

Youth Action for Nature and Well-Being

Case Study



Erasmus+



Contents

Introduction	3
Youth Action for Nature and Well-Being (YAFNAW) technical background.....	3
Why was this case study written?.....	4
What is the structure of this Case Study?.....	4
Chapter 1: Context.....	5
Youth Action for Nature and Well-Being project.....	5
Learning, Teaching and Training (LTT) events.....	5
Building on each other.....	6
Chapter 2: Methodology.....	8
Components.....	8
Questionnaires.....	8
Focus groups.....	9
Summary of data collection.....	10
Chapter 3: Results.....	11
Questionnaires.....	11
Focus groups.....	13
Chapter 4: Learnings and Implications.....	24
Formative evaluation for design-thinking.....	24
Transformative experiences.....	24
Appendix.....	26

Introduction

Youth Action for Nature and Well-Being (YAFNAW) technical background

YAFNAW was an Erasmus-funded Key Action 2 Strategic Partnership for Innovation project led by ECO-UNESCO. YAFNAW involved a collaboration between six European environmental educational organisations: Resilience.Earth, The Rural Parliament of Slovakia, Youth for Smile, Ecowellness Consulting, Gaia Education, and ECO-UNESCO. The project number was 2020-3-IE01-KA205-082885, and it ran from 01/05/2021 to 31/08/2023. The project engaged 102 participants to co-produce five intellectual outputs that focused on developing action competence and positive well-being among young people within the context of eco-activism. The five intellectual outputs are:

1. **Educational Toolkit** (a physical book designed to support young people throughout their eco-activism)
2. **Case Study** (a paper documenting the transformative learning of project participants)
3. **Pedagogy Design Guide** (a paper documenting the pedagogy design process of the project)
4. **E-learning Course** (an online resource designed to increase access to the educational toolkit)
5. **Evaluation Tool** (a framework for use alongside the educational toolkit, which guides the evaluation of transformative learning)

In pursuing the delivery of these five intellectual outputs, the partnership sought to realise its purpose statement for the project:

Co-create personal and collective regenerative action and resilience tools/frameworks (with youth and youth workers) to transform the way we understand, relate, and respond to nature, as nature

To facilitate the production of the intellectual outputs, YAFNAW hosted four international youth events to trial new teaching and learning methods and co-design a set of educational tools with collaboration from target beneficiaries. This participatory approach created a case study cohort that informed the development of the educational toolkit, pedagogy design guide, and evaluation tool.

Why was this case study written?

The case study aims to provide a deeper insight into the experiences of project participants and the impact participation had on them. More than a summative evaluation exercise, the concurrent processes of conducting youth events and evaluating the teaching and learning methods allowed the partnership to recognise and respond to the participants' needs formatively. The case study process, therefore, enabled a design-thinking approach throughout the wider project's development and provided a crucial voice to help shape the educational toolkit, pedagogy design guide, and evaluation tool. The case study will interest stakeholders working for educational change in their practice or more widely. Specifically, those teachers, programme developers, and youth workers interested in education for sustainable development (ESD) or transformative learning may find particular relevance.

What is the structure of this Case Study?

The case study is presented across four chapters. Chapter one sets up the broader context of the YAFNAW project and details the youth events which produced the cohorts of participants and dataset. Chapter two outlines the methodology, and chapter three presents the results. Finally, chapter four explores the learnings and implications of the findings.

Chapter 1: Context

Youth Action for Nature and Well-Being project

Recognising the potential vulnerability of youth well-being within the context of climate justice and activism, YAFNAW sought to respond by co-creating educational tools that would build the resiliency of young leaders in the environmental sector. The project focused on innovative approaches that blended pedagogies and actively engaged target beneficiaries during the toolkit development processes. Six organisations (herein referred to as *the partners*) collaborated to host 102 young eco-activists at four Learning, Teaching and Training (LTT) events in Ireland, Slovakia, Latvia, and Catalonia. The youth participants of the LTTs formed the various case study cohorts and enabled the project to develop a pedagogy landscape as the educational toolkit progressed from an idea into something tangible. An evaluation framework and a complimentary E-learning course were developed in tandem with the pedagogy design guide and case study, contributing to a supporting body of resources that would accompany the educational toolkit at its launch.

Learning, Teaching and Training (LTT) events

At each of the four LTT events, participants from Ireland, Slovakia, Latvia, and Catalonia attended. During LTT events, participants engaged with content developed by the partners, providing feedback and co-designing alternative material that would go on to form the project's educational toolkit. To create adaptability, the scope and focus for each LTT event were only loosely defined at the start of the project. LTT1 would focus on creating communities and connecting to nature. LTT2 would focus on mapping strategies and mobilising ecosystems. LTT3 would focus on leading collectives and building momentum. LTT4 would focus on leveraging change and amplifying voices. The partners conceptualised the LTTs as deeply interconnected, and thus, the focus of an LTT was subject to revisions. This approach allowed the partners to respond to the needs of the participants and the project. The LTT flow and associated topics were mapped into a diagram at the start of the collaboration process. The flow diagram remained in place throughout the project, serving as a guiding framework for LTTs. This diagram can be found in the appendix of this paper.

Building on each other

LTT1 occurred in Dublin, Ireland, between 18/04/22 – 22/04/22. This event saw 32 participants aged 18-25 participate in a five-day programme exploring community and nature connections. LTT1 involved a wide range of nature-based techniques and place-based methods, including work on eco-anxiety, teambuilding, sustainable development, transformative learning, and peer education. Cultural exchange was a consistent element of the LTT events, with local (domestic) participants sharing accommodation with travelling (international) participants, enabling the whole group to engage more inclusively. Participants of LTT1 were guided through early iterations of various tools and frameworks which interested the partners. LTT1 gave the partners an idea of the type of activities and topics most enjoyed by participants, which provided a focus for refining the toolkit.

LTT2 occurred in Hokoce, Slovakia, between 18/07/22 – 22/07/22. This event saw 31 participants aged 16-25 participate in a five-day programme exploring civic engagement, project planning, and communication. Selected tools and templates featured in LTT1 were refined and developed for LTT2, resulting in participants engaging with ideas put forward by the previous youth cohort. Five participants of LTT1 attended LTT2, which gave the project opportunities to track longitudinal engagement and explore peer education in more detail. This mechanism also improved accountability, as returning participants would be able to see how the partners had taken on board their feedback and refined content – promoting a youth-led approach. LTT2 resulted in a narrative structure for the toolkit beginning to emerge, as links between different tools were established through the imagery of a journeying character.

LTT3 occurred in Valle, Latvia, between 18/10/22 – 11/10/22. This event saw 33 participants aged 16-25 participate in a five-day programme exploring teamwork, leadership, adventure-based learning, and systems thinking. These areas represented gaps within the developing toolkit and the activities that previous cohorts found to be the most challenging. Eight returning participants from previous LTTs enabled the programme to feature peer education methods more explicitly. Going deeper into systemic models and systems thinking, LTT3 enabled the partnership to refine the narrative structure, developing additional imagery and characters to be featured in the toolkit. These supplementary characters would help illustrate the concept and explanation of systemic models.

LTT4 occurred in Olot, Catalonia, between 20/02/23 – 24/02/23. This event saw 32 participants aged 16-25 participate in a five-day programme that explored land connection, project planning, governance, and systems thinking. Participants (including Eight returners) were shown a working draft of the toolkit to see

the proposed narrative structure and individual tools. By this stage, the project's pedagogy had rounded into shape, informed by the case study work conducted at previous LTTs. This final LTT served as a trial of this pedagogy, allowing for detailed and structured feedback time with participants.

The four LTTs built upon each other pedagogically, serving as the primary toolkit development method. After each event, a cohort of case study participants was created. The methodology used to document their learning journeys and participation impact is presented in the next chapters.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Components

The project used pre- and post-event questionnaires and post-event focus group sessions to collect the data for this case study.

Questionnaires were used to generate a dataset representative of the cohort. This would provide the partners with quantitative data which could be compared across LTTs and cohorts. Focus groups were used to add nuance to the data supplied in questionnaires. A schedule was created to complement the questionnaires, allowing more qualitative data to emerge. This mixed methods approach allowed participants to engage with various mediums, increasing the scope for validity.

Questionnaires

All new participants were given pre-and post-event questionnaires before and after the first three LTT events. These questionnaires aimed to collect data across four dimensions:

- Singular Internal – How the individual is doing within themselves
- Singular External – How the individual is doing within their community and ecosystem
- Collective Internal - How the group or organisation that the individual is a part of manages itself internally (decision-making, transparency, well-being)
- Collective External - How the collective effects change and does the transformative work it intends to do

The questionnaires were designed to explore three types of learning: Personal Development (PD), Well-being (WB), and Action Competence (AB). Questionnaires were disseminated on google forms. After each of the first three events, a review period allowed the partners to generate a report of findings. The questionnaires informed the production of the project's evaluation tool (intellectual output five), so it was appropriate for questions to be adapted over time where necessary. For LTT1, nine questions were included in the forms (respectively, excluding bio information). The first iteration of the pre- and post-

event questions, their interested domain, and relevant learning types can be found in the appendix of this paper.

Responses from the pre- and post-event questionnaires were inputted into Excel and underwent analysis by Resilience.Earth as part of the development of the evaluation tool. The findings from each LTT event informed subsequent development and refinement of the questions featured in the questionnaires. The final version of the questions can also be found in the appendix of this document.

Focus groups

On the last day of each LTT event, participants answered standardised questions in semi-structured focus groups with their accompanying facilitator. The nine focus group discussion questions reflected the same four domains explored in the questionnaires (Singular Internal, Singular External, Collective Internal, and Collective External). Responses were recorded and facilitators took notes, subsequently transcribing the sessions. All LTTs featured the same questions, as analysis consistently revealed new and exciting findings. The focus group questions can be found in the appendix of this paper.

After each LTT data collection period, Mural (an online whiteboard tool) was used to conduct a thematic analysis. Each national group was compared, and common answers and themes were mapped together and synthesised into a master list representing overlaps, synergies, and outliers from across the four groups of participants. This process and the sharing of findings informed the planning for subsequent LTTs and led to developments within the toolkit.

Question eight on the focus group schedule read as follows:

‘When we meet again in a few months, what questions would be useful to ask ourselves?’

Between 3 and 5 months after each LTT event, the Irish, Latvian, and Slovakian groups met again (separately, face-to-face or virtually) to conduct a second semi-structured focus group. Responses from question eight (above) informed the discussions had during the second round of follow-up focus groups. An example set of follow-up questions from LTT1 is provided in the appendix of this paper. During the second round of focus groups, facilitators again recorded and transcribed the responses. A thematic analysis using Mural helped compare responses to similar questions across national groups.

The Catalonian groups were subject to a different follow-up focus group approach. In this case, all four Catalonian participant groups were invited to a large focus group session in April 2023 after all LTTs had concluded. This would give the partners another unique dataset, providing insights into the long and short-term effects of participation and mentorship throughout the project development process.

Summary of data collection

Method	Data Type	Number
Pre-LTT event questionnaires	Quantitative	72
Post-LTT event questionnaires	Quantitative	65
Post-LTT event focus group	Qualitative	16 sessions
Follow-up focus groups	Qualitative	12 sessions
Mixed cohort follow-up focus group	Qualitative	One session

Chapter 3: Results

Questionnaires

Questionnaire results are presented in event order, beginning with LTT1 and ending with LTT3.

LTT1 – Ireland

For LTT1, the questionnaires revealed that 73% of respondents changed their opinions on the climate crisis, trending towards a more hopeful and optimistic view. Their relationship with the natural environment and community also improved over the week-long event. Their concept of teamwork evolved to include a need for diversity, equity, and empathy. Regarding personal development, there were significant strides made here by the cohort.

Although many participants had strategies to look after their well-being before LTT1, post-event data pointed to the cohort placing greater importance on self-care, having fun, and nature connection in a collaborative setting. Systems thinking models were also identified as a strategy for mental well-being. Informal settings were highly valued, along with collective, action-based activities. Situating such activities in place-based settings around nature was seen as important for well-being.

Knowledge acquisition was a major factor in developing action competence among the participants. Before the event, 96% of respondents indicated that they did not know much (if anything) about systems thinking. Post-event data highlighted that strategies and frameworks linked to systems thinking were greatly valued, and most participants had learned information about the skills needed to excel in their roles.

The report for LTT1 (and LTT2/3) can be found in the appendix of this document. The data showed the partners that young people found value and had progressed with their personal development, well-being, and action competence. The results also showed some limitations with specific questions, which were then rewritten for LTT2.

LTT2 - Slovakia

For LTT2, the partners found a similar pattern of responses (compared to the LTT1 dataset). 75% of respondents changed their perception of the climate crisis through the event, citing an increased

awareness of the issues, increased motivation, knowledge improvement, empowerment, and networking opportunities as key factors responsible for the shift in perception.

