

Report on the promotion of sustainable development and global citizenship (Agenda 2030, SDG 4.7) in Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools

1. Introduction

Folk high schools provide education that supports social stability, equality and active citizenship based on the principle of lifelong learning. It emphasises self-directed learning, a sense of community and inclusion. The aim is to promote people's diverse development, well-being and the realisation of democracy, pluralism, sustainable development, multiculturalism and internationality. These same goals can be found in the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Sustainable development refers to development that secures good living conditions for current and future generations. The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to eradicate extreme poverty and achieve sustainable development that takes the environment, the economy and people into account equally. The guiding principle of the programme is that no one is left behind in development.

Sustainable development is development that satisfies the needs of the present without depriving future generations of the opportunity to satisfy their own needs. Its basic elements are ecological, economic, social and cultural sustainability. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to help people learn to live in harmony with nature and each other.

An essential part of sustainable development is the idea of the limits of the earth. Human activities must be adapted to the earth's natural resources and its carrying capacity.

One of the sub-goals of the education goal of the 2030 Agenda is SDG 4.7., which aims to ensure that by 2030 all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, such as sustainable development and lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship, cultural diversity, and education that values the role of culture in sustainable development.

In order to get a snapshot of the current work of Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools in the field of sustainable development, we conducted a survey of folk high schools in both countries. 52.9 per cent of Finnish folk high schools (n=36/68) and 50 per cent of Norwegian folk high schools (n=40/80) responded to it. In Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education commissioned the Ministry of Education and Culture to conduct a report on the state of sustainable development of all liberal adult education institutions earlier in 2025. Regarding Finnish folk high schools, this report has made partial use of this material.

The report examines how the different perspectives of sustainability are implemented in the operations of educational institutions and how well it is integrated into teaching and practical work. The survey also examined the effects of changes in the operating environment on operations and identified development needs.

The report is part of the Building bridges project, funded by the EU's Erasmus+ programme, which is carried out in cooperation between the Finnish and Norwegian folk high school associations and the international organisation Bridge 47, which has been responsible for the preparation of this report.

Sustainable development in education

The surveys examined which themes of a sustainable future and global responsibility are included in teaching at Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools. The responses of both countries show that the themes are widely present in the activities of educational institutions, but there are differences in emphasis.

In Finnish folk high schools, the themes most strongly included in the studies are human rights (94%), gender equality (94%) and environmental responsibility (94%). Taking cultural diversity into account and strengthening related competence is also particularly common (92%). A sustainable lifestyle is part of teaching in the majority of adult education centres (86%).

On average, peace education and the themes of non-violence and conflict resolution are included (72%), as well as solidarity (72%). Global citizenship is discussed slightly less often, but still in a significant proportion of educational institutions (69%). Other themes were mentioned by 11% of the respondents.

In Norwegian folk high schools, climate and environmental responsibility (93%), sustainable lifestyle (90%), human rights (90%) and solidarity (90%) are the most strongly presented. Global citizenship is also a clearly highlighted theme (83%).

Content related to the appreciation and promotion of cultural diversity is included in 70% of educational institutions. Gender equality (65%) and peace education and nonviolence (57%) are less prominent in Norway than in Finland. Other themes were brought up by 15% of the respondents.

