



NGEnvironment

‘Layman’s Report’

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LAYMAN'S REPORT

NGEnvironment

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1. SETTING THE SCENE

NGOs play a crucial role in the wellbeing of mankind and their relevance as promoters of positive change in the world is undeniable. Creating a new NGO is a powerful way to change things.

However, starting an NGO is usually a lengthy, time-consuming process that arises many doubts and uncertainties, which can more often than not, result in potential leaders to give up or to join any other entity that already exists, even if it does not entirely fulfil the person's view or goals.

We believe the difficulties of the process of starting an NGO can be minimized by following a consistent series of steps and seeking advice. This is where the **NGEnvironment** Project steps in.

NGEnvironment seeks to promote active citizenship and sustainability among adults in Europe. The entities involved – based on 8 different European states, created a multitude of different tools to train potential and current NGO leaders. Project beneficiaries had the opportunity to improve their skills and basic competencies in leadership, citizenship and NGO management whilst also being given the opportunity to support green and social actions.



2. The NGenvironment Project



NGEnvironment arises as a relevant contribution for the EU horizontal priority of improving relevant and high-level basic and transversal competences of EU citizens, in the scope of adult education and under the perspective of lifelong learning. In fact, it aims at capacitating new leaders for change engagement, improving entrepreneurial, foreign language and digital skills and fostering employability, socio-educational and professional development, through NGO action.

By capacitating NGO leaders, **NGEnvironment** contributes to improve/extend the supply of high-quality learning opportunities tailored to the needs of low-qualified adults so they acquire literacy and entrepreneurship skills, with the recognition of such skills.

NGEnvironment is specifically tailored for adult audiences, fostering social cohesion, boosting talent, taking their specific needs/concerns into account, and delivering novel learning approaches through a holistic, participative, motivational pedagogical process that ultimately results in the development of many key competences with a long-term effect on European active citizenship for sustainability.

Social inclusion is achieved as **NGEnvironment** seeks to train new NGO leaders providing equal learning opportunities for all, despite their gender, religion, cultural background, age, etc. The project fosters social integration by creating jobs for socially segregated or low-skilled people.



NGEnvironment was built to achieve the following objectives:



Supporting the development of a new generation of NGO leaders.



Be at the forefront of strategies and programmes for leadership.



Define and implement strategies and programmes for leadership development that incorporate best practices and current experience/expertise, from a multitude of countries and cultures across Europe (south, north and central).

The NGEEnvironment consortium:



Universitaet Paderborn (Germany)
Project Coordinator

Rightchallenge (Portugal)



Acrosslimits Ltd (Malta)

**Society for Environmental
Education of Korinthia (Greece)**



Future in Perspective Ltd (Ireland)

**Asociacion Cultural y Medioambiental
Permacultura Cantabria (Spain)**



Sinergie (Italy)

**Grupul pentru Integrare Europeană
(Romania)**



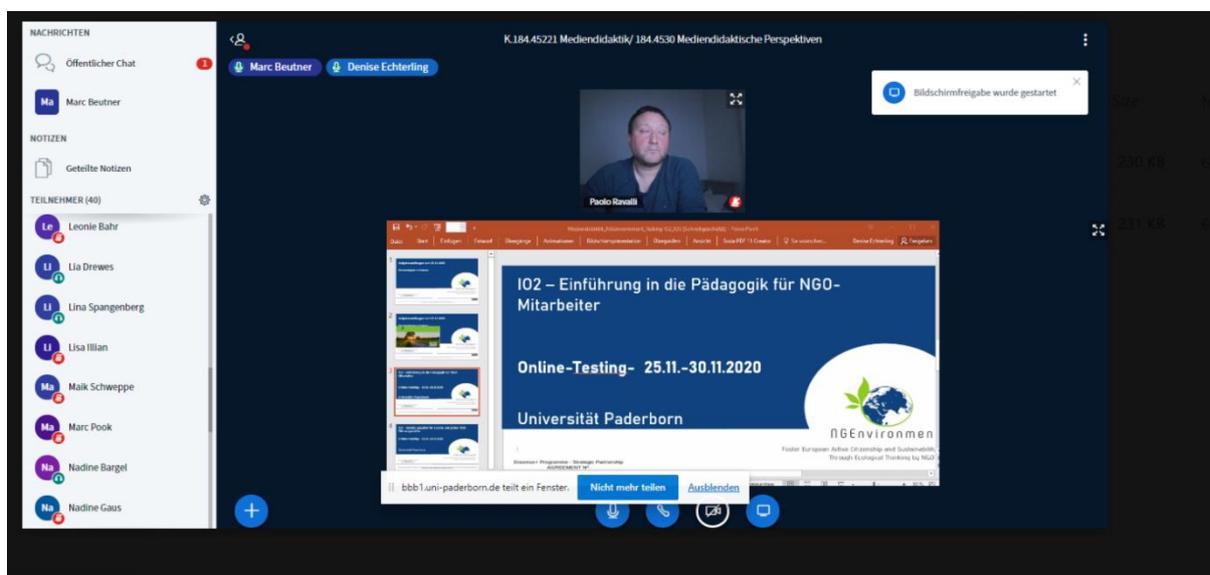
3. NGEEnvironment Solutions

3.1. Insights from “Comprehensive Pedagogical Training Programme for equipping the NGO leaders with new knowledge, skills and resources”

The German testing concerning IO2 “Induction to pedagogy for NGO staff” took place from 26th to 27th of November 2020. The modules were taught online via BigBlueButton of the University of Paderborn. A total of 32 persons attended the workshop. Among them, there were employees of an NGO, but also potential NGO employees and leaders. Moreover, 2 trainers took part. The aim of this testing was to present the modules of IO2 in order to receive constructive feedback from the field and to make improvements to the content of the modules. We can observe that most of the participants were generally satisfied with the whole IO2 training, since we cannot find any negative answer regarding the ‘Induction to Pedagogy for NGO staff’ training. This is also shown by the results that most participants agreed with, i.e. that the whole training corresponded to their needs and expectations. Additionally, most participants evaluate all modules as positive. Especially the provided support materials/resources were evaluated as very positive. Even so, the content of the module seems to satisfy the needs of the target group.

Furthermore, the participants in the training indicated that they were able to effectively learn, because the topics of blended learning are particularly helpful. Most of the participants did not suggest any improvements regarding the training modules. Hence, the participants like most the structure of the modules with videos, tasks, clear structure and content. Even so, the participants liked the multiple-choice questions for self-monitoring.

On this basis, a constructive discussion with all participants could take place during the training.