Post-event, most of the participants had found new strategies to take care of their mental health. The major developments included nature connection skills, systems thinking frameworks and proactive project planning. The power of community was also more realised after the event, with participants recognising the need for nurturing environments, a sense of belonging and empathetic, supporting spaces.

Most participants felt they learned important skills during LTT2 that could apply to their roles. This was measured with a Likert scale (0-10), with 50% of respondents falling into the 9 and 10 categories. Nature connection and team formation activities were among the most helpful for participants during LTT2. Data revealed that the eco-anxiety sessions were better received, with 14% citing this as the most beneficial session during the event, compared to 9% of respondents from LTT1. Similarly, exploring global perspectives was a more prominent topic in LTT2, and the data reflected this, with 21% of respondents finding this to be the most helpful aspect of the event.

The data revealed a level of consistency among the participants regarding the impact of the events. It showed that a younger cohort could also gain skills and improve their personal development, well-being strategies and action competence using the toolkit's evolving pedagogy.

LTT3 – Latvia

For LTT3, 100% of respondents changed their perspective on the climate crisis during the event. Systems thinking strategies, emotional management, and community resilience were major causes of this perspective shift. A more polished pedagogy landscape may have resulted in a more cohesive and practised event (compared to LTT1 or LTT2), reflecting the massive shift in personal development seen among the cohort. Connections to community and nature rose among respondents more significantly than in previous events. Data showed that leadership, active listening, and fun were considered important ingredients in teamwork post-event. The perception of whether participants could play a meaningful role in eco-activism groups increased drastically at the top distribution.

The perception of well-being also changed significantly as a result of the event, with participants having a broader understanding of the concept, feeling part of a greater whole (integrated with nature), seeing individual uniqueness, and seeing beyond themselves, yet seeing the relevance and importance of self-

care. Respondents believed collective well-being could be fostered through inclusive support, open communication, a balanced workload and expectations, shared experiences, and nature connection.

Action competence was better understood post-event, with participants demonstrating a clearer understanding of roles, purposes, and peer education within the context of community activism. The acquisition of skills was reported to be high, with a variety of frameworks and topics sighted as important sources of knowledge (including reflection activities, eco-anxiety and resilience sessions). Pre-event, 10% of respondents had heard of systems thinking (possibly explained by returning participants) compared to 67% of respondents who cited this framework as the most helpful post-event. Responses showed that the popularity of this framework stemmed from its applicability to all aspects of life.

The data showed the partners that LTT events yielded similar results and developments across the three learning areas. As an increasing proportion of participants were returning to future events, it was decided that questionnaires would be dropped in favour of more extended focus groups for LTT4.

Focus groups

Focus group results are presented in event order, beginning with LTT1 and ending with LTT4.

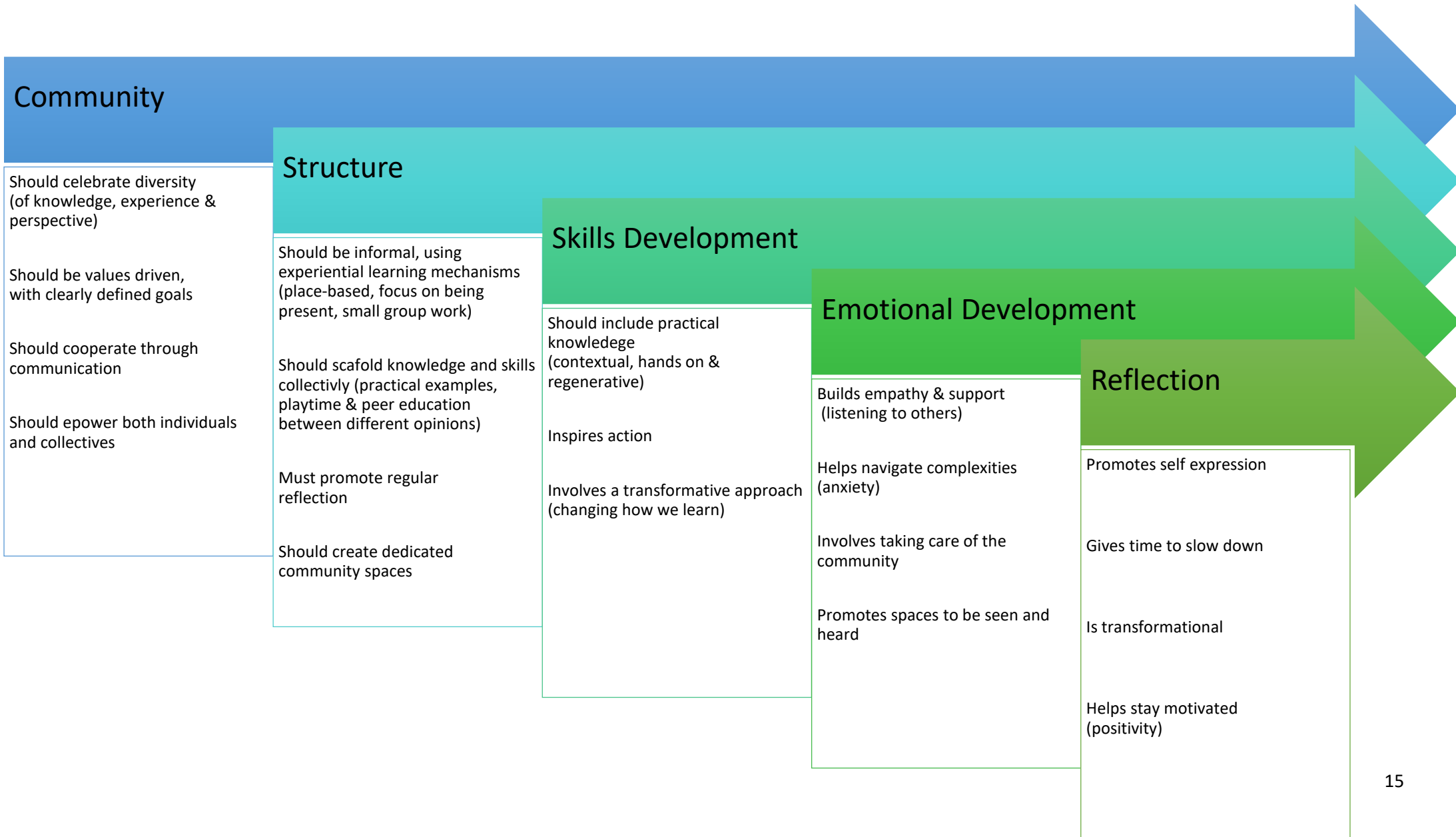
LTT1 – Ireland

For LTT1, a thematic analysis revealed the importance of establishing eco-conscious community spaces. If these communities were formed through shared ecological values, subsequent dialogue and action were found to empower individuals and collectives. Interestingly, a level of diversity among a collective, across nationalities and backgrounds, directly added to feelings of empowerment.

When clearly defined goals and shared values united community members, alternative perspectives on an issue arose organically in spaces without judgment or unhealthy conflict. Using informal and experiential learning mechanisms (including place-based approaches, peer education, and nature-based reflection) allowed participants to scaffold knowledge collectively. Learning from each other, a dedicated community space created a reflective and open environment. Emotional and skills development arose when the governance structure complemented the collective.

Practical and contextual knowledge was shared, which inspired action. Regular reflection activities promoted a shift in perspective as participants could dialogue with one another. This created a transformative atmosphere where participants could change how they approached problems and

solutions. Emotionally, empathy was fostered through listening and sharing circles. Eco-anxiety sessions provided strategies for participants to look after their collective mental health needs. The recognition of shared learning provided a critical source of motivation for the participants. The LTT1 focus group data brought more meaning to the questionnaire data and allowed the partners to create a process model. The model (presented on the next page) articulated the journey that eco-activists could pursue to enhance their impact.



The LTT1 cohort was re-engaged with a follow-up focus group 3+ months after the event. Using an interview schedule designed by the participants, further thematic analysis revealed that the tools and activities experienced in Ireland had a lasting impact with practical applications. The understanding of the self had improved, with participants feeling more in tune with their roles, ecological beliefs, and nature connection. However, the data highlighted that sustaining a sense of community was difficult without an organised programme or event. In Ireland, the project provided a context to foster peer-peer dialogue. Returning to their everyday lives, participants lost this sense of community, and thus, eco-activism became more challenging and harder to sustain.

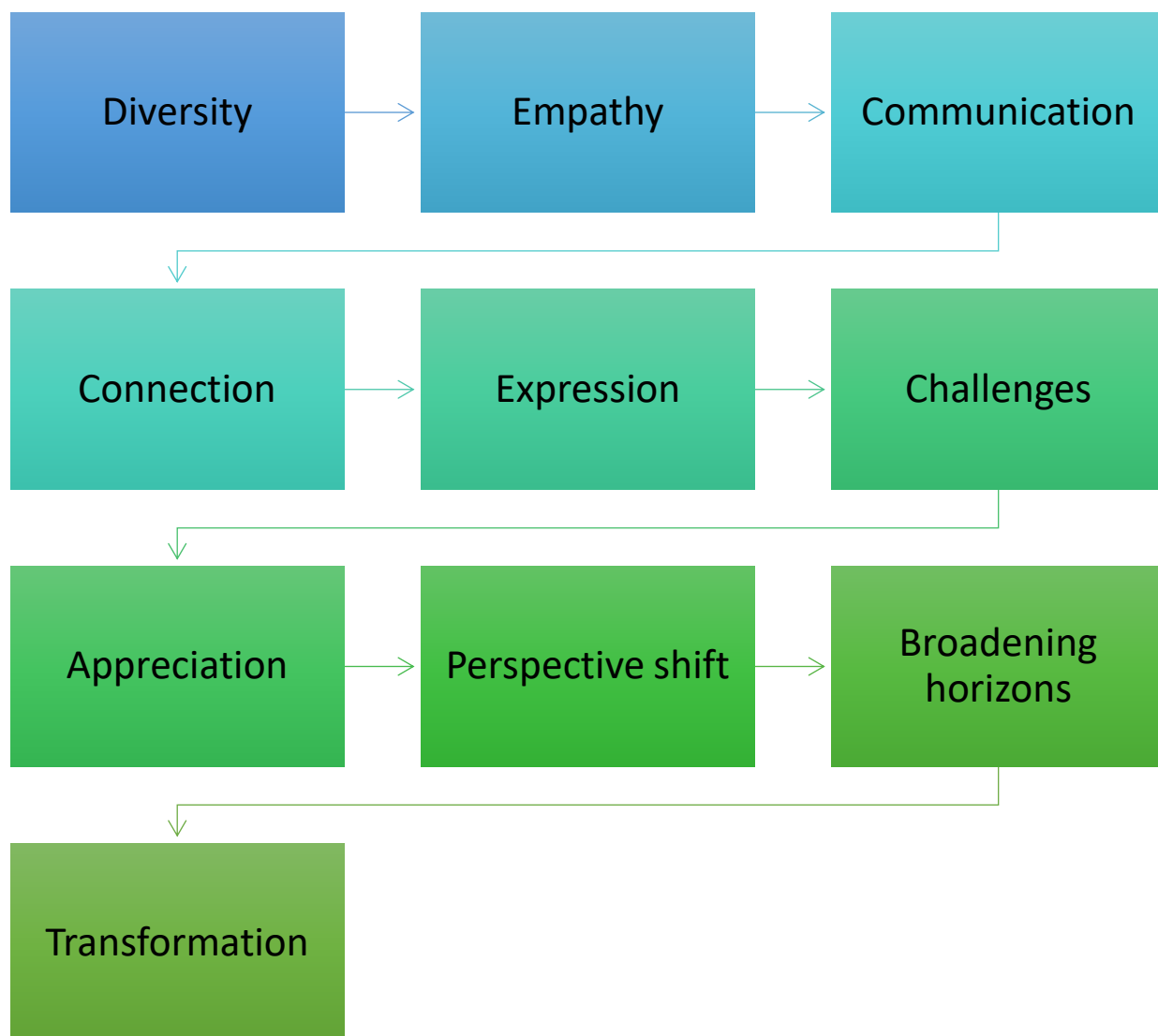
Overall, LTT1 revealed that the concepts and themes of the project resonated strongly with the 18 – 25 eco-conscious demographics. It was found that building and maintaining a community was the most powerful action to take. This was considered the bedrock of successful eco-activism. Within these new communities, an informal yet action-based defined structure can facilitate emotional and skills development. Reflection activities were considered among the most beneficial ways to promote that development.