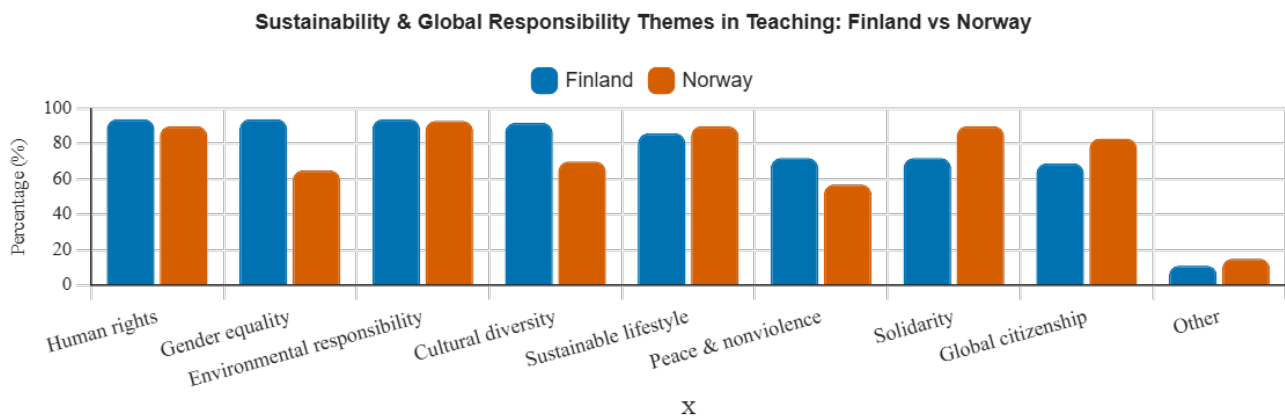
There are several similarities in the results of Finland and Norway: in both countries, the focus of education is strongly linked to human rights, sustainable lifestyles, environmental responsibility and solidarity. However, differences can be found especially in the following areas:

- Gender equality is clearly a more central theme in Finland (FI 94%, NO 65%).
- Cultural diversity is more strongly present in Finnish adult education centres in terms of teaching (FI 92%, NO 70%).

- Peace education is emphasised more in Finland than in Norway (FI 72%, NO 57%).
- Global citizenship is a more visible part of education in Norway (NO 83%, FI 69%).

Viewed as a whole, educational institutions in both countries emphasize human rights and sustainable development issues, but Finnish educational institutions emphasize equality, diversity and peace education more clearly. In Norway, on the other hand, the themes of global citizenship and the strong presence of solidarity and climate responsibility are emphasized.

Which of the following themes are included in the teaching at your folk high school? (Select all that apply)



What teaching methods do you use to develop learners' knowledge and skills in these areas?

In the responses of Finnish folk high schools, discussion and critical reflection (92%) and experiential learning (69%) are particularly emphasised. The teaching methods are diverse and focus on interactive practices that support learning by doing, such as theme courses, nature education, workshops and cooperation with local actors. In Finland, futures thinking and nature education are also clearly more common than in Norway.

In Norwegian folk high schools, the most important methods are discussion and reflection methods (85%) and, in particular, cooperation with local communities and organisations (78%), which is significantly more common than in Finland. In Norway, project work is also utilised more (68%) than in Finnish institutes. On the other hand, experiential learning and future scenarios are rare in Norway.

As a whole, it can be stated that experiential and nature-related learning methods are emphasised in Finland, while projects and external partners are emphasised in Norway. In both countries, discussion and reflection are key methods for developing sustainable development and active citizenship skills.

**What teaching methods do you use to develop learners' knowledge and skills in these areas?
(Select all that apply)**



How do you engage students and the wider community in sustainable development?

At Finnish folk high schools, students and the wider community are involved in sustainable development in a diverse and systematic manner. Keyways are incorporating sustainable development into teaching (89%), promoting sustainable practices in the everyday life of educational institutions (83%), experiential learning (81%) and outdoor learning (78%). In addition, sustainability events are organised and cooperation is carried out with local actors. Participation is implemented both in everyday practices and as a pedagogically consistent part of studies.

In Norwegian folk high schools, the participation measures are significantly smaller. The most common means are sustainability-themed workshops and project weeks (18%) and the promotion of sustainable practices on the school grounds (18%). Sustainability is less often integrated into teaching (14%) and experiential learning, outdoor learning, local cooperation and international activities, for example, are clearly rare. However, the open-ended responses show that the staff of folk high schools consider the exchange of experiences and cooperation to be an important way to develop teaching, strengthen the sense of community and support the goals of sustainable development and active citizenship. It is proposed that the cooperation be carried out by utilising existing gatherings, such as principal meetings, festivals and Folk High School Week.

Key forms of cooperation include theme meetings, joint courses, visits, employee and researcher exchanges, joint projects and webinars. A common data bank for sharing good practices and materials is also considered necessary. The challenge is the diversity of educational institutions. Therefore, cooperation must be flexible and take into account the special characteristics of each school. As a whole, increasing cooperation is clearly considered useful and desirable.

How do you engage students and the wider community in sustainable development? (Select all that apply)



Perspectives of sustainable development in liberal adult education institutions

Sustainable development requires a holistic approach and measures in decision-making and action that combine environmental, social, cultural and administrative-economic perspectives at the same time.

The respondents were asked to select all the options that the educational institution had made from an environmental, social, cultural, and administrative-economic perspective. With regard to the Norwegians, there are no answers from an administrative-economic point of view.

3.3.1. Environmental perspective

The basic condition for sustainable development is the preservation of biodiversity and the functioning of ecosystems, as well as the long-term adaptation of human economic and material activities to the carrying capacity of nature. In addition to national measures, international cooperation plays a key role in the pursuit of environmental sustainability.

1. Measures from the environmental perspective of Finnish folk high schools

Based on Finland's responses, the environmental perspective is reflected in the everyday life of folk high schools in a very broad and practical way. The measures emphasise practical ecological activities related to campus areas, dining, energy use, circular economy and the development of learning environments. The responses also highlight a large number of concrete projects, such as:

- recycling centers and "Fan's House"
- Yard work and biodiversity work

- Garbage sorting workshops
- building heritage fences to support biodiversity
- Study modules on climate change and a sustainable future
- campus nature trails and Health Forest cooperation
- nature-based immigrant training
- Food waste weighing and communication campaigns

The range of activities shows that in Finland, environmental sustainability is seen as part of the educational institution's overall operating culture, not just as a technical or administrative obligation.

2. Measures from the environmental perspective of Norwegian folk high schools

In Norway, environmental measures are widely used, but they are focused on slightly different areas. Environmental measures focus especially **on** issues related to climate and energy needs and the sustainability of food production and consumption, which is reflected in the emphasis on projects and new technical solutions.

Based on the open-ended responses, environmental measures have been implemented in Norway through a variety of projects:

- construction of passive houses, energy efficiency renovations of kitchens
- collection of coastal and marine litter;
- "Byttedag" (exchange market/flea market)
- Crop, self-sufficiency and food waste projects ("Matauk")
- Utilising local food and short supply chains
- "Green uke" – Sustainable Development Week
- avoiding carbon-intensive travel practices (e.g. no flying in the calculations)
- Development of the Miljøfyrtårn certification

3. Finland-Norway: comparative analysis

Key similarities

In both countries, the clear key actions for environmental action are:

- Waste sorting (FI 99%, NO 95%)
- Vegetarian food (FI 87%, NO 93%)

- Reducing food waste (FI 87%, NO 93%)
- Reducing energy use (FI 82%, NO 93%)
- Improving energy efficiency (FI 81%, NO 68%)

Based on these, the core of operations in both countries focuses **on** reducing energy consumption, making food systems more sustainable, managing material flows and the circular economy.

Key differences

Focus	Finland	Norway
Diversity & Cultural Heritage	Clearly stronger (meadows, traditional fences, nature trails)	Less visible
Technical and Infrastructure Solutions	Moderate (renovation 62%)	Stronger (passive houses, heat pumps, ventilation)
Climate and carbon footprint calculation	Minor (9% emissions calculation)	Clearly more common (23–25%)
Self-sufficiency & food gathering	In some projects,	Clearly stronger ("matauk", hunting and harvesting projects)
Communal exchange events	Less	Very common (byttedag, loppemarked)

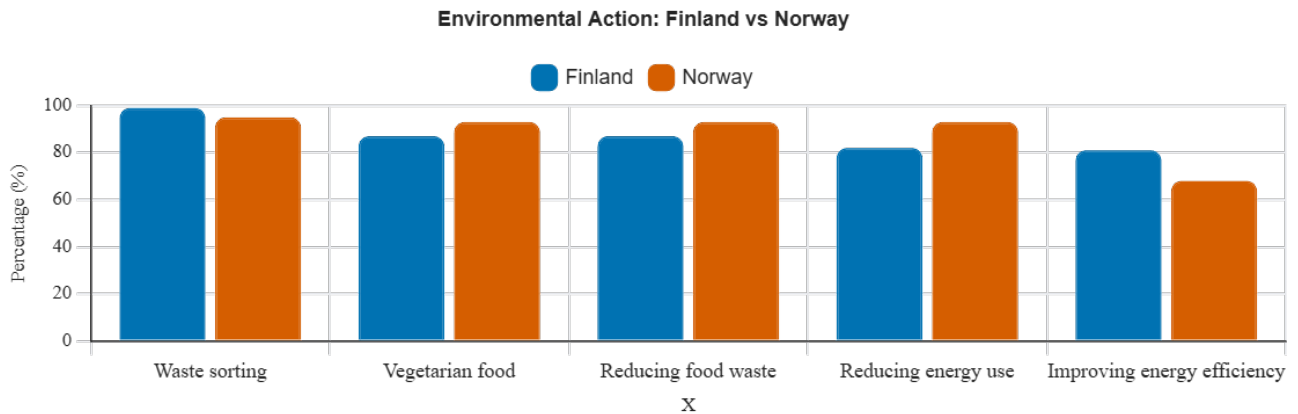
- Finland emphasises everyday functional, communal and nature-based environmental actions that combine diversity, traditional culture and learning.
- Norway emphasizes climate and energy solutions, as well as self-sufficiency and a sustainable food system – the technological and production-related steps are stronger.

4. Summary

The environmental measures of Finnish and Norwegian educational institutions are extensive, but their emphases differ:

- In both: waste sorting, vegetarian food, energy saving and reducing food waste are well established and widely used.
- In Finland: nature-orientedness, ecological education, the preservation of cultural heritage, biodiversity and communal environmental practices are emphasized.
- In Norway: climate change mitigation, energy efficiency, technical systems and practices related to local food production are more prominent.

In Finland, environmental work is linked to comprehensive educational pedagogy; In Norway, it is linked to climate and energy efficiency thinking and the circular economy.



5. An example of successful SDG 4.7 action (Finland)

Building a heritage traditional fence in Valamo College course combines nature work, landscape management, the promotion of biodiversity and the transfer of traditional construction skills. The course supports SDG 4.7 goals as follows:

- promote ecological education (influencing the environment through concrete actions)
- strengthen knowledge of cultural heritage
- supports sustainable land use and biodiversity
- provides participants with experiential learning about environmental responsibility

The activities bring together ecological, cultural and social sustainability – exactly in the spirit of SDG 4.7.

6. An example of successful SDG 4.7 action (Norway)

The "Matauk" project combines self-sufficiency, sustainable use of natural resources and a holistic understanding of the food system. Elements of the activity:

- harvesting, picking berries and mushrooms, hunting and preparing food from scratch
- Cooperation with local farms
- learning about how climate change affects farming
- learning sustainable consumption and circular economy skills
- At the end of the project, a joint celebration of the harvest

In line with SDG 4.7, this project strengthens students' understanding of ecosystems, sustainable food systems, local livelihoods and the individual's opportunities to influence the well-being of the environment.

Share one example of a successful initiative or activity that your folk high school has implemented that supports the environmental aspect of SDG 4.7.

Number of respondents: 29

Finnish answers
A concrete example is the recycling points on campuses, where you can bring unnecessary, usable items to be distributed. In addition, we are preparing to increase the biodiversity of our campus areas (e.g. natural meadows).
A group of students has carried out a circular economy project related to a flea market, in which students have first renovated used items and then rented a table at a local flea market for sale. Some of the group have also organised their own flea market for the staff at the institute. Through the project, the students have learned the principles of the circular economy, the life cycle thinking of goods, and responsible consumption concretely and through their own actions.
One of many: on the initiative of the student union, our institute acquired a biocomposter to promote waste sorting (there is no organized biowaste collection in our area)
Study visits to environmental facilities in the region during lessons within the framework of the theme have been appreciated above all by the international students the school has.
Annual theme days for language learners in cooperation with the local waste management company Ekorosk.
- Summer camp for international students last summer away from campus - Sustainable activities in nature
Together with Ekokymppi, we organize garbage sorting workshops several times a year. The housing counsellor continues with the same theme in her guidance.
Sustainable housing
In the LUovat Lumo project, which deals with nature-based activities for immigrants, we have Students' own projects
Theme lessons and projects for students of the Finnish as a Second Language group
Reducing food waste
Building a heritage fence – practical learning about sustainable development The Traditional Fence Building course, implemented at Valamo College, combines traