very far away from the modern didactical concepts of the N4N project such as learner centration, co-creation of learning pathways, revised roles of learners and teachers/staff etc. For programmes that can not offer the support that the N4N project could offer because of the project budget available, the level of complexity of the original N4N model is too high. In the framework of project result 3, the complex model was therefore simplified and further developed in a cooperative way of working by the partners and the target group of NEETs.



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