LTT2 - Slovakia

For LTT2, questions centred on session preference revealed the pedagogies most valued by the participants. This list included experiential learning, visual learning, informal learning, interactive learning, strength-based approaches, place-based methods, and peer learning. Regarding place-based approaches, participants highlighted the positive impact of gratitude exercises. The rediscovery of nature, the ability to remain present, and the importance of surroundings for education all pointed toward the benefits of place-based and nature-based approaches.

The importance of peer learning was a particularly insightful finding. The data from the LTT2 focus groups enabled the project partners to create a Theory of Change (TOC) for peer learning. Each level of this TOC was conceptualised through specific responses from participants. The TOC explained how and why participants considered the events successful and where patterns could be replicated in subsequent events or within the toolkit. A diagram and explanation table of the developed TOC is shown on the next pages.

Theory Of Change Stages – Developed from thematic analysis of LTT2 focus group data:



Theory Of Change Breakdown – Developed from thematic analysis of LTT2 focus group data:

Stage	Example
Intercultural / Intergenerational exchange	The event brings young people from different backgrounds together
Creating a space for diversity	A specific workspace is provided for all
Developing tolerance and empathy	Groups' rules, roles, and responsibilities are co-created and agreed upon
Enhancing communication skills	With a co-defined structure, group members begin to dialogue freely
Forming genuine connections based on values rather than geographic or social markers	Group members develop bonds, understanding their united purpose and interest in eco-activism
Establishment of safe spaces for emotional expression	Armed with the knowledge that common values unite each group member, individuals can be vulnerable and articulate their needs better
Pushing each other to step outside of comfort zones	Because group members can be vulnerable, others will know when people need extra support and encouragement
Gaining an appreciation for diverse perspectives	Going through challenges shows people that there is great power in collective thought and collaboration
Exposure and understanding of alternative worldviews and problem-solving methods	The power of collectives is experientially known now - It moves from theory into practice, as group members have seen how different perspectives can solve problems
Broadens horizons and realisation that multiple realities and ways of learning exist	At a paradigm level, group members now value their mental growth and frame it within the context of group and peer learning
Transformative experiences	Those involved with peer education have changed how they learn (valuing diversity and perspective), and they can incorporate that into everyday lives

The LTT2 cohort was re-engaged with follow-up focus groups 3+ months after the event. During these discussions, participants reflected on their most memorable and meaningful experiences. The awareness and attitude of many participants had shifted since LTT2. Some of the tools participants encountered during LTT2 proved to be useful. Still, there was a desire for a formalised structure (i.e., producing a toolkit) to help apply these tools in a logical order.

The strongest themes from the follow-up sessions mainly focused on atmosphere, vibes, and feelings. Rather than specifics, participants recalled how quickly meaningful bonds formed, how they pushed each other to overcome challenges, and how their perspective shifted, but most of all – they recalled the happy mood of the event and collaborations.

The use of mixed learning environments was also a stand-out theme of the analysis. Participants reflected and compared the event to their regular schooling, noting that outdoor learning environments and the rotation of learning spaces were impactful pedagogy. Participants believed that a balance of work and play time was essential, and the healing power of nature can be an effective context for learning about eco-activism.

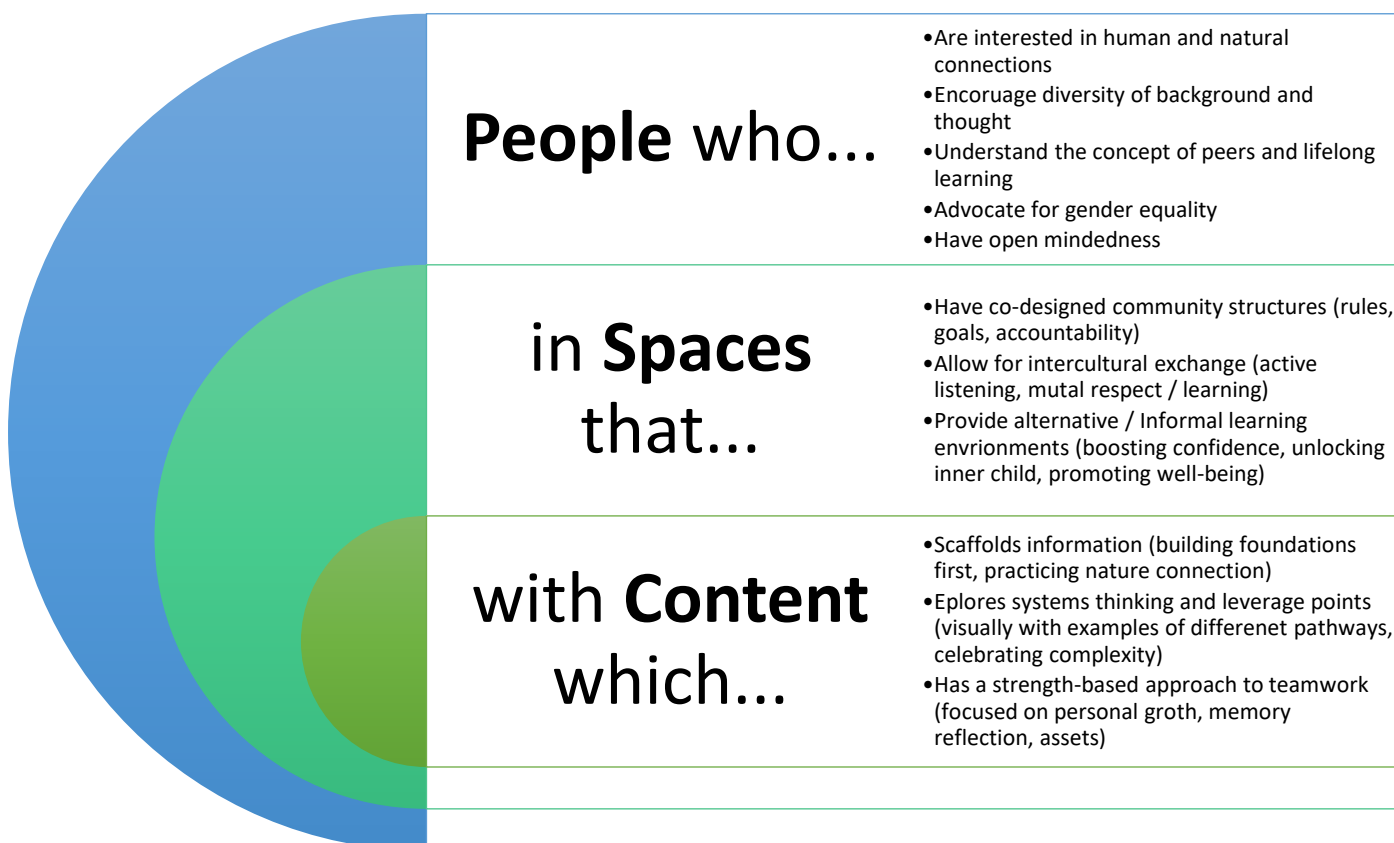
Overall, LTT2 revealed that the concepts and themes of the project were well received by a slightly younger demographic (compared to LTT1) of 16-year-olds. The revision of previously used tools from the first event was well received, and return participants became more active in design-thinking processes. Participants identified the pedagogies that resonated the most, enabling the project partners to produce a pedagogy landscape to inform future content creation. Peer education was found to be an important factor in unlocking transformative experiences in informal learning environments.

LTT3 – Latvia

A thematic analysis of focus group responses revealed three defining concepts for LTT3 in Latvia: people, spaces, and content. Participants once again reported that establishing a collective (a community group like the cohort assembled for LTT events) was a critical component of eco-activism. However, the success of the collective hinged on certain factors. According to the participants of LTT3, a diversity of background and thought, alongside open-mindedness from the group members, created a solid foundation for making connections. The space in which the group operates in then should be co-designed and co-created. Creating rules, roles, and responsibilities from the bottom up using participatory processes allows mutual respect and learning to transpire.

Participants also reported that increasing the scope for informal, outdoor education could promote well-being and unlock a group's inner child. Finally, within those spaces and collectives, the cohort believed content should be scaffolded with visual learning that guides group members through systems thinking pathways. Where possible, using a strength-based approach can catalyse action projects and synergise with a collective's talents and skills.

People / Spaces / Content - Developed from thematic analysis of LTT3 focus group data:



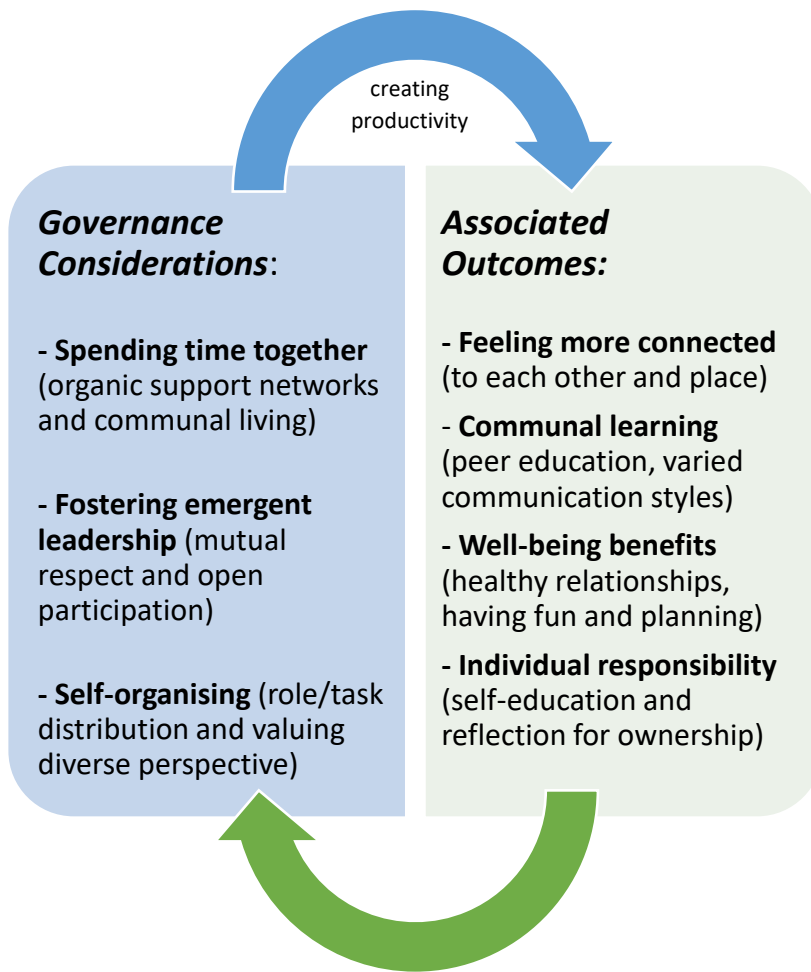
The LTT3 cohort was re-engaged with follow-up focus groups 3+ months after the event. During these discussions, participants reiterated the importance of people and content for successful eco-activism. Intercultural dialogue and explorations into cultural identity, language and customs were recalled as the most powerful experiences. It was reported that group attitude and a willingness to open up and connect with others could promote community formation. The cohort found the need to schedule and prioritise nature connection methods in their everyday lives. Mechanisms to habituate nature connection were suggested as a valuable addition to the toolkit.

Overall, the analysis from LTT3 was found to align with previous cohort data. Patterns were emerging across the events, pointing towards a need for community creation, co-designed governance, facilitation of nature connection, project planning frameworks, and reflection activities.

LTT4 – Catalonia

LTT4 featured participants engaging with the toolkit draft directly. This resulted in rich feedback grounded in a more tangible set of activities and topics. Analysis of data from across the cohort highlighted three main governance considerations and four associated outcomes for collective eco-activism spaces. Regarding governance, 1.) spending time together, 2.) fostering emergent leadership and 3.) self-organising were found to be important factors in creating productivity. During LTT4 the participants lived together and spent free time in these communal spaces. Social and ecological connections were catalysed through communal living, with support networks emerging organically. In a similar way, leadership was organic and emergent. A culture of mutual respect and open participation was generated to foster this style of leadership using techniques such as group agreements. The final governance consideration revolved around self-organisation. An informal approach to education with youth-led role and task distribution allowed for perspective and diversity to be valued and for the group to self-organise and allocate resources.

Four groups of outcomes resulted from the governance practices. Firstly, participants reported feeling more connected to each other and to place, citing systems thinking, sense work, and developing empathy among the group for one another. Secondly, communal learning emerged with collective learning, peer education, the sharing of experiences and valuing each other's communication styles all cited as positive outcomes of communal living. Thirdly, participants described well-being improvements, with healthy relationships, and a focus on having fun and planning ahead contributing to this outcome. Finally, co-existing with communal learning was a notion of individual responsibility. Participants spoke of learning by doing, self-education and reflection as being important ways one can take ownership of their learning processes.



