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This guide collects good practices for the inclusion and integration of young people with fewer opportunities and refugees through outdoor methods. It also includes advice on promoting environmentally friendly practices during similar activities and propositions on activities and exercises.

The guide will be beneficial for:

- Organizations working with young people with fewer opportunities or refugees, such as NGOs, youth organizations, and refugee support groups.
- Program designers and facilitators who are interested in designing and implementing inclusive outdoor programs that promote the integration and well-being of young people with fewer opportunities or refugees.
- Outdoor educators and instructors who are interested in creating more inclusive and accessible outdoor education programs.
- Government agencies that fund or support youth programs and outdoor education





Overall, the guide will benefit anyone who wants to create good quality, inclusive, and accessible outdoor programs that promote the social inclusion and integration of young people with fewer opportunities and refugees.





Empowering Growth is a small-scale partnership project between Logos Polska and Náš tábor, NGOs from Poland and the Czech Republic. The project aimed to integrate and include refugees and people with fewer opportunities into society through outdoor and environmentally oriented activities. We implemented a set of activities that would help our target audience feel more European and better understand European values.



Integrate Ukrainian refugees and people with fewer opportunities in Czechia and Poland into local communities through outdoor activities.

Exchange best practices between organizations, and bring a greater European dimension to the organizations' youth work.

Educate participants about environmental issues and climate changes.

Make a positive impact on the issue of environmental change and provide participants with specific knowledge and skills on how to reduce their negative impact on ecology and climate change.

Raise awareness about European values and identity among participants through discussions and common activities.

Create a better cross-border understanding and cooperation between members and target groups of participating organizations.

## LOGOS POLSKA

For Logos Polska, the target group for the project was young refugees from Ukraine aged 18–30, as well as mothers with children who had to flee Ukraine in the last 2 years. Even though they are diverse, these groups are often not integrated into the local community and, because of exclusion, don't understand how the EU works and its values. They often stay within their communities, which leads to less contact with locals.



## NÁŠ TÁBOR

For Náš tábor the target group was youth with fewer opportunities, facing economic difficulties and social exclusion. They have previous experience working with local orphanages and want to involve those youngsters in this project. While these groups might not be similar, they face similar difficulties of being excluded.

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## LOGOS POLSKA

Logos Polska started as a small enthusiastic group in 2015, focused on intercultural exchange, the power of benefits of cultural diversity, and critical thinking. Logos group became bigger and from July 2016 they worked as a part of Logos International with our headquarters in Poland, Poznan.

Since 2016 Logos Polska has been actively involved in the Erasmus+ projects and built a reliable and effective network of local and international partners.

For most of this time, they focused on the youth work, developing innovative non-formal education tools, critical thinking, and human rights. Since 2022 they had to put much more stress on the activities connected with the integration and support of refugees. After the first huge waves of refugees' arrival, Logos decided to work more on integrational activities and support young immigrants and refugees.

## NÁŠ TÁBOR

Nas Tabor is a newly established NGO with four active members who participate in activities in the Czech Republic. Nas Tabor works in schools covering the complete educational age range from preschool to university level students from all works of life. They have experience working with children from disadvantaged homes and local orphanages from the age of 8–18. As well as students from the Czech Primary school and University level. Their work includes individual study programs, group work, and team building. Their volunteer work focuses on inclusion, acceptance, and understanding of others through a series of debates and sports.



# Z

We always started every session by doing an ice-breaker game and using energizers to get to know each other and prepare the participants for the activity. This includes open-ended questions and games that foster dialogue and understanding among diverse groups.

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In all our outdoor activities, we started the day with a name-movement-adjective game. Participants created a circle and one by one every participant said their name, one adjective that starts with their name's first letter, and made a movement that they chose. After the first person, each person had to repeat the others, then add their name, adjective, and movement. This way they could practice and memorize the names of others.

An example of this type of energizer can be found [here](#)

We also used the "Would you rather..." or "2 truths 1 lie" questions to make them learn some interesting and fun facts about each other. Another type of ice-breaker activity can be open-ended prompts: these can facilitate conversations that help participants learn about each other in a relaxed and informal setting.



# Z

Another icebreaker was Human Bingo. It is an interactive icebreaker game that helps people get to know each other.

ICEBREAKER BINGO				
DRIVES A PRIUS	KNOWS SOMEONE THAT CLIMBED MT. EVEREST	DISLIKES TOMATOES	HAS A TWIN	IS WEARING RED
HAS GREEN EYES	KNOWS HOW TO SEW	DOESN'T DRINK COFFEE	HAS NEVER BEEN TO DISNEYLAND	HAS A TATTOO
LIKES SPICY FOOD	HAS A DOG	FREE SPACE	HAS FLOWN A PLANE	CAN SPEAK A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
KNOWS HOW TO SURF	CAN COUNTRY LINE DANCE	HAS NEVER BEEN ON A PLANE	SCUBA DIVES	HAS A BIRTHDAY THIS MONTH
WAS ON A SWIM TEAM	IS AN ONLY CHILD	HAS CHANGED A TIRE	CAN PLAY THE PIANO	IS A VEGETARIAN

Design bingo cards and fill each square with a unique statement or characteristic.