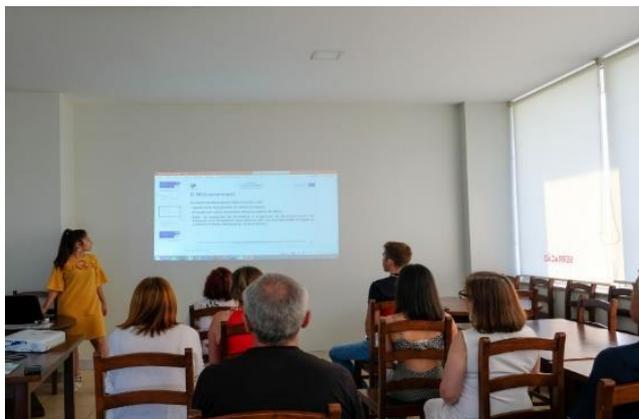


The event was divided in two face-to-face sessions on August 8, 2020: one session took place in Penafiel, with RC's trainers Sandra, Artur and João, and the second one took place in Braga, with Vanessa. Rightchallenge staff ensured safety in every session, and tried to dynamically host the session, according to all measures, given the circumstances we are facing. In Penafiel, the IO2 Induction to Pedagogy for NGO staff gathered 20 people, and in Braga it gathered 14 people, that included volunteers in NGOs, NGO staff and leaders, and adult citizens. Rightchallenge did its best to encourage and welcome people of all ages, in order to diversify and extend this training to all kinds of people working in green and social NGOs. They found a wide range of participants, with which they were delighted, such as seniors working as volunteers and young people with fresh and active ideas. Rightchallenge presented the main aims and objectives of IO2 – Induction to Pedagogy for NGO staff – its value within the whole picture of the project, and the crucial role of the workshop to address the needs of NGO trainers.

Quotes from participants

“The training helped me to identify the personal and inter-personal skills needed to manage a NGO as a green or social entrepreneur. I am happy because these are the fields of intervention that pleased me most”.

“It was able to improve multiple pedagogical and communicational skills that I valued and will be of great use in the future.”



**RightChallenge presenting the IO2 –
'NGENVIRONMENT - INDUCTION TO PEDAGOGY
FOR NGO STAFF' in Penafiel and Braga**



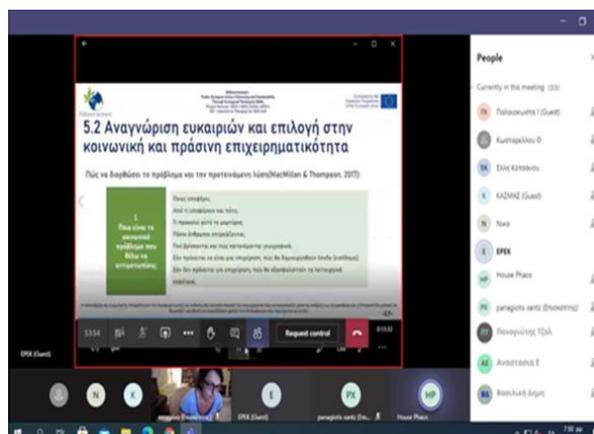
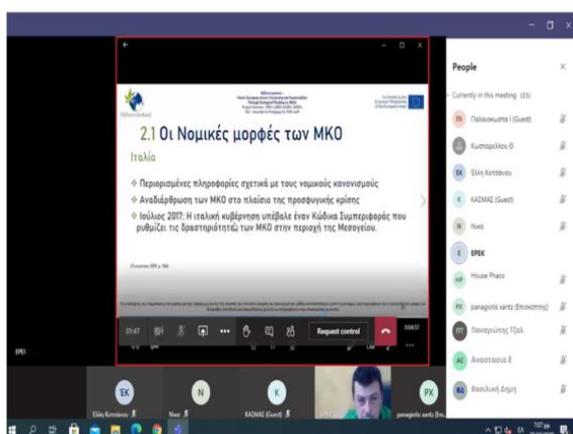
Unfortunately, due to the current situation resulting from the pandemic it was not possible to do the seminar indoors and face-to-face, which is why it was decided to carry out the IO2 testing online. There was the participation of 23 people, including: volunteers in NGOs, NGO staff and leaders, and adult citizens, the test instructor was Tsolakos Christos.

On Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 18:00 p.m., the online seminar was successfully held online (via Microsoft Teams), we informed participants by email, and posted a news on our website, Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The goal of this workshop was to give information about NGOs. It was explained that the IO2 was divided into 5 sections: Understanding NGOs, Improving pedagogical and communication skills and methods, Ways to develop entrepreneurial ideas, Blended learning in NGENvironment and Environment immersion program.

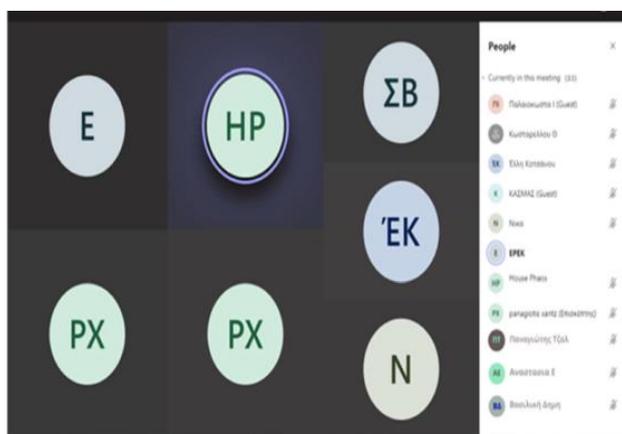
The participants were existing NGO executives, young leaders and those who were interested in learning about the " Induction to Pedagogy for NGO staff ".

One of the participants asked a lot of questions about the legal forms of NGOs and what are the laws in Greece for their creation and operation.



Another one didn't know about the elevator pitch and found it very interesting and wanted to learn how he could do it himself.

Also, one of the participants found blended learning a very useful teaching method. He only had experience with face-to-face learning and teaching, so he will explore other methods, too.





AcrossLimits held the online webinar for IO2 titled “Improving Pedagogy skills within NGOs” on December 2nd 2020. Participants invited to this webinar were existing members of NGOs looking to increase their knowledge of teaching skills.

During the webinar, participants introduced themselves and the goals of their NGOs. The programme started by discussing the aims of the project and what was to be tackled during the webinar. The content discussed was well received and the participants showed genuine intrigue in the more complex topics, asking questions to make sure they understood the topics. While some of the content mentioned during the webinar was already known by the participants, thanks to the large amount of information offered, everyone seemed to pick up some new information.