The LTT4 cohort was re-engaged with follow-up focus groups 3+ months after the event. Participants had found a deeper connection to the land in their everyday lives, with nature connection integration increasing among several people. Participants commonly described a perspective shift with regards to their relationship with nature, citing the power of nature and the energy it provides as an important source of inspiration and strength. Barefoot walking, frequently visiting a sit spot, and spending more time outdoors appeared to be sustained practices for many. There was a noticeable increase in holistic understanding, with participants describing the new thinking pathways they conceptualised. These centred around the connections between mental health and nature/environment. Participants fondly recalled informal, peer-led and self-generated folk style activities. Starting a campfire and singing in circles, group dances that evolved each day culminating in a final performance, and so on. These activities were youth-led and illustrate the importance of creating communal spaces for eco-activism which build connection and relationships. As well as a general sense of atmosphere, participants recalled superorganism teachings,

group role activities and sit spots as being highlights of the education received. One of the most important learnings from the follow-up focus groups came with peer education implications. Some of the returning participants had taken it upon themselves to reach out to local schools and conduct workshops using the toolkit content. They had covered systems thinking tools, nature connection, asset-based community development and community formation methods in their self-made role as peer educators and youth leaders. This was an important discovery with implications for how peer education works. In the absence of formal training and explicit instructions to become peer educators, such figures were able to evolve organically through youth-led, self-organised communal spaces. The drive to innovate, respond and collaborate was innate and already within the young people.

Catalonian cohorts met at the end of the project cycle to reflect as a whole group on the learnings and impact. There was a common sense of belonging and awareness, even though some participants had not met each other before. At a personal level, participants recall how systems thinking tools allowed for a shift in perspective on the systemic crisis and on their personal roles in community, and how tools for self-connection and reflection with nature allowed for a space of tuning into personal realities and interests. Something participants most valued in all cohorts was the impact of creating strong and safe bonds with people, in which common care was put at the centre of all relationships. At the same time, guiding them through the importance of peer-to-peer learning brought back home a sense of empowerment and responsibility with other people and the territory. Hence, having a clearer idea of their role as youth in the community and in society, and feeling inspired to start leading projects in their territories. Each of which, adding the value of singularity from the individual, to the group, to the community and to the territory. One year after this KA2 project started, with the right tools and support, participants were still engaged and bringing their ideas forward with different people, roles and purposes, with the learnings and values of Youth Action for Nature and Well-Being very present all along.

Chapter 4: Learnings and Implications

Formative evaluation for design-thinking

The case study conducted during YAFNAW demonstrated the value of participatory curriculum design within environmental education. Implementing the case study plan allowed the partners to respond to the needs of the project beneficiaries in real time, ensuring the final outputs of the project would be tailored to the needs of its users. Many of the innovations featured within the educational toolkit can be traced to ideas put forward by case study participants. Design-thinking positions the end user as an essential resource, asking developers to consider the context of their products. Non-profit and social-ecological enterprises, associates and collectives can use a similar framing to create educational material that aligns with the worldviews of youth stakeholders in their fields. The partners hope practitioners working in eco-activism and education spaces will continue involving the youth in planning and development processes.

Transformative experiences

The case study highlighted the shifts in thinking that occurred over the course of four international training events. Furthermore, as returning participants increased their exposure to the toolkit activities and helped co-create and lead sessions, the impact grew. By the end of the process, participants were interacting with their wider communities and sharing thinking tools and frameworks for activism without support from the partners. It is therefore appropriate to close this case study with the words and testimonies from participants of this project.

“Building a sense of community and working collaboratively with others in this project allowed the development of the toolkit to flourish. Throughout this project there was a consistent ability of participants to build strong relationships with each other which made a true positive impact on how the toolkit turned out. In this project I had the opportunity to gain so many new perspectives from so many inspiring individuals which I will forever be grateful for.”

- Participant of LTT1

“From my time working on the toolkit I’ve found a sense of community with the participants involved, I’ve learned and am still learning about different cultures and it has helped me develop new skills, and gain a

deeper understanding of the world (through systems thinking for example) and it has helped me to build meaningful connections with others from around Europe. This experience has shown me that I do have a passion to make change.”

- Participant of LTT2

“The event was a new and eye-opening experience for me. I have never before met a group of strangers and have been able get so close to them in such a short amount of time. To have such deep and meaningful conversations with people from other countries really had me coming away with a new mindset. I had a wonderful time and could not recommend getting involved with an Erasmus project enough. To be a part of the planning process for the toolkit has really helped me develop my evaluation and reflection skills. It's really cool to see how I use parts of the toolkit in my daily life. I've always thought of myself as a more practical person, so to have the topics explained simply really helps to take in the info.”

- Participant of LTT3

“I have realised that I am not alone with my problems, that we are not alone. I have learned about my own wellbeing and how to look after it. Now I know that it's important to have space for thinking and generally to have space just for yourself.”

- Participant of LTT4

Appendix

LTT Flow Diagram

First iteration of Pre-Event Questionnaire

First iteration of Post-Event Questionnaire

Final iteration of Pre-Event Questionnaire

Final iteration of Post-Event Questionnaire

Focus group Schedules

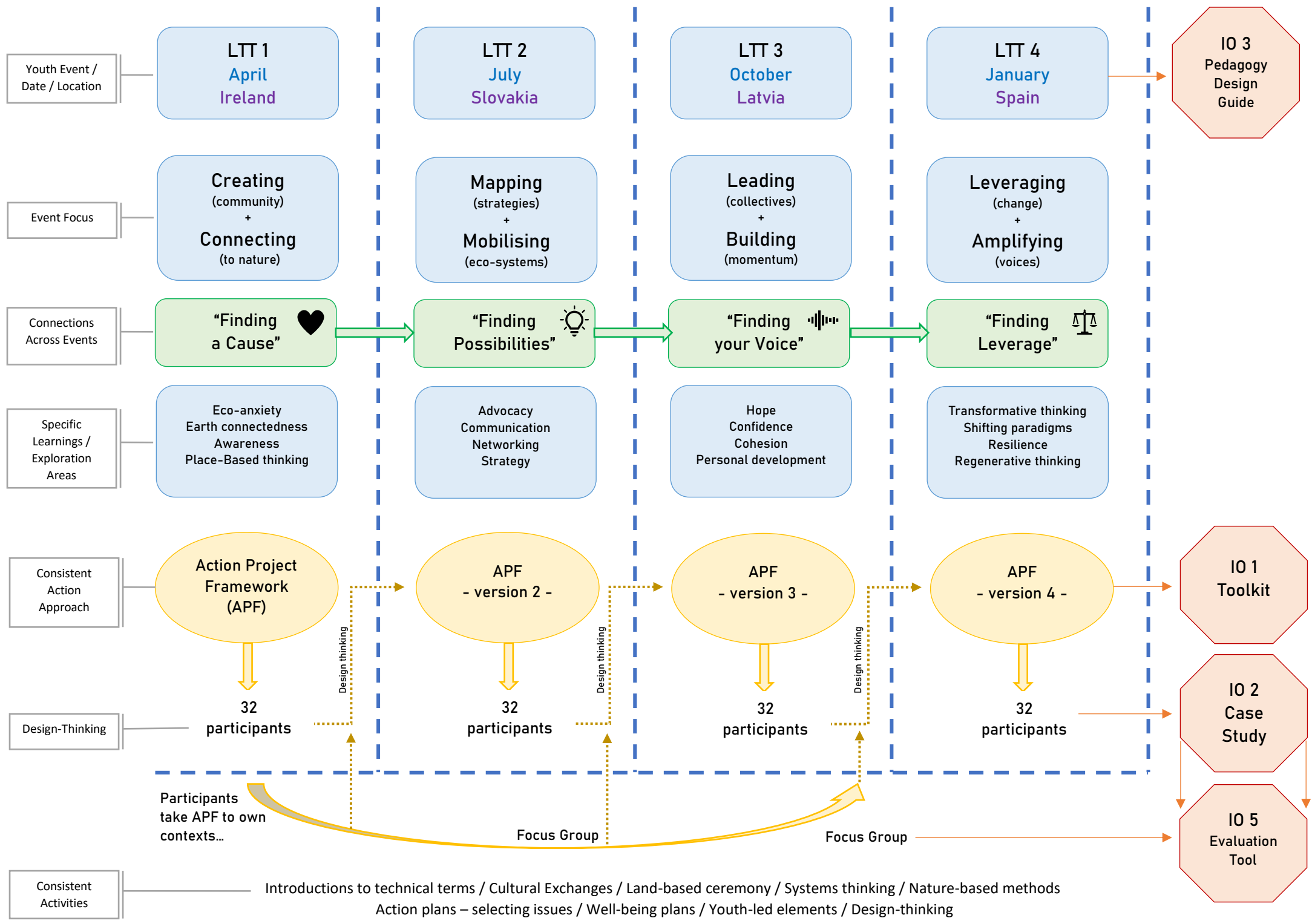
Follow-up Focus group Schedules

LTT1 Questionnaires Report

LTT2 Questionnaires Report

LTT3 Questionnaires Report

LTT4 Questionnaires Report



First iteration of Pre-Event Questionnaire

- **Q1. What do you expect to gain from this experience?** – Singular Internal / PD WB AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q2. How do you feel about the climate crisis?** – Singular External / WB
Multiple choice: Apathetic, I am beyond feeling anything at this point / Despair, where do we even begin? / Anger, I can't believe the situation has gotten this bad, I am furious! / Hopeful, I think if we work together, we can fix this situation / Other
- **Q3. What strategies do you have to look after your own mental health and wellbeing? (for example, walking, meditating, etc)** – Singular Internal / WB AC
Long response - open ended
- **Q4.a) How would you define your role /purpose in doing social or ecological work?** - Singular External / PD AC
Long response - open ended
- **Q4.b) Do you have the skills required to excel in this role?** - Singular Internal / AC
Multiple choice: yes / no / not sure
- **Q5. How would you define your relationship with your natural environment?** – Singular External / PD WB AC
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)
- **Q6. How would you define your relationship with your community?** – Singular External / PD WB AC
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)
- **Q7.a) Think of the best team / group experience you have ever had... What about it made it work?** – Collective Internal / PD WB AC
Long response - open ended

- **Q7.b) In that group... What does / did the group do (if anything) to foster positive mental-health and wellbeing?** - Collective Internal / WB
Multiple choice: yes / no / not sure
- **Q7.c) In that group... How were / are decisions made?** (for example, through voting; team leader decides; by consensus, etc.)- Collective Internal / AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q8. Do you know about systems thinking?** – Collective Internal / PD AC
Multiple choice: yes / no / not sure
- **Q9.a) Are you currently volunteering or working with a group that is dedicated to social or ecological work?** Collective External / PD AC
Multiple choice: yes / no
- **Q9.b) If yes, to what degree do you feel that your group is making a meaningful difference?**
Collective External / PD AC
Scale 0-10 points - Not at all (0) to Transformatively meaningful (10)
- **Q9.c) If no, do you think you could help such a group make a meaningful difference?** Collective External / AC PD
Scale 0-10 points - Definitely Not (0) to Absolutely (10)

First iteration of Post-Event Questionnaire

- **Q1. What did you gain from this experience?** – Singular Internal / PD WB AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q2a. Have your feelings about the climate crisis changed over the past week? (please explain if they have)** – Singular External / WB
Multiple choice: yes / no
- **Q2b. Please explain why.**
Short response - open ended (explain)
- **Q3. Are there any new ways that you plan to look after your own mental-health and wellbeing in the future?** – Singular Internal / WB
Long response - open ended
- **Q4.a) Do you think the way you conceptualise your role /purpose in doing social or ecological work has changed over the past week?**- Singular Internal / PD
Long response - open ended
- **Q4.b) Have you learned anything over the past week about the skills needed excel in your role?** - Singular Internal / AC
Scale 0-10 points – I didn't learn anything about the skills needed (0) to I learned a huge amount about the skills needed (10)
- **Q5. How would you define your relationship with your natural environment moving forward?** – Singular External / WB
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)
- **Q6. How would you define your relationship with your community moving forward?** – Singular External / PD WB AC
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)

- **Q7.a) What (if any) principles of good teamwork apply to all groups?** – Collective Internal / PD WB
AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q7.b) How can groups that you are a part of foster collective well-being?** - Collective Internal / WB
Short response - open ended
- **Q7.c) How could decisions be made in groups you are a part of?** - Collective Internal / AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q8. What strategies and frameworks have you found most helpful to you during this training? (nature well-being exercises, systems thinking, etc)** – Collective Internal / PD AC
Multiple choice: Understanding Eco-Anxiety / Exploring Global Perspectives / Resilience Activities / Team Formation Activities / Nature and Animal Connection Activities / Reflection Activities
- **Q9.a) Are you currently volunteering or working with a group that is dedicated to social or ecological work?** Collective External / PD AC
Multiple choice: yes / no
- **Q9.b) If yes, to what degree do you feel that your group is making a meaningful difference?**
Collective External / PD AC
Scale 0-10 points - Not at all (0) to Transformatively meaningful (10)
- **Q9.c) If no, do you think you could help such a group make a meaningful difference?** Collective External / AC PD
Scale 0-10 points - Definitely Not (0) to Absolutely (10)