Examples include:

"Has traveled to another country,"

"Has a pet cat," etc.

We gave each participant a bingo card and a pen. Participants must circulate the room and find someone who matches the statements on their bingo card.

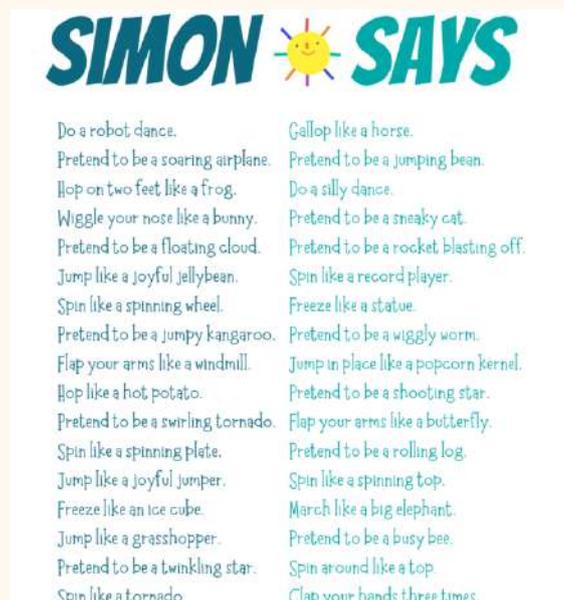
When they find someone who matches a statement, they should have that person sign the corresponding square. The goal was to complete a row, column, or diagonal with signatures.

A link with examples of human bingo can be found [here](#)

# Z

In addition, we used physical activities and stretching for energizers; examples of this can be the game "Simon Says" or the "human knot".

To play Simon Says, one person is chosen to be Simon and gives commands like "Simon says jump" or "Simon says touch your toes." The group must follow the commands only if prefixed with "Simon says." If Simon gives a command without saying "Simon says," and someone follows it, they're out.



To play the human knot, the participants stand in a circle, reach in, and grab two other hands at random. The group must then work together to untangle themselves without letting go of their hands.

Further examples of energizers can be found at this link:

[Epic energizer games and team warmups for work groups](#)

At the beginning of each day, we divided the participants into teams to do different tasks: cooking team, cleaning team, ecology team and social media team. Every day the teams would be changed so the people could do various tasks.

In every activity we created a mixed team: for example, half Polish and half Czech.





During the project, we implemented a set of activities that would help our target audience experience different outdoor activities and offer a range of practical objectives, including teamwork, participation, team management, inclusion, and acceptance. The participants could also develop a set of hard and soft skills connected to outdoor skills, intercultural skills, and organizational skills.

During the first study visit of the project, Kajakarze, we did a kayaking on the river Obra. The participants could get hands-on experience in outdoor activities and teamwork. During the expedition, participants learned about environmental issues, climate change, and EU environmental policies. This was supplemented with discussions and workshops. Participants got new hard skills – riding kayaks, cooking in outdoors, setting tents, and working in outdoor environment. There were soft skills developed – intercultural, teamwork, organizational, and so on.



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During Bike On, we biked and hiked in the Sumava National Park. The aim of this activity was to integrate Ukrainian refugees and people with fewer opportunities in Czechia and Poland into local communities through outdoor activities. Participants learned about environmental issues, European values, and identity through discussions and shared experiences, enhancing cross-border cooperation. The initiative aimed to positively impact environmental change by providing practical skills and knowledge on reducing negative ecological impacts, and fostering a sense of community and well-being.



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In the Karkanosze mountains expedition, all participants had a chance to hike and reach the highest peak in the Czech Republic, and the common goal of the highest peak enabled participants to feel a sense of belonging to their group. This activity allowed each participant to lead the group through map reading, team management, and respect for their peers.

This raised empathy in the group as different levels of abilities will become apparent. Public speaking was introduced as friendships and memories are made when participants had the chance to talk about their favorite and worst parts of the journey. Learners felt accepted within the wider group. A set of hard and soft skills connected with making cross-border expeditions – outdoor skills, intercultural skills, management, and organizational skills developed among participants.



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One of the aims of Empowering Growth was to create awareness about the environment. For this reason, we implemented activities aimed at learning about this issue.

In Kajakarze, we used the fishbowl technique to create discussion groups on key environmental issues like ecology, biodiversity loss, and soil degradation. Participants shared their knowledge in a rotating inner circle, encouraging active listening and engagement.

During Bike On, we held an interactive “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” workshop to educate participants on sustainable practices. After introducing themselves and sharing a sustainable habit, participants engaged in a “Sustainable Shopping Challenge,” where they evaluated everyday products in small groups based on sustainability criteria such as materials, production processes, and company ethics.

We also did a nature walk and group discussion, during which the participants reflecting environmental issues.

In the Karkonosze mountains expedition, all participants stayed in a house without electricity, relying on natural water sources and hiking to reach the house due to the lack of roads. This setup was chosen to support volunteers and demonstrate the feasibility of sustainable living. Additionally, we held discussions about the meaning of sustainability, and participants gained hands-on experience living in a sustainable house, Chatka, in the mountains. This experience provided valuable insights into sustainable living practices.