After the content was presented and any questions were answered, the attention was then placed on the participants themselves. At this point, participants described their experience with training within NGOs and any opinions they held on the content presented to them





The Induction to Pedagogy for NGO staff that was delivered to 10 participants from NGOs and community organisations from our region on 8th and 15th January 2021. Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 in Ireland, it was not possible to host this training in person as we had originally planned, so the programme was adapted to be delivered through two 6-hour sessions, online. The first session of this training focused on introducing the IO2 Curriculum to participants, and to focusing mostly on the content of Module 2 and Module 4. As all participants worked in the NGO sector in Ireland, some with over 20 years' experience, it was agreed to briefly introduce the content of Module 1 – understanding NGOs, as the participants would already be familiar with their structure in the context of Ireland; and also, to briefly present the content of Module 5 – NGENvironment Immersion Programme – so that participants could contextualize their work on Module 2, within the overall structure of the project.



Quotes from the participants

"It has been very nice to meet with others in this sector and to gauge how we are all struggling and coping together this year."

"It's interesting to see how leadership can be improved in our organisation through not only effective communication, but also by having an entrepreneurial outlook and encouraging others to do so."

"I enjoyed the talk around what motivates us to work in this sector and the social professions in general."

"I liked having the chance to think of a business idea – this is a new activity for me and something to exercise one's brain with."

I02: Formación Pedagógica para miembros de ONGs.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Modulo 2 – Parte 1: Mejora tus habilidades pedagógicas y comunicativas; así como tus métodos pedagógicos

Creado por UPB

NGEnvironment

Foster European Active Citizenship and Sustainability Through Ecological Thinking by NGO's

ERASMUS+ Programme - Strategic Partnership Agreement No. 2018-1-DE02-KA204-005014

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Permacultura Cantabria held an online testing on October 5, 2020. 10 participants staff from different NGOs attended the workshop. In addition, some adult trainers from Permacultura were attending to take advantage of the training. During the session, an overview of the training modules was presented, to later deepen the development of module 2 (Improving your pedagogical skills, communication skills and pedagogical methods). Some of the participants had experience in training, and one have highlighted the difficulties when establishing the learning or educational objectives for their trainings. He didn't know the Blooms taxonomy and found it very useful. All participants prefer face-to-face courses, but in the pandemic situation they also must deal with some online activities. They had not heard the term blended learning before, and some expressed their interest in specific module on blended learning (Module 4), to acquire knowledge and tools to be used in their trainings. One of the participants manifest that choosing teaching methods is difficult. She mainly uses role play and brainstorming when developing activities, and she found useful the discussion on other teaching methods that she could apply in future trainings.

The image shows a Zoom meeting interface with a grid of 16 participants. The bottom right corner displays a browser window showing the NGenvironment project website. The website content includes the NGenvironment logo, the project title 'NGEnvironment Foster European Active Citizenship and Sustainability Through Ecological Thinking by NGOs', and the project number '2018-1-DE02-KA204-005014'. It also mentions 'Co-funded by the Erasmus Programme of the European Union' and 'Official project website'. Below this, there is a section for 'PROJECT DETAILS / DETALLES DEL PROYECTO'.

The Italian partner Sinergie structured training activities in order to offer both an interactive part in the form of webinars (4 lessons of 2 hours each), and another part where participants were required to access the learning material and study it autonomously on the NGE e-learning platform. The training activities started in October (IO2) and ended in November 2020 (IO3).



During the 1st webinar a round-table presentation was held to allow participants to introduce themselves and the organisations they are working or collaborating with. Then, participants were involved in a debate on NGOs to share their experience and entrepreneurial ideas in the green and social field.

During the 2nd webinar two activities were suggested: the first one, called “the silly cow exercise”, allowed the audience to implement the Business Model Canvas methodology to a concrete example; in the second one they could test the acquired knowledge on the Value Proposition.

The participants had the opportunity to share ideas and experiences, ask questions and also express their impression on the course, which was overall positive.

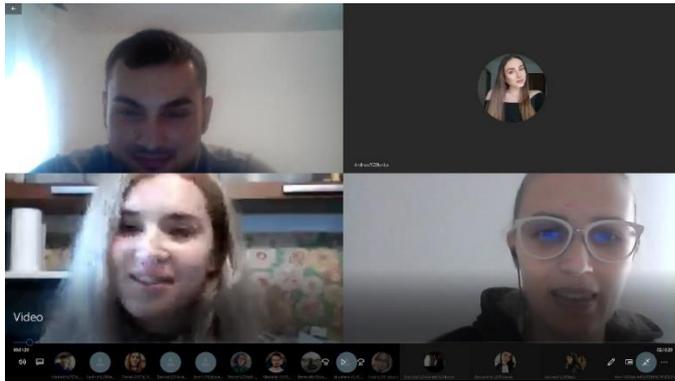


Quotes from the participants

“I found it interesting to talk about social enterprise in a current and concrete key.”

“I liked the part relating to learning methods because I consider it extremely topical.”

“The materials presented by the trainers were clear and the recording of the lesson was also very useful for reviewing the more complex parts.”



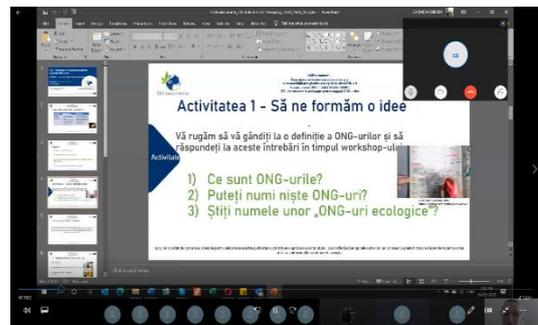
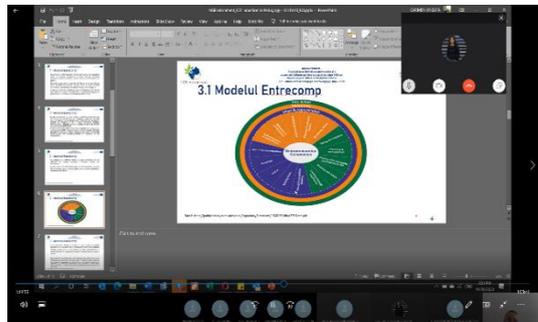
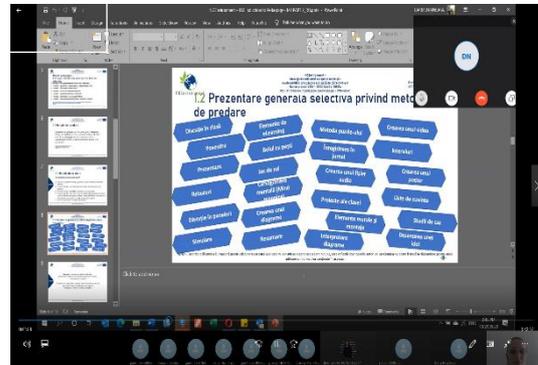
IO2 testing was organized on 29th of October 2020, online, via Skype. 11 NGO leaders attended the event, being quite interested in developing their professional skills in order to extend their NGO activity and team, considering that the NGOs play the most important role in the nowadays society, being the key leaders of progress and sustainability. The participants showed a higher interest in the topic *Improving pedagogical skills, communication skills and pedagogical methods.*

Quotes from the participants

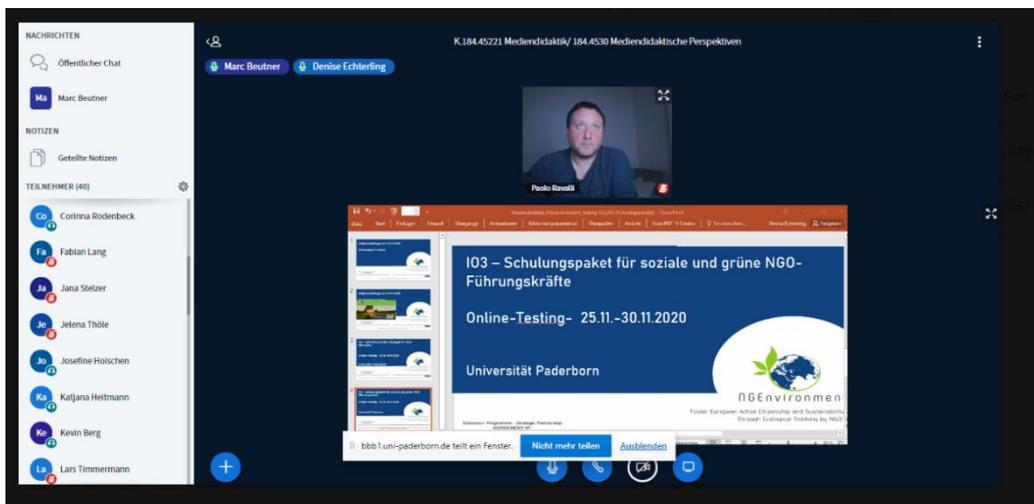
“The NGenvironment project is what our society needs! It is the key of improving the NGOs activity and also the key to rise the interest of more and more people to join our initiatives!”

“This Intellectual Output is outstanding! I am eager to come back to my team and share all the knowledge and skills developed through the training. I am sure our activity will improve and we, as a team, will become closer!”

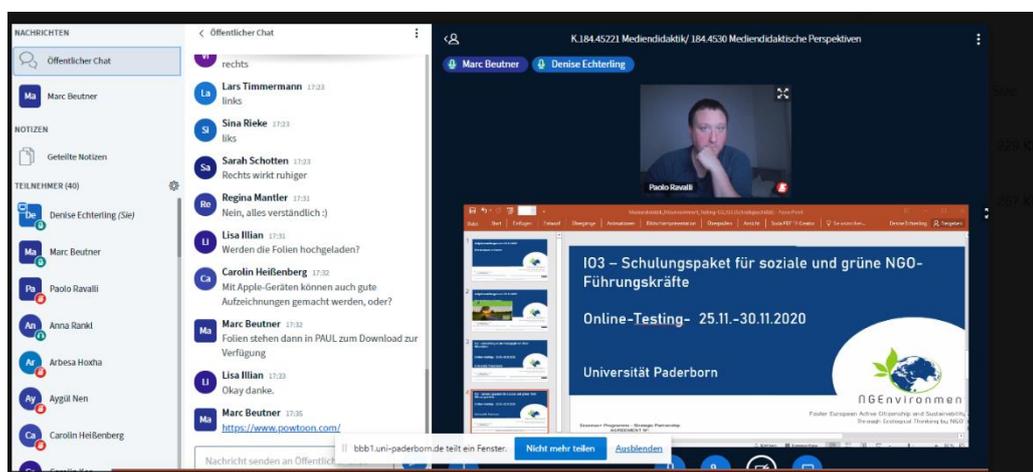
“The skills developed through the NGenvironment project and especially through this intellectual output will help all NGO leaders to work closer with the public bodies and authorities, assuring the improvement, development and sustainability of all behaviours.”



3.2. Insights from “Leadership training addressed to potential new leaders of green and social NGOs”



The German testing concerning IO3 “Training package for social and green NGO leadership” took place from 30th of November to 2nd of December 2020. The modules were taught online via BigBlueButton of the University of Paderborn. A total of 26 persons attended the workshop. Among them there were employees of an NGO, but also potential NGO employees and leaders. Moreover, 2 trainers took part. The aim of this training was to present all modules of IO3 in order to receive constructive feedback from the field and to make improvements to the content of the modules. We can observe that most of the participants were generally satisfied with the whole IO3 training. Most participants agreed that the training methods used in the “Training package for social and green NGO leadership” were appropriate and simple to understand. Furthermore, the participants in the training indicated the most important information was covered in Module 3, as these provide concrete tips for a leader and their leadership behavior. At this point, the provided support materials/resources were evaluated as very positive. Even so, the content of Module 7 was evaluated as very positive, because it provides the participants with information about communication and public relations, which is essential for an NGO. What participants liked most about the training were the interactive questions (H5P) and the content presentations combined with appropriate learning videos. Most of the participants have no improvements regarding the training modules.



As the circumstances we are currently living wouldn't allow to gather more than 20 people in the same space, the event was split into two face-to-face sessions on August 8, 2020: one session took place in Braga, with Rightchallenge trainer Vanessa, and the other in Penafiel with Sandra, Artur and João, following the same structure as the pilot testing of IO2. Rightchallenge staff sought to host the session in a dynamic way and has ensured to provide all safety measures following all health recommendations. In Braga, the session gathered 14 participants and in Penafiel 20 participants, that included adult citizens, NGO staff members and leaders. The audience was very diverse and included varied trainers within the target group of the output



RightChallenge presenting the IO3 – Training package for social and green NGO leadership in Penafiel and Braga.

Quotes from participants

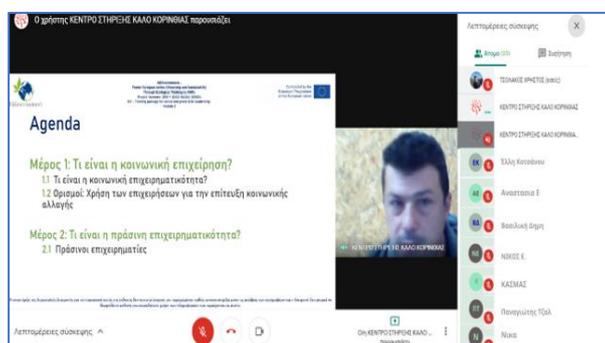
“It is of utmost importance to foster this kind of training activities because green and social entrepreneurship is of great relevance for the future if we want to change and improve environmental practices within our reach”.