Final iteration of Pre-Event Questionnaire

- **Q1. What do you expect to gain from this experience?** – Singular Internal / PD WB AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q2. How do you feel about the climate crisis?** – Singular External / WB
Multiple choice: Apathetic, I am beyond feeling anything at this point / Despair, where do we even begin? / Anger, I can't believe the situation has gotten this bad, I am furious! / Hopeful, I think if we work together, we can fix this situation / Other
- **Q3. What does well-being mean to you? Do you have ways to look after your well-being?** – Singular Internal / WB AC
Long response - open ended
- **Q4.a) How would you define your role /purpose in doing social or ecological work?** - Singular External / PD AC
Long response - open ended
- **Q4.b) Do you have the skills required to excel in this role?** - Singular Internal / AC
Multiple choice: yes / no / not sure
- **Q5. How would you define your relationship with your natural environment?** – Singular External / PD WB AC
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)
- **Q6. How would you define your relationship with your community?** – Singular External / PD WB AC
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)
- **Q7.a) Think of the best team / group experience you have ever had... What about it made it work?** – Collective Internal / PD WB AC
Long response - open ended

- **Q7.b) In that group... What does / did the group do (if anything) to foster positive mental-health and wellbeing?** - Collective Internal / WB
Multiple choice: yes / no / not sure
- **Q7.c) In that group... How were / are decisions made?** (for example, through voting; team leader decides; by consensus, etc.)- Collective Internal / AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q8. Do you know about systems thinking?** – Collective Internal / PD AC
Multiple choice: yes / no / not sure
- **Q9.a) Are you currently volunteering or working with a group that is dedicated to social or ecological work?** Collective External / PD AC
Multiple choice: yes / no
- **Q9.b) If yes, to what degree do you feel that your group is making a meaningful difference?**
Collective External / PD AC
Scale 0-10 points - Not at all (0) to Transformatively meaningful (10)
- **Q9.c) If no, do you think you could help such a group make a meaningful difference?** Collective External / AC PD
Scale 0-10 points - Definitely Not (0) to Absolutely (10)

Final iteration of Post-Event Questionnaire

- **Q1. What did you gain from this experience?** – Singular Internal / PD WB AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q2a. Do you feel more resilient in the face of climate crisis after this past week** – Singular External / WB
Multiple choice: yes / no
- **Q2b. Please explain why.**
Short response - open ended (explain)
- **Q3. Has this week given you new strategies to look after your own mental health and wellbeing? Which ones?** – Singular Internal / WB
Long response - open ended
- **Q4. Do you think of well-being differently having done this event? Why?** – Singular Internal / WB
Long response - open ended
- **Q5.a) Do you think the way you conceptualise your role /purpose in doing social or ecological work has changed over the past week?**- Singular Internal / PD
Long response - open ended
- **Q5.b) Have you learned anything over the past week about the skills needed excel in your role?** - Singular Internal / AC
Scale 0-10 points – I didn't learn anything about the skills needed (0) to I learned a huge amount about the skills needed (10)
- **Q6. How would you define your relationship with your natural environment moving forward?** – Singular External / WB
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)

- **Q7. How would you define your relationship with your community moving forward?** – Singular External / PD WB AC
Scale 0-10 points - Absent from my daily thinking (0) to Important part of my life (10)
- **Q8.a) What (if any) principles of good teamwork apply to all groups?** – Collective Internal / PD WB AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q8.b) How can groups that you are a part of foster collective well-being?** - Collective Internal / WB
Short response - open ended
- **Q8.c) How could decisions be made in groups you are a part of?** - Collective Internal / AC
Short response - open ended
- **Q9.a) What strategies and frameworks have you found most helpful to you during this training? (nature well-being exercises, systems thinking, etc)** – Collective Internal / PD AC
Multiple choice: Understanding Eco-Anxiety / Exploring Global Perspectives / Resilience Activities / Team Formation Activities / Nature and Animal Connection Activities / Reflection Activities / Peer Education / Systems Thinking
- **Q9.b) Why? Think of:**
 - Why was it the most significant (strategy or framework) to you?
 - Do you think it will improve your ability to take action?
 - Where can you use it in your life? -
- **Q10.a) Are you currently volunteering or working with a group that is dedicated to social or ecological work?** Collective External / PD AC
Multiple choice: yes / no
- **Q10.b) If yes, to what degree do you feel that your group is making a meaningful difference?**
Collective External / PD AC
Scale 0-10 points - Not at all (0) to Transformatively meaningful (10)

- **Q10.c) If no, do you think you could help such a group make a meaningful difference?** Collective External / AC PD
Scale 0-10 points - Definitely Not (0) to Absolutely (10)

Focus group Schedules

- **Q1. What do you think is important to reflect on at this stage?**
- **Q.2 What type of learning is the most valuable for you and why?**
- **Q.3 What does a good team look like?**
- **Q.4 What does positive wellbeing look like?**
- **Q.5 What nature-based techniques stood out to you the most over this past week and why?**
- **Q.6 Which parts of the week were the least enjoyable and why?**
- **Q.7 How can people enhance their ability to take environmental action?**
- **Q.8 When we meet again in a few months time, what questions would be useful to ask ourselves?**
- **Q.9 What does good peer educator look like?**

Follow-up Focus group Schedules (example from LTT1, Irish Cohort Questions, 3 months post-event)

- Q1.) **Have your habits changed at all since the event in Dublin?**
- Q2.) **How transformative would you consider the event in Dublin?**
- Q3.) **Have you found time to play in nature?**
- Q4.) **Have you used any strategic planning tools to help you think about or solve problems?**
- Q5.) **How have you found interactions with people when talking about the environment?**
- Q6.) **Have you connected with/to new people since the event?**
- Q7.) **Have you had any opportunities or experiences with peer learning/education since the event?**
- Q8.) **Do you feel like the event had an impact on your personal development, mental well-being, or action competence?**

LTT1 Ireland Questionnaires Report



Background and Objectives

'Because of the innovative nature of this project and the great impact the methods developed will have on participants, we will conduct a case study to gain deep insight into the experience of the learners and the impact participation has on them. We are particularly interested in their personal development, mental well-being, and their action competence (ability to take informed action for sustainability) as a result of their participation. The case study includes not only analysis of the evaluations of each LTT activity (which will consist of a questionnaire and free response questions), but also open interviews with participants to gather more nuanced and detailed information from their perspective on their experiences and learning. The case study will be an important tool to inform the partnership on the creation of the toolkit because it will provide rich data on the impact of the methods.

The impact of the case study on the target groups will be to:

- attract other young people to the project to learn more about the transformative methods developed, seek to use the toolkit or get involved in some other way.
- give educators and practitioners insight into the impact of the methods developed in the project and interest them in using the toolkit.
- engage professionals and academics in the field with this new contribution and interest them in building on it in their work.

Survey Method

Two individual surveys were sent to be answered by participants, one before the event and one right after the weeklong training. Surveys could be answered online on a Google Forms or physically and then results were uploaded online by the facilitators.

Questions were designed according to the seismograph designed by Resilience Earth, which is a tool designed to evaluate the level of resilience of an individual, project, organization, community or ecosystem by analysing 4 dimensions:

- **Singular Internal:** How the individual is doing within themselves
- **Singular External:** How the individual is doing within their community and ecosystem
- **Collective Internal:** How the group or organisation that the individual is a part of, manages itself internally (decision-making, transparency, wellbeing)
- **Collective External:** How the collective effects change and does the transformative work it intends to do

The questions in the pre-event questionnaire also seek to explore three types of learning: Personal Development (PD),

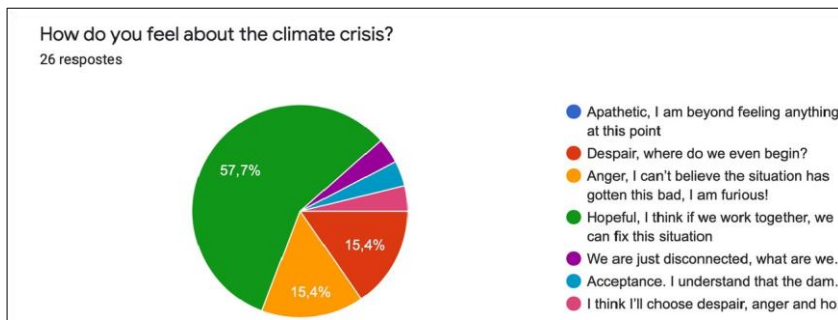
Well-being (WB) and Action Competence (AB). There are 9 questions included in the form (as well as bio information)

Survey Results

Personal Development

Out of the experience, most participants expected to gain knowledge on issues related to the environment, theoretical and practical tools, to create a safe network and to feel connected to nature and to themselves.

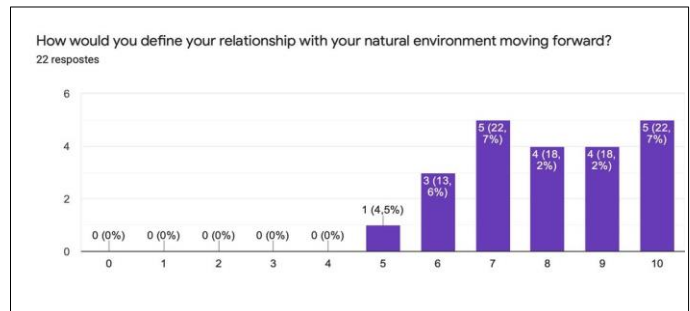
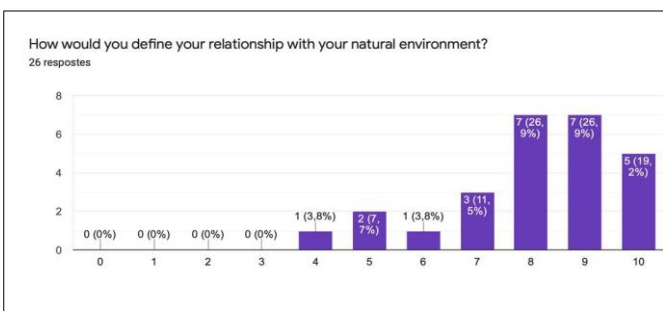
Youngsters' feelings before the event regarding the climate crisis were optimistic in the slight majority, with close to 60% of the voters feeling hopeful that their situation can improve if they start working with their community. Of the remaining 40%, 30% felt angry, despair and frustration, and the other 10% felt apathetic or acceptance.



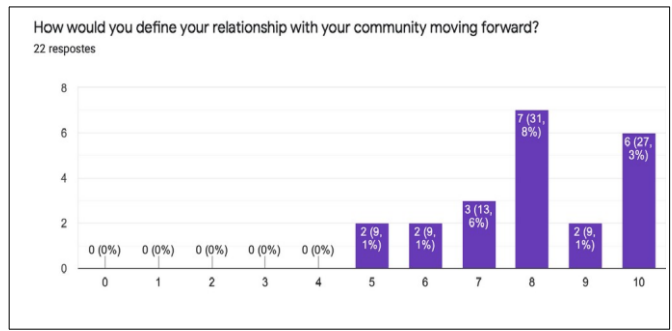
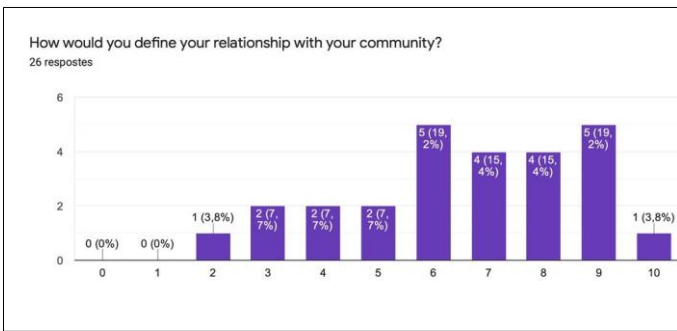
After the event however, 72,7% of voters changed their perception on the climate crisis:

1. It doesn't all fall on me, gained perspectives and awareness of how we live
2. Stronger feelings, opinions, personal growth
3. Hopeful, positive, activated creativity, inspiring
4. Love, respect, connection to nature, helping others
5. Tools, strategies

The relationship participants have with the natural environment improved from before to after the training:



As did the relationship among their communities, which was significantly better after the week in Ireland:



In regard to team/group experiences, participants had similar themes on what good teamwork implies both before and after the training:

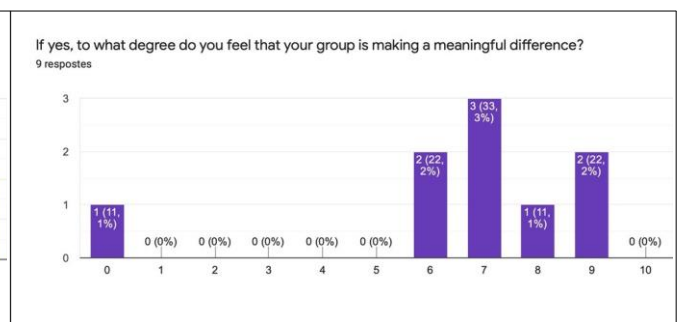
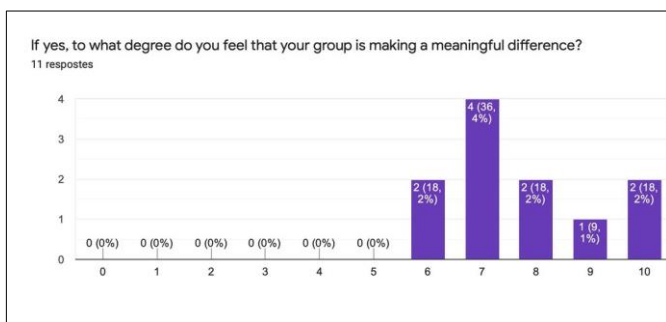
Before the event, participants thought that their best group experiences involved:

1. Relationships with people, real bonds, safe space, no judgement
2. Curiosity, interest, commitment, communication, honesty, passion, humor, respect
3. Space for improvement, good leadership, organization
4. Equal share of responsibilities, teamwork activities, talk about what did not work
5. Connection to nature

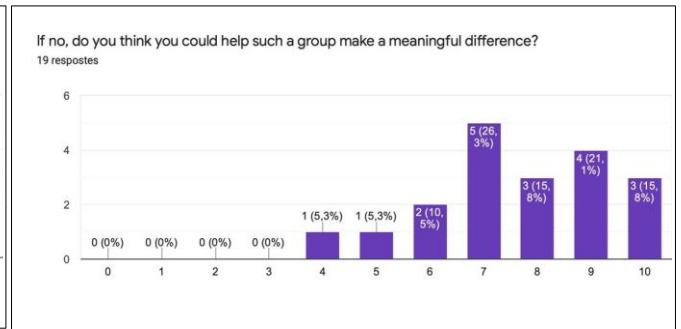
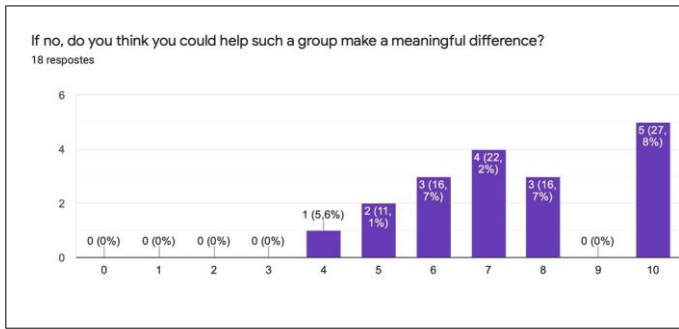
After the event, participants considered that good teamwork that applies to all groups implies:

1. Shared goal, connection to nature
2. Good leadership and shared responsibilities, every person has a role
3. Communication, teamwork, coordination, open to outsiders' opinions
4. Diversity, equity, open-mindedness, respect, inclusiveness, empathy
5. Mixed nationalities, ice-breakers, emotional/talk circles

Instead, participants' perception of whether the organization they're involved/working/doing activism with is doing an impactful job seemed to remain similar, except for one participant who had a significant different perception:



Instead, their perception of whether they could play a meaningful role in their groups increased:



Mental Well-being

Before the event, participants felt like they already had tools to take care of their mental health, such as:

1. Be with people, honesty, open conversations, share thoughts
2. Walk, art, sport, meditation, stargazing, martial arts, listening to music, reading
3. Self-acceptance and forgiveness, regulating emotions, psychologist, focus
4. Connection with spirituality, nature, animals

After the training, some argued like they felt that they already were in a good place, while new trends arose:

1. Engage in more projects, connect with people
2. Meditate, more nature, walk bare foot
3. Iceberg, systemic thinking

In regard to group work strategies to foster mental health and well-being, participants' opinions were similar, although they seem to place more importance on self-care, having fun and connection to nature to foster collective well-being:

Before the event, youngsters felt it was important to foster:

1. Open conversations about feelings, meditation together, talking circles, accepting emotions
2. Overcoming difficulty together, create a common project, everyone's involvement
3. Safe space, respect, have fun, informal atmosphere, music
4. Working with people you already know, free time to get to know new people

After the event, participants argued that groups can foster collective well-being with:

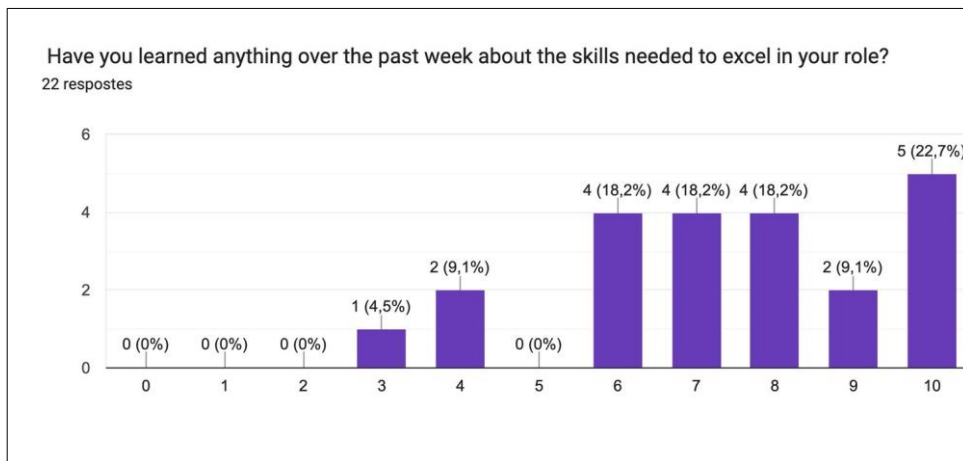
1. Connection to nature, meditation, activities in nature
2. Communication, sensitivity to thoughts and feelings, self-love, awareness of mental health, less judgement
3. Eliminate formalities, don't be so serious, opening up and trusting, positive mindset and help each other
4. Engage in actual activities that get you moving and bonding, share ideas, exchange views

Action Competence

In terms of roles in the community in doing social or ecological work, participants had different motivations:

1. Activism, altruism, communicating, caring, future, awareness
2. Leadership, teaching, responsibility, be an example,
3. Group activities/initiatives, learning
4. Neutral, in the background
5. Satisfaction, personal growth
6. Scaling the impact (small to big)

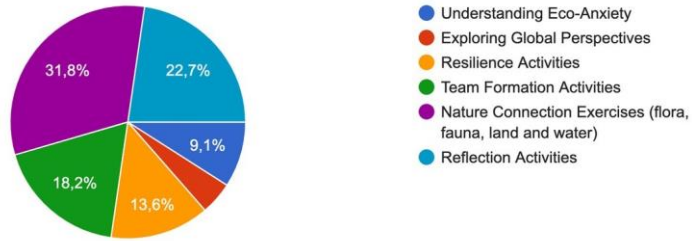
However, most of them 50%, were not sure if they had the skills required to excel in the role, while an important percentage, 42.3% thought they did and 7.7% did not. At the same time, most participants felt like they learned skills during the training that could apply to their roles:



Before the training, most participants had never heard or were not sure whether they knew about systems thinking (96,2%). However, by the end of the training the strategies and frameworks that were linked to systems thinking were greatly valued, among others:

What strategies and frameworks have you found most helpful to you during this training?

22 responses



LTT2 Slovakia Questionnaires Report



Background and Objectives

'Because of the innovative nature of this project and the great impact the methods developed will have on participants, we will conduct a case study to gain deep insight into the experience of the learners and the impact participation has on them. We are particularly interested in their personal development, mental well-being, and their action competence (ability to take informed action for sustainability) as a result of their participation. The case study includes not only analysis of the evaluations of each LTT activity (which will consist of a questionnaire and free response questions), but also open interviews with participants to gather more nuanced and detailed information from their perspective on their experiences and learning. The case study will be an important tool to inform the partnership on the creation of the toolkit because it will provide rich data on the impact of the methods.

The impact of the case study on the target groups will be to:

- attract other young people to the project to learn more about the transformative methods developed, seek to use the toolkit or get involved in some other way.
- give educators and practitioners insight into the impact of the methods developed in the project and interest them in using the toolkit.
- engage professionals and academics in the field with this new contribution and interest them in building on it in their work.

Survey Method

Two individual surveys were sent to be answered by participants, one before the event and one right after the weeklong training. Surveys could be answered online on a Google Forms or physically and results were then uploaded online by the facilitators.

Questions were established according to the seismograph designed by Resilience Earth, which is a tool designed to evaluate the level of resilience of an individual, project, organization, community or ecosystem by analysing 4 dimensions:

- **Singular Internal:** How the individual is doing within themselves
- **Singular External:** How the individual is doing within their community and ecosystem
- **Collective Internal:** How the group or organisation that the individual is a part of, manages itself internally (decision-making, transparency, wellbeing)
- **Collective External:** How the collective effects change and does the transformative work it intends to do

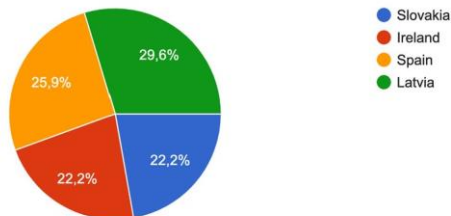
The questions in the pre-event questionnaire also seek to explore three types of learning: Personal Development (PD), Well-being (WB) and Action Competence (AB). There are 9 questions included in the form (as well as bio information).

Survey Results

Demographics

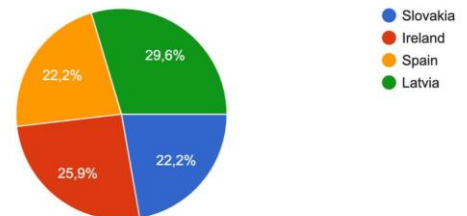
Pre-Event

Which country is your sending organization from?
27 responses



Post-Event

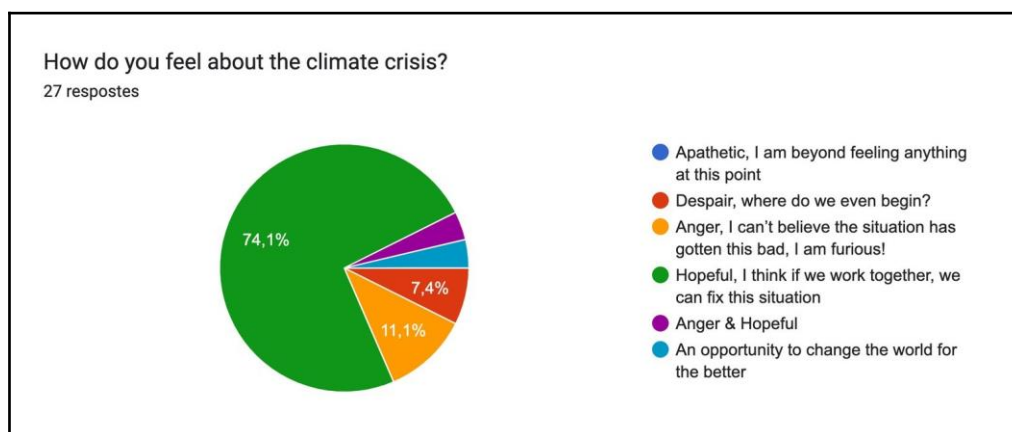
Which country is your sending organization from?
27 responses



Personal Development

From this training, most participants expected to gain knowledge about the environment, sustainability and different cultures. They also wanted to make new friends and gain confidence to act, inspiration and ways to take action.

Their feelings before the event regarding the climate crisis were greatly optimistic with close to 75% of the voters feeling hopeful that their situation can improve if they start working together. The most prevalent response out of the remaining 25.9% was anger and despair, whilst few people were feeling anger and hopeful or perceiving the climate crisis as an opportunity to change the world for the better.

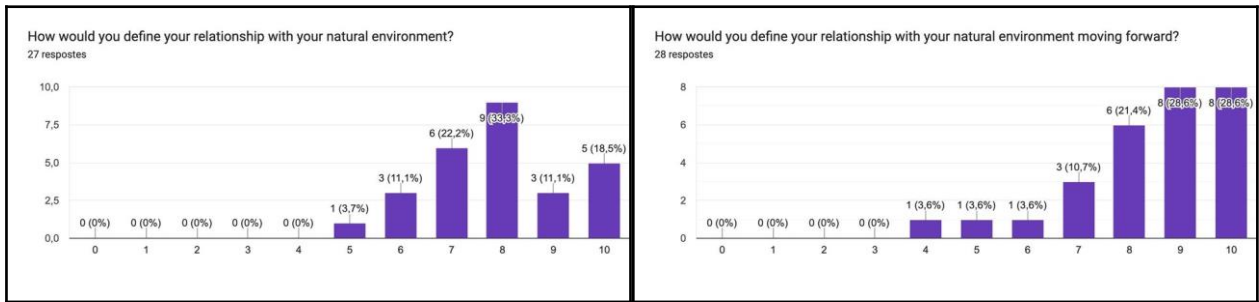


After the event however, 75% of participants changed their perception on the climate crisis:

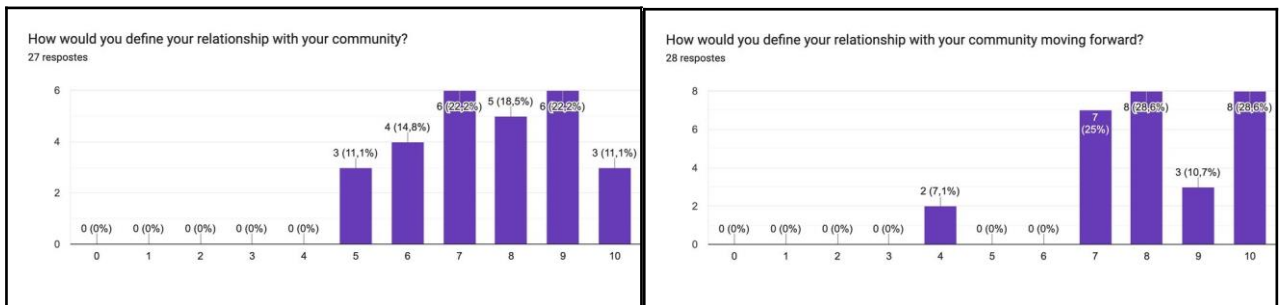
1. Not feeling alone, creating networks of diverse people, hopeful that people care
2. Knowledge acquired, systemic thinking, tools, empowerment

3. Increased awareness and connection to climate change
4. Motivation, willingness to take action

The relationship participants have with the natural environment improved from before to after the training:



The relationship among their communities also changed significantly, as more people felt their relationship could improve but with some people feeling more disconnected.



In regards to team/group experiences, participants had similar themes on what good teamwork implies both before and after the training:

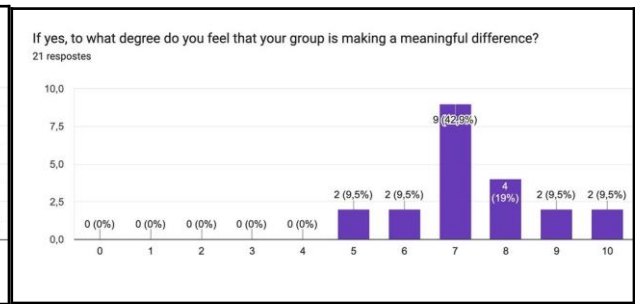
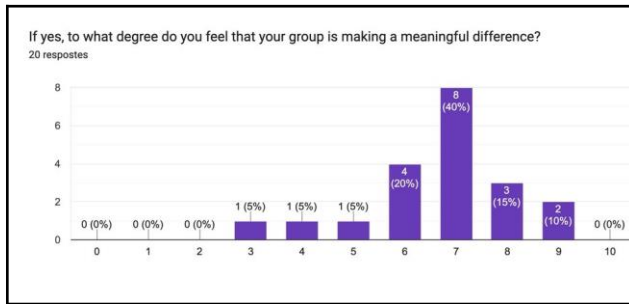
Before the event, participants thought that their best group experiences had involved:

1. Connection, mutual motivation, good communication
2. Explore individual skills, diversity, include all opinions
3. Organisation, good leadership, timelines, visual results
4. Work toward one same goal, people want to be there
5. Space for relaxation, creativity, human connection, trust and support

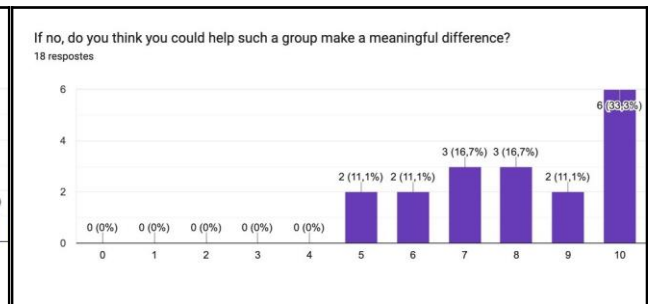
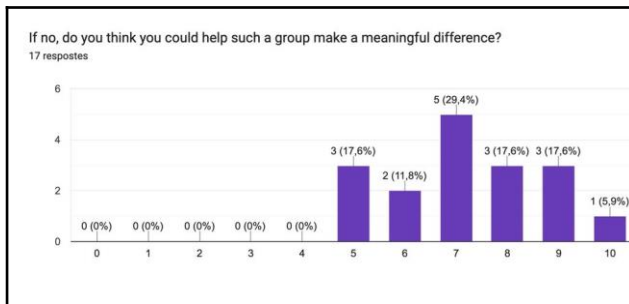
After the event, participants considered that good teamwork that applies to all groups implies:

1. Communication, cooperation, collaboration, teamwork
2. Acceptance, inclusivity, value all opinion
3. Happiness, empathy, trust, honesty, respect, nurturing
4. Hard work, good leadership

Participants' perception of whether the organization they're involved/working/doing activism with is doing an impactful job seemed to improve after the event, with people skewing away from the lowest numbers (3 and 4) and towards the top (10), but with 7 being the most voted number.



The perception of whether participants could play a meaningful role in their groups increased drastically at the top distribution.



Mental Well-being

Before the event, participants felt like they already had tools to take care for their mental health, such as:

- Physical activity: walking, swimming, dancing, hiking
- Introspection: alone time, reading, music, meditation, shower, journaling
- Community: friends, talking to loved ones
- Nature: fresh air, spending time in nature

After the training, a few people mentioned they were not planning on implementing new ways to look after their mental health, but the vast majority found new strategies for themselves, such as:

- Skills: Learned frameworks, systemic thinking, project planning
- Introspection: Self-awareness, breathing techniques, grounding exercises, meditation
- Nature: Connect with nature, be outside, plant planting, gardening
- Community: Connections, helping others, prioritize face-to-face, join environmental groups, share knowledge
- Physical activity: Sports

Regarding group work strategies to foster mental health and well-being, many participants said at the beginning that their group did not foster positive mental health and well-being. Still, the rest of participants argued:

Before the event, youngsters felt it was important to foster:

1. Actions: collect garbage, recycling bins
2. Surroundings: Atmosphere, flexible timeline, forest
3. Personal: Check-ins, patience, self-expression, meditation

4. Social: Share feelings, buddy groups, jokes

After the event, participants argued that groups can foster collective well-being with:

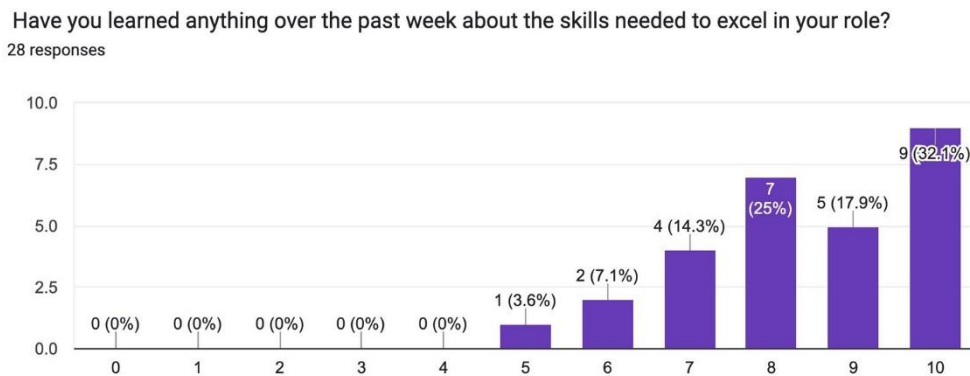
1. Personal: check-ins, listen more, safety, empathy, kindness, mental support
2. Community: work together, sense of being, tolerance, communication
3. Social: organize events
4. Atmosphere: Less stress, nurturing environment

Action Competence

In terms of roles in the community in doing social or ecological work, participants had different motivations:

1. Activism, spread awareness
2. Helping others, be an active part of the community
3. Improve ecological work, lead change
4. Get involved as as a participant

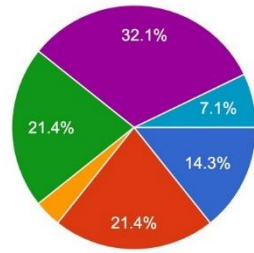
However, most of them 52%, were not sure if they had the skills required to excel in the role, while an important percentage, 48.1% thought they did. At the same time, most participants felt like they learned skills during the training that could apply to their roles:



Before the training, most participants had never heard or were not sure whether they knew about systems thinking (55.6%). And an equal number had and had not heard of system thinking before 22.2%.

What strategies and frameworks have you found most helpful to you during this training?

28 responses



- Understanding Eco-Anxiety
- Exploring Global Perspectives
- Resilience Activities
- Team Formation Activities
- Nature Connection Exercises (flora, fauna, land and water)
- Reflection Activities

LTT2 Latvia Questionnaires Report



Background and Objectives

Because of the innovative nature of this project and the great impact the methods developed will have on participants, we will conduct a case study to gain deep insight into the experience of the learners and the impact participation has on them. We are particularly interested in their personal development, mental well-being, and their action competence (ability to take informed action for sustainability) as a result of their participation. The case study includes not only analysis of the evaluations of each LTT activity (which will consist of a questionnaire and free response questions), but also open interviews with participants to gather more nuanced and detailed information from their perspective on their experiences and learning. The case study will be an important tool to inform the partnership on the creation of the toolkit because it will provide rich data on the impact of the methods.

The impact of the case study on the target groups will be to:

- attract other young people to the project to learn more about the transformative methods developed, seek to use the toolkit or get involved in some other way.
- give educators and practitioners insight into the impact of the methods developed in the project and interest them in using the toolkit.
- engage professionals and academics in the field with this new contribution and interest them in building on it in their work.

Survey Method

Two individual surveys were sent to be answered by participants, one before the event and one right after the weeklong training. Surveys could be answered online on a Google Forms or physically and results were then uploaded online by the facilitators.

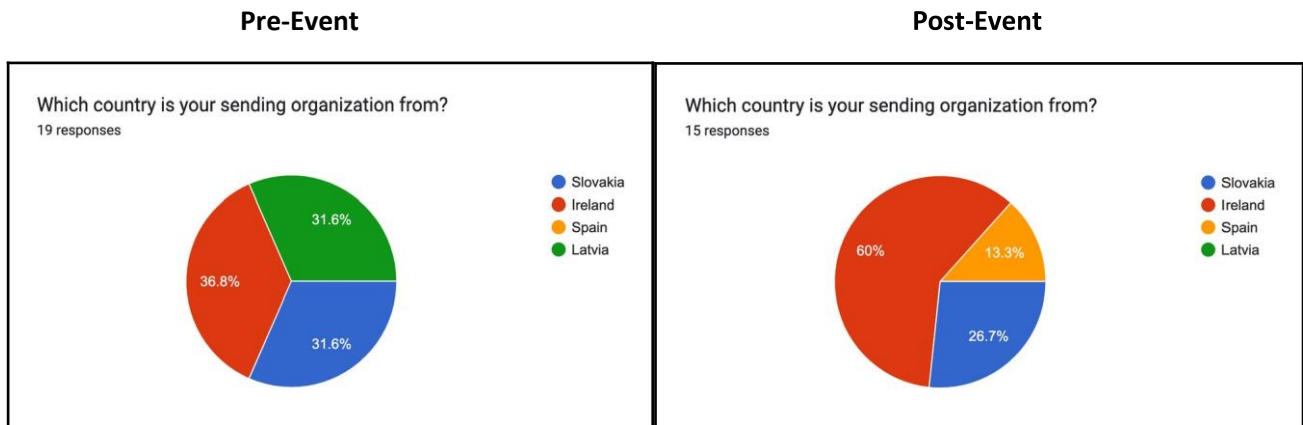
Questions were established according to the seismograph designed by Resilience Earth, which is a tool designed to evaluate the level of resilience of an individual, project, organization, community or ecosystem by analysing 4 dimensions:

- **Singular Internal:** How the individual is doing within themselves
- **Singular External:** How the individual is doing within their community and ecosystem
- **Collective Internal:** How the group or organisation that the individual is a part of, manages itself internally (decision-making, transparency, wellbeing)
- **Collective External:** How the collective effects change and does the transformative work it intends to do

The questions in the pre-event questionnaire also seek to explore three types of learning: Personal Development (PD), Well-being (WB) and Action Competence (AB). There are 9 questions included in the form (as well as bio information).

Survey Results

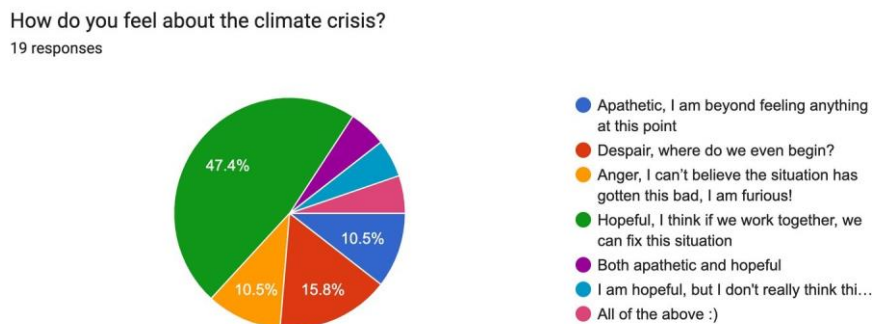
Demographics



Personal Development

From this training, most participants expected to gain knowledge about the environment, sustainability and different cultures, team building, new friends, connections and experiences.

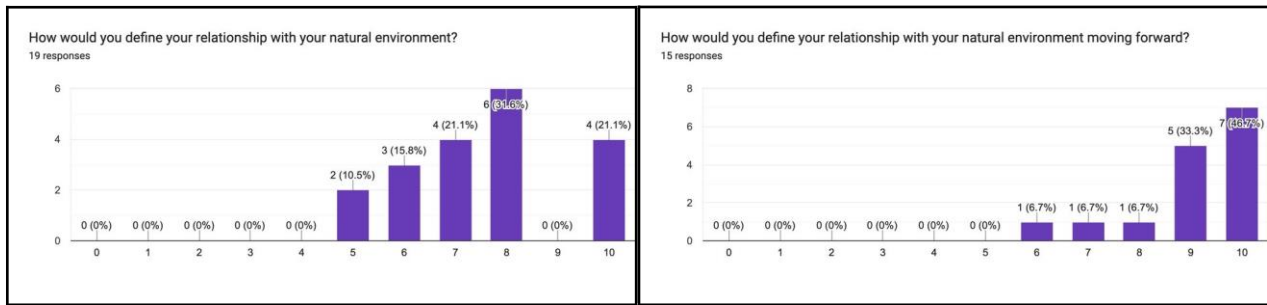
Their feelings before the event regarding the climate crisis were distributed among half and half of the group. Half of the group was optimistic with close to 48% of the voters feeling hopeful that their situation can improve if they start working together. The most prevalent response out of the remaining 26% was anger and despair, whilst few people were feeling anger and hopeful or perceiving the climate crisis as an opportunity to change the world for the better.



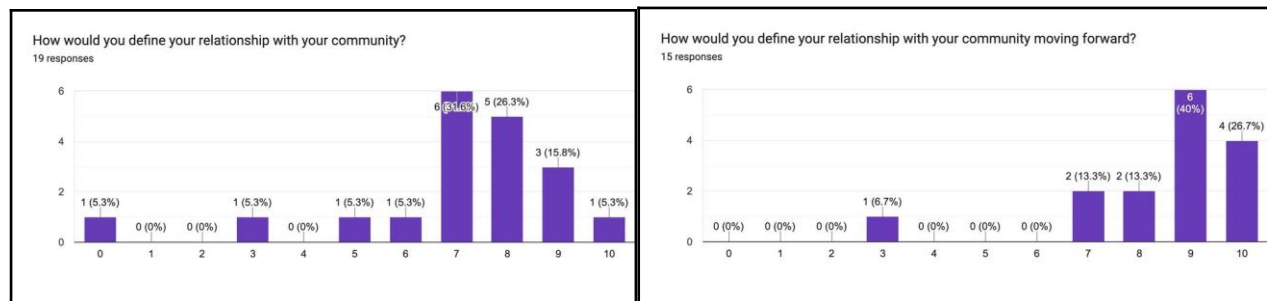
After the event however, 100% of participants changed their perception on the climate crisis:

1. Strategies and tools to have an impact, and understand the big picture through systems thinking
2. Capacities to manage emotions and focus on well-being, new understandings of eco-anxiety
3. Motivation to fight for something, self-empowerment
4. Importance of communities, not being alone

The relationship participants have with the natural environment was better after the training :



The relationship among their communities also changed, people were more optimistic after the event, with the votes skewing to the highest numbers, though some outliers still felt disconnected.



In regards to team/group experiences, participants had similar themes on what good teamwork implies both before and after the training:

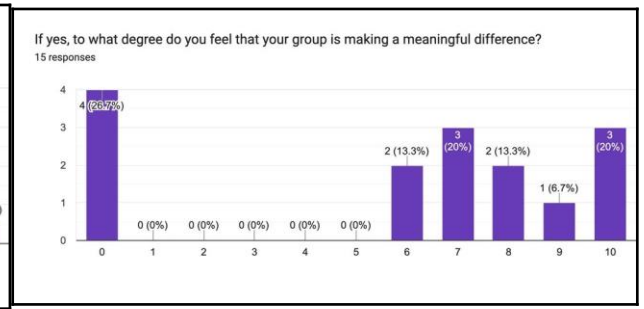
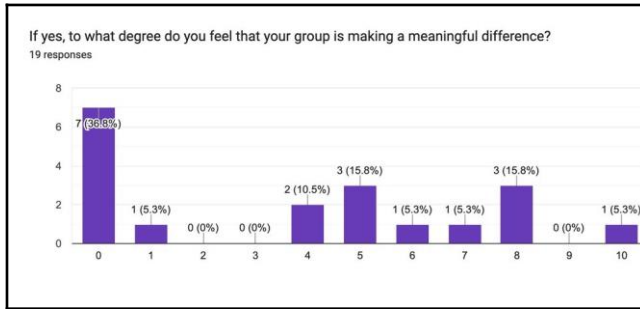
Before the event, participants thought that their best group experiences had involved:

1. Friendly environment, honesty, cooperation, reaching mutual decisions, everyone is listened to, mixed group
2. Diversity in activities, modeling real-life situations
3. Similar goals, motivations, and vibe
4. Clear roles to play on strengths and interests

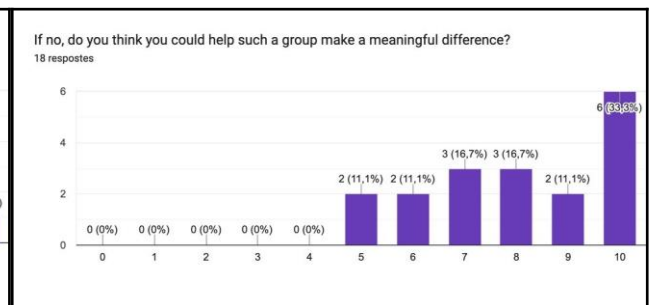
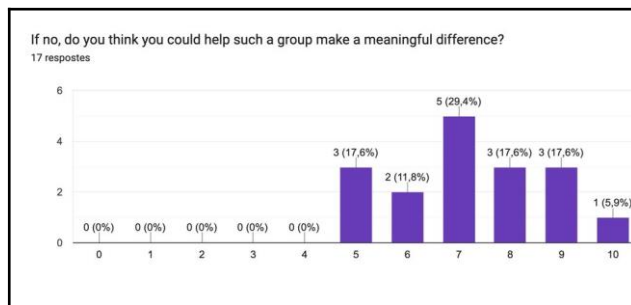
After the event, participants considered that good teamwork that applies to all groups implies:

1. Communication, respect, finding compromises, active listening
2. Have fun and laugh
3. Research, exposition, listening skills, observations
4. Leadership and diversity

Participants' perception of whether the organization they're involved/working/doing activism with is doing an impactful job improved after the event, improved after the event, as most participants skewed their votes to the highest numbers. After the event still, more than 25% of the voters felt that their group was not making a difference (voting 0).



The perception of whether participants could play a meaningful role in their groups increased drastically at the top distribution.



Mental Well-being

Before the event, participants felt like they already had tools to take care for their mental health, such as:

1. Environment: Nice places and good atmospheres
2. Caring: Looking after others and nature
3. Physical activity: sports, running, gym, walking, volleyball
4. Relationships: Being with family and friends, sharing worries and issues
5. Arts: Music
5. Food :)
6. Introspection: Meditation, spiritual connection

After the training, almost everyone's perception of well-being changed, with people having a broader understanding of the concept, feeling part of a greater whole (nature), seeing its individual uniqueness, seeing beyond themselves, and seeing the relevance and importance of self-care. Some people felt that they already had a good understanding before the event. In terms of post-event well-being strategies:

1. Relationships: being social, building solid relations
2. Introspection: energizers, meditation
3. Nature: recognizing the importance, feeling connected
4. Tools: Systems thinking, analytical and design tools

Regarding group work strategies to foster mental health and well-being, many participants said at the beginning that their group did not foster positive mental health and well being. Still, the rest of participants argued:

Before the event, youngsters felt it was important to foster:

1. Checking on each other, being friendly
2. Conflict resolution
3. Helping when needed
4. Common empowerment
5. Have fun and build shared memories

After the event, participants argued that groups can foster collective well-being with:

1. Support: Being inclusive, relaxed, comfortable environment, diversity
2. Communication: Sharing concerns, being open, dialogues,
3. Balance: Manage workload and expectations, roles and leadership
4. Experiences: Share beyond work, step outside comfort zone
5. Nature: Seek more connection

Action Competence

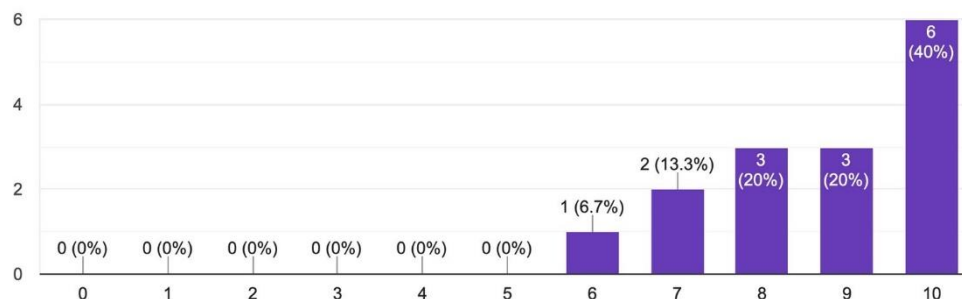
In terms of roles in the community in doing social or ecological work, participants had different motivations at the start, especially focused on eco-friendly, grass-roots movements, educational roles. However, many of them feeling disconnected, giving general answers or not answering this question. After the event, people felt empowered and had a more clear role:

1. Peer educators
2. Intercultural work
3. Personal purpose
4. Project planning

Before the event, most of them 64%, were not sure if they had the skills required to excel in the role, while 36% did. At the same time, most participants felt like they learned skills during the training that could apply to their roles:

Have you learned anything over the past week about the skills needed to excel in your role?

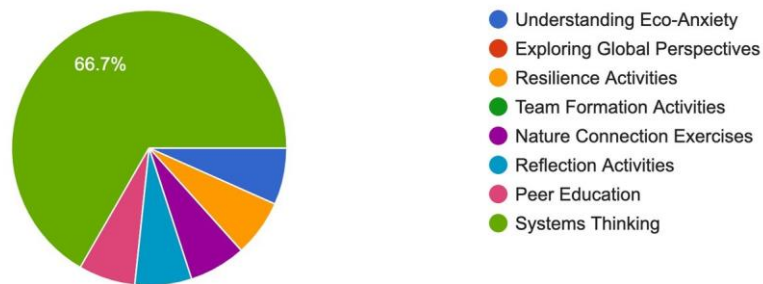
15 responses



Before the training, only 10% of participants had heard of systems thinking, while it was one of the most valued frameworks after the event (67%).

What strategies and frameworks have you found most helpful during this training?

15 responses



Some of the arguments for the above votes were:

1. Application outside of eco-activism, relate to all aspects of life
2. Understanding our own processes and how we think, deconstructing behaviours, getting to the root of problems
3. Learning and being inspired by other participants
4. Seeing anxiety as a shared issue and how to “surf” it