Also, during each activity we separated trash bins and promoted recycling during every activity, highlighting a key aspect of sustainability.





One of the objectives of Bike On and Karkanosze was to raise awareness about European values and identity among participants through discussions, common activities, and exchanges. For this, we implemented activities such as discussion circles, where participants can talk about what European values mean to them. Topics can include democracy, human rights, cultural diversity, and solidarity. Facilitators can guide the discussion and ensure that everyone has a chance to speak.

Another activity that can be used is cultural storytelling, which encourages participants to share stories from their own countries that reflect European values. This can include historical events, personal experiences, or cultural anecdotes.

In an activity focused on respect for the environment, you can also plan activities such as a nature hike or a clean-up project. Use these activities to discuss Europe's commitment to environmental protection and sustainability, tying them to broader European values.

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At the end of each activity and also at the end of day, we set up a moment of reflection. Reflecting after a workshop is crucial for both participants and facilitators to consolidate learning, gather feedback, and plan future improvements. Here are various methods of reflection that can be used.

### **VISUAL REFLECTIONS**

During our expeditions, we used Dixit cards as a prompt to reflect on the day.

### **CIRCLE**

A group reflection session where participants gather in a circle to share their experiences, thoughts, and feelings about the activity, fostering a sense of open safe space and community. Each participant will have time to reflect and give a short speech about their favorite part of the activities.

### **MIND MAPS**

Participants can create mind maps to visually organize their thoughts and key learnings from the workshop.

### **REFLECTION PROMPTS**

Provide specific questions to guide the reflection, such as "What was the most valuable insight you gained today?" or "What was the most challenging part for you?" " How do you feel and how was it for you ?"

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The last moment of each activity was dedicated to the **evaluation and feedback** from the participants. This could be done through the **harvesting method**, which is a powerful tool for **evaluating** a workshop by **gathering and synthesizing the collective insights**, learnings, and **feedback from participants**. This method emphasizes collaboration and visual representation, making it effective for capturing **diverse perspectives**.

To implement the **harvesting technique** you need to decide on key areas you want to evaluate, such as successes, challenges, etc. You will give the participants a few **minutes to reflect** individually **on their experiences**. Each group will use large sheets of paper or a whiteboard to compile their collective reflections. This can be done by placing the sticky notes on the board and **organizing them into themes or patterns**. Once the groups have completed their harvesting, organize a gallery walk where all participants can view the compiled reflections from each group. Allow **time for participants** to walk around, read, and add additional thoughts or comments using sticky notes.





Another evaluation method is **the learning log**: participants documented their experiences, insights, and learning outcomes throughout the activity, providing a **personal reflection** and evaluation tool.

You should **provide a template** or guidelines for maintaining the learning log. The template can **include sections for date, activity, key learnings, challenges**, questions, and reflections. Encourage consistency by asking participants to **make regular entries in their learning logs**. Consistent entries help in tracking **progress and reflections** over time. You could also provide prompts to help participants reflect on their learning, for example:

**“What did I learn today?”**

**“How can I apply this knowledge?”**

**“What challenges did I face?”**

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Other evaluation activities include:

- **Storytelling:** where the participants are asked to share a short story about their experience in the project. This encourages them to **focus on moments of learning**, personal growth, or challenges they overcame. This can be done in pairs, small groups, or as a whole group activity.
- **Peer Review:** pair participants or create small groups where they can provide feedback to each other about their **contributions and experiences**. Provide guiding questions to focus the feedback, such as "What did this person contribute well?" and "What could they improve?". Have participants **share the feedback they received** with the group if they are comfortable.
- **Success story:** ask participants to write or verbally share a **"success story" about their experience** in the project, focusing on a moment they felt particularly successful or proud.





This guide has outlined a comprehensive approach to fostering the inclusion and integration of young people with fewer opportunities and refugees through the power of outdoor activities. By leveraging the natural environment as a setting for education and socialization, the guide provides a versatile toolkit that can be adapted to various contexts and needs.

The activities and practices described herein aim not only to bring together diverse groups of participants but also to instill essential values such as environmental stewardship, European identity, and cultural understanding. Through these experiences, participants are encouraged to step out of their comfort zones, engage with others across cultural and social divides, and build the skills necessary for both personal and communal growth.



As organizations, educators, and facilitators implement these activities, they play a crucial role in shaping a more inclusive society where all young people, regardless of background, can thrive. The emphasis on reflection, evaluation, and continuous improvement ensures that these programs remain dynamic and responsive to the evolving needs of participants.

By following the practices and recommendations in this guide, you are not only contributing to the social integration of vulnerable groups but also nurturing a generation of environmentally conscious, culturally aware, and socially responsible young Europeans. We encourage you to adapt and expand upon these ideas, making them your own as you work towards creating a more inclusive and sustainable future.

# LINKS AND SOURCES

## General

<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-6-training-essentials>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/non-formal-education>

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## Ice-breakers

<https://symondsresearch.com/quick-icebreakers/>

<https://teambuildinghub.com/blog/group-icebreakers/>

## Empowering Growth