“I found particularly relevant the skills I was able to gain and improve, especially on ideas’ development and communications aptitudes.”

The IO3 testing seminar was held online and it saw the participation of 23 people, including: NGO volunteers, NGO staff and leaders, and adult citizens, the testing instructor was Tsolakos Christos.

On Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 18:00 p.m. the online seminar on "Encouraging active citizen participation and sustainability through the ecological thinking of NGOs" was successfully held. The seminar was conducted online, via Microsoft Teams. We informed participants via email, and posted a news on our website, Facebook and Twitter accounts.

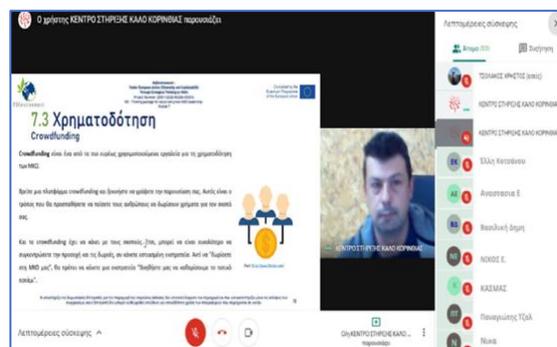
The seminar addressed the needs of NGO students / educators. It was explained that the work was divided into 7 sections: Introducing leadership in NGOs, Introducing green and social entrepreneurship, Creative thinking, initiative and self-confidence, Idea generation and evaluation, Testing and prototyping the NGO idea, Communication and promotion, Funding.



In the seminar one participant asked about module 2, he asked a lot of questions about social enterprises the cons and pros of these types of enterprises, and how many there are today compared to before.

Another one, asked about how can she generate ideas, because she used some technics but they didn't work. So, she asked more information about the ways to do it and if they are effective.

In module 6, one of the participants was interested in how he can promote his business through networking, and how this can be done as successfully as possible. Because his networking so far wasn't working and asked us if he was doing something wrong.





The second webinar held by AcrossLimits was related to launching a new NGO. This webinar, which was held on December 3rd 2020, proved to be the more widely anticipated of the two webinars, attracting a larger audience.

While there were a few shared participants between this webinar and that of the previous one, the conversations held among the participants was vastly different, most probably due to the difference in the content discussed.

The webinar's focus on topics related to entrepreneurship opened an avenue to a lot of discussion within the group, with participants sharing their insights of the different challenges they faced when starting their own NGOs. This was invaluable insight to those participants who had yet to start their own organisation but were intending to do so in the near future.

After all the discussions of the webinar were complete, the floor was opened to the group to field feedback about the content, as well as to address any additional questions that might have come up. Once again (and as seen by the other partners within the project) the content was very well received.

Feedback was sourced from the participants and while there was some regret that the webinar had to be held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the actual webinar was deemed concise yet very informative. In addition, when the mention of funding for NGO initiatives was discussed, a majority of participants wanted to not only learn more about funding opportunities, but also wished there were more informative sessions, webinar and workshops specifically related to funding options.



The first round of the IO3 training was delivered to 12 participants in two online sessions on 23rd and 30th January 2021. Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 in Ireland, it was not possible to host this training in person as we had originally planned, so the programme was adapted to be delivered through two 4-hour sessions, online. This training was planned as a follow-up to the delivery of the Induction to Pedagogy training for NGO leaders (IO2). During the course of delivering the IO2 training to NGO leaders in our network, all participants also expressed an interest in learning more about the IO3 Training Package, as they believed that it could help staff in their organisations and could also facilitate a transfer of knowledge within their organisations to new staff. Some of the participants were also current NGO staff, but interested in taking a leadership role in their organisation in the future, so this training was interesting to them for their own career progression. The focus of the online sessions was to introduce the 7 curriculum modules, and then to vote between participants which were the key topics that would form the basis of their group discussion.

During the first session, the group decided to focus on the themes of:

- Leadership in NGOs – Module 1
- Green and social entrepreneurship in NGOs – Module 2
- Communications and outreach – Module 6

Then in the second session, the group would focus on the topics of:

- Idea generation and evaluation – Module 4
- Creative thinking, initiative and self-confidence – Module 3
- Testing and prototyping the NGO idea – Module 5



The group of participants agreed that it was not necessary to cover the topic of ‘funding’ in the live sessions, as all NGOs who were represented in this group had been funded through different schemes and mechanisms.

Quotes from the participants

“Nice opportunity to engage with the training topics in a practical way, to swap stories and experiences and to gain tips from experts. I feel that I have learned a lot that I can bring with me.”

“Good to hear what others are doing in the sector so that we can make changes to our own practices.”

“I found it very inspiring – especially the part about having confidence in my own ideas and the concept of ‘intrapreneurship’ is new to me, so I definitely think this is something I would like to develop further and learn more about.”



The workshop was held online by Permacultura Cantabria in November 9, 2020. Previously, participants were given access to the material of the modules so that they could prepare the workshop in advance. 20 participants mainly volunteers of different NGO or people interested in creating a NGO, attended the workshop. An overview of all the training modules was presented, and then the training was mainly focused on Module 1 (Introducing leadership). Some participants highlighted the importance of being a good leader when creating or developing an NGO. Participants were more used to work with leaders that apply the autocratic or 'laissez-fair' leadership, and their attitudes are much dependent on the relationship with the leader. Some participants would prefer an enthusiastic leader who creates value and inspires employees, but also think that is very difficult to find that kind of leader. One of them was overwhelmed by the amount of skills and competencies required to be a good leader. Many of the participants agreed that leaders play a central role in shaping the destiny of the NGO. Participants liked the contents of the module and the exercise to identify the style of their own leadership, which they found very useful.



During the 1st webinar new participants were allowed to introduce themselves and the reason for their interest in the course.

When the debate on NGO ideas was launched, a couple of participants talked about experiences that were familiar to them or in which they had the opportunity to take part.

During the 2nd webinar, participants had the opportunity to showcase their own work, by presenting the Business Model Canvas or the Elevator Pitch of their own NGO, of a specific project, or their idea of NGO.

The overall feedback was positive and the audience was very participative and enthusiastic to share ideas and experiences.

Quotes from the participants

“It was useful to understand how to do a pitch and concretely organize the activities of an NGO.”

“The most relevant information learned was about social and green entrepreneurship and Business Model Canvas for NGOs.”

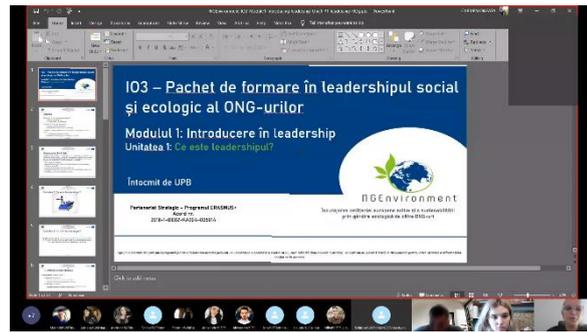
“It was very interesting to know about the figure of the social and green entrepreneur in Italy, financing, donations and crowdfunding: a topic that I knew little and that I was pleased to investigate.”

M4 | Valutazione delle idee

- ✓ Raccogliere e analizzare informazioni sull'attività, le caratteristiche e i risultati di un programma.
- ✓ Essere aperti a ricevere continui feedback e regolare il programma di conseguenza.
- ✓ La valutazione si basa su: **obiettivi, processo e risultati.**



IO3 testing was organized on 31th of October 2020, online, via Skype. 21 participants attended the event, being quite interested in developing their professional skills in order to join the big family of NGOs, becoming leaders and a voice for sustainable development, environmental protection and people's rights protection. The participants actively got involved in all the practical activities, showing an immediate response to the training activities and skills development. They showed a high interest in the topic Communication and outreach, and they also considered an important topic the one focusing on Funding mechanisms.

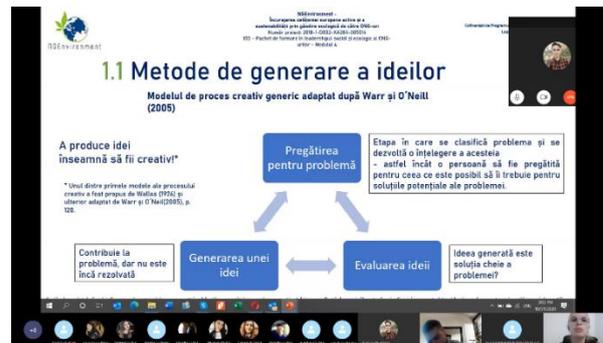
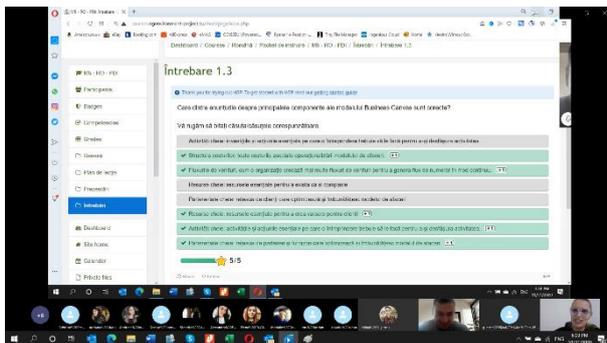


Quotes from the participants

"If, initially, I was just thinking of joining and NGO for a part-time activity and volunteering, now I am convinced to do so!"

"This activity was the only one which I participated in and presented so complete information about an NGO and how to develop your activities in order to respond to the needs of the society".

"I will graduate this year and, if for some time, I have not been so sure about my future, now a know: I will develop my own NGO in order to promote sustainable development".

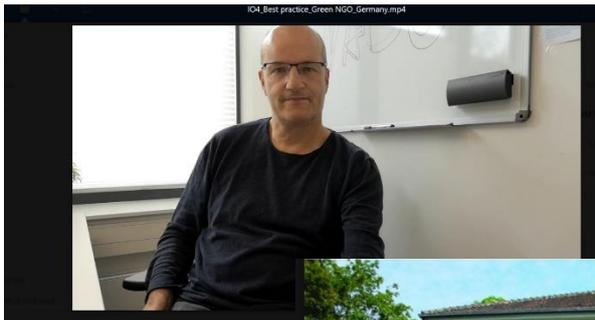


3.3. Case studies and the NGENvironment Online Observatory



NABU is a green NGO business in Germany. The nature centre Senne (Prinzenpalais Bad Lippspringe) was founded in 2014 and concentrates mainly on the protection of the national environment and sustainable development in the green education sector. Renewable energy measures are also taken into account. In this context, the program of NABU focuses on dimensions under ecological, economical, sociological and socio-cultural aspects. For example, a current project focuses on the respectful use of drinking water. Today this NGO employs 5 full time staff and over 100 volunteers.

For the NABU the biggest challenge is the process of funding and setting up associations. The administrative process is especially very extensive in Germany. Furthermore, it is difficult to find the right partners who share the same goals. In addition, questions have to be asked about financial support. Once an association has been founded and the right partners have been found, a joint project usually follows. For this purpose, project applications have to be written. These applications are very bureaucratic in Germany, so the application process takes a lot of time. With regard to the issue of Development Corporation the NABU sees itself as pioneers for social ecological transformation of society. NGOs have the potential to implement and transfer smaller ideas into large projects. This is also the vision for the coming years. Small regional ideas should experience their high relevance through NGOs and should be expanded nationally together with a large network.



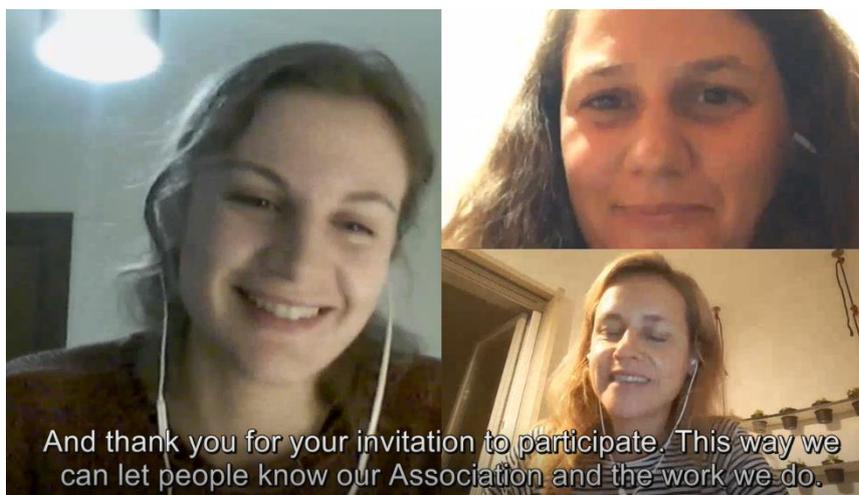
Forest School Association Portugal is a nonprofit association that was founded in 2017, focused on bringing the forest closer to children, to allow them to discover what nature has to teach, as a complement to conventional education.

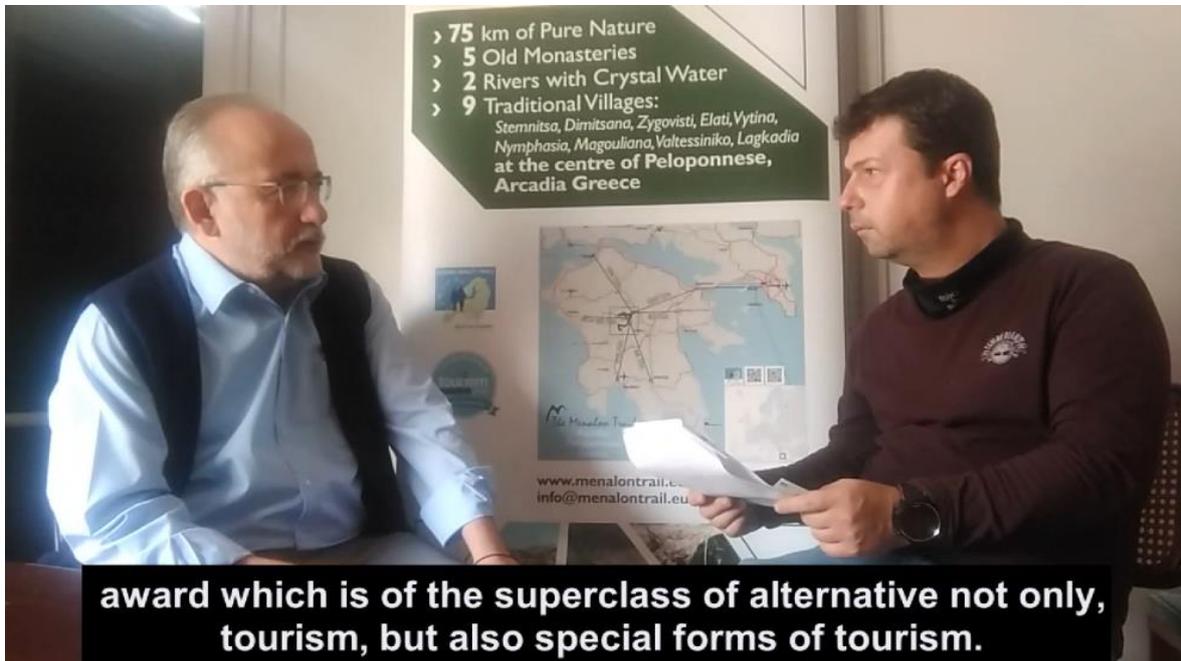
The biggest challenges the Forest School Portugal faced was the lack of support, namely legal and lawful support at the time it was founded.

Regarding opportunities and future plans, they see an opportunity to expand their associates in the future, since they are located in Loures (Lisbon) but have several associates throughout the country, and even a founding member connected to the Association in Brazil. They emphasize the growing involvement and interest of parents and children in the forest school pedagogic approach, and on the recognized benefits of “just being” and learning in nature for children.



ASSOCIAÇÃO
ESCOLA DA FLORESTA
FOREST SCHOOL PORTUGAL





MENALOS is a Social Cooperative Company for the protection of Mainalos, they are the first social enterprise that took place in the Peloponnese in July 2012 and one of the first in Greece.

The whole concept was about picking up the dry and rotten residue from the forest and transforming them into pellets so the forest doesn't burn, and this also create jobs in the mountains.

Because of the bureaucracy, they haven't done the above, so they have been dealing with trails and hiking in the mountains.

MENALOS is the first certified NGO in Greece with European specifications, and established a hiking trail, the Menalo trail, which meets all the criteria of the pan-European federation of hikers. This also brought jobs to a lot of people.

Looking ahead, there is room for growth in this area of green entrepreneurship, because Greece has 101 forest offices, so this will lead to the creation of hundreds of NGOs, which could have the responsibility of the forest, that is to remove the dry, and rotten residue, collecting and selling aromatic plants, and forest plants, always under the supervision of the forestry authority.

The Malta Organic Agriculture Movement (MOAM) was started on the 3rd of November 1999, with the intention to endorse any initiatives in favour of using natural products to grow crops without any chemical involvement and to share best practices on how to sustain the Maltese agriculture in the best way possible. At the time of writing, MOAM consists of over 60 other organisations in the same area, and acts as an association of these different initiatives.



The initial struggle of MOAM was due to the lack of education related to organic produce, and as such their first challenge was quickly identified to be the teaching of local actors and decision makers in the areas of organic agriculture as well as increasing awareness. In the beginning, the association was all self-funded through donations as, at the time, there were no funding opportunities available from the Maltese government suitable to their cause.

Mr. Mario Salerno, social entrepreneur, believes that the Maltese archipelago (Malta and Gozo), still has many opportunities in the area of agricultural preservation, and is optimistic that the work he conducted through his NGO can also be replicated on Malta's sister island Gozo.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



The Rural Hub was established as an NGO in 2012, and is a provider of community education in Virginia, Ireland. Specifically, The Rural Hub works to address social and rural isolation, which is something that affects the mental health and well-being of many local community members. They achieve this through running a series of informal and non-formal training programmes. Specifically, through the Social Mornings programme, The Rural Hub aims to bring community members together to engage in non-formal learning on topics like arts and craft, knitting, mediation, working with crystals, storytelling, etc. The courses that are run as part of this programme are decided upon through regular training needs analyses that are conducted among community groups. The topic of the courses is irrelevant; what this programme strives to encourage is social engagement and inclusion between community members. These courses are free of charge, with The Rural Hub engaging volunteers to deliver the training sessions and funding the venue and refreshments from its own private income sources. This income is generated through external contracts that The Rural Hub undertakes. These include some engagement in European-funded projects, as well as local contracts for digital media work. This programme ran successfully from September 2019, until March 2020 when COVID-19 restrictions were introduced by the Irish government and when The Rural Hub training venue was closed. This posed a significant challenge for The Rural Hub. In the interim, staff from this NGO tried to engage with learners online. However, the demographic of the Social Mornings programme was mostly older learners, migrant learners and young people living with a disability. This meant that many of The Rural Hub's participants could not engage fully with online learning. The Rural Hub staff have tried to maintain contact with these learners by developing short instructional videos and sharing them online, through Facebook, and also through a WhatsApp group that was created to keep everyone connected throughout the lockdowns. The Rural Hub plans to re-open the training venue in September 2021. To support this, the NGO has secured a larger premises in Virginia, where courses can be offered in line with social distancing guidelines. This means that The Rural Hub can continue its work to addressing social exclusion, rural isolation and loneliness in our community, through providing a safe and supportive environment for adult learners to engage in non-formal learning, while also socialising with members of their community.



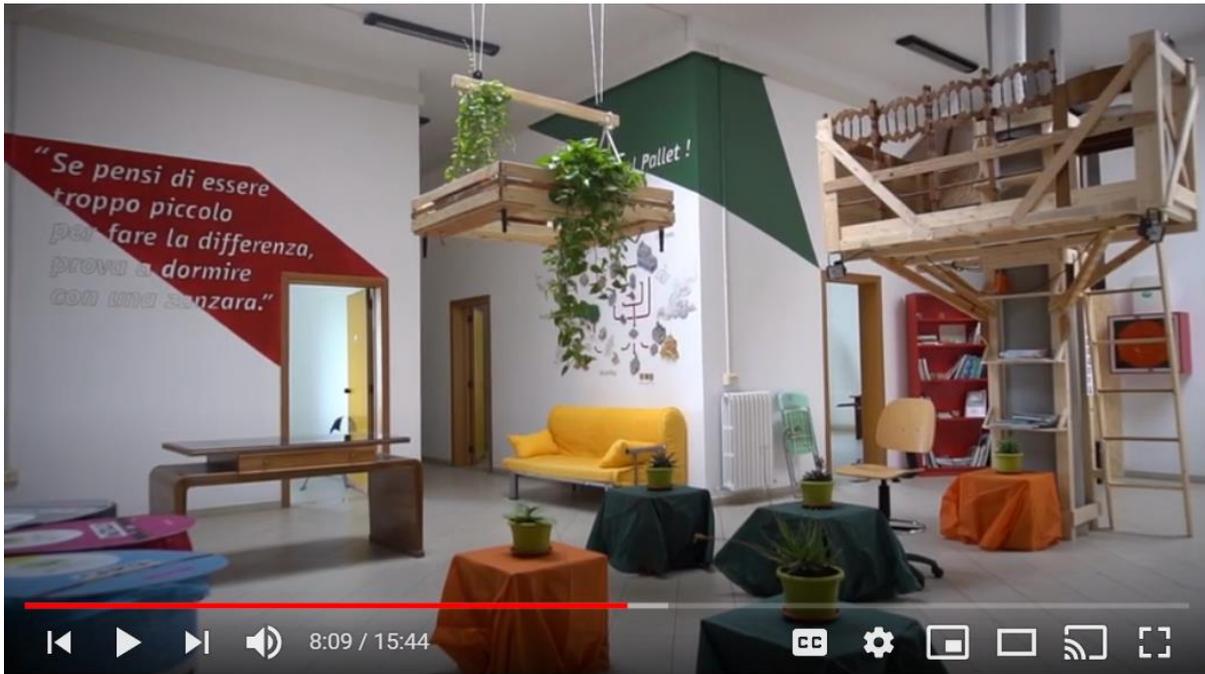


Platforms of Sustainable and Solidarity Alternatives (PASOS) is a nonprofit association of public interest with social character that was founded in 2006, focused on strengthen relationships with other entities mainly working in environmental issues.

The biggest challenges today are related to the Covid: how to survive when all projects keep being postponed and encounter difficulties in their implementation. The biggest challenge is to maintain the connection with their partners and the people they work with. Another issue is how to deal with keeping the staff with the low salaries they have and how to be able to take care of the whole social structure around them.

Regarding the opportunities they have on the environmental issue, people from PASOS think that it is a field underdeveloped, especially the adaptation to climate change. They think that climate change is already a fact and it is inevitable. One of the medium and long-term objectives is to create more awareness on the climate change problem and how we can adapt to it. So, the plans for the future are still to generate alliances with entities that work with climate change, to increase the awareness of their learners and to develop strategies for adaptation to climate change. Due to the success of their projects, they hope to grow and, in the next 10 years, double the staff and multiply the number of people they are able to reach with their projects and initiatives.





Cultura Ambiente Onlus was born from the idea of a group of friends who created a voluntary association in 2005 with a strong desire to make their own contribution to the local development and the environment.

Over the years, the Association has always considered the importance of spreading information and raising awareness among the citizens because, within a culture linked to the development of new clean technologies, these fail in their intent.

In 10 years', the founder and social entrepreneur Roberto Paladini hopes to see what was carried out in recent years becoming something consolidated in the country, at least in Italy. He would like that small composting experiences will become the method to solve the problem of waste transport and environmental impact, also generating savings for small administrations.

For more information:

https://youtu.be/qOMipRP7EMw?list=PL84k6zO2ZYS3R2l6u5PrWYW1B2LNb6r_j





INGMED is an NGO focusing on sustainable development and environmental protection, established in Pitesti, in 2010. The experience of more than 10 years recommends INGMED as an outstanding institution in the region, its experience being a valuable one. Of course, during all its activity, the NGO has faced some pitfalls and challenges in funding and finding donors. Apart from that, the lack of feedback and social support bring delays in the activity and in the responsiveness to the immediate needs of the society. Moreover, sometimes, it is difficult to find funding in order to provide training opportunities to the NGO members.

As for opportunities, INGMED is focusing on extending the activity in the field of recycling, waste reduction and new ways to reuse the waste such as manufacturing toys. In this way, INGMED intends to demonstrate that green opportunities are the key to make the world better.

For more information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQU4kKb1XY4>



4. Target beneficiaries

NGEnvironment is addressed to all interested actors, from all EU Member States. However, through the specificities of its outcomes and services, the focus is on the following categories of beneficiaries:

potential new
NGO leaders

social and
green activists

existing NGO leaders and staff
members



5. Benefits of the innovative solution provided by NGENvironment

There is a proven need to train capable leaders able to express their willingness to engage in the issues and challenges they see around them. NGENvironment trains such leaders, helping them to develop the skills needed to find creative solutions to local/regional problems, through associativism, recognising potential leadership and harnessing such qualities for the benefit of the environment and of others, through job creation, social inclusion and active citizenship, sharing benefits with all – as the true objective and building block of NGO is democratic and opens participation and sustainability. The project demonstrates, as intended by the European Commission, that green entrepreneurship is an effective mean to boost employment and the efficient use of natural and social capital.

NGEnvironment brings an innovative solution that is directed to adults, who clearly lack leadership programmes in Europe, since the existing one are directed to youth. The projects' training programme and products are freely available to any interested person, promoting inclusion and active citizenship throughout Europe!



Further information at:
<https://ngenvironment-project.eu/>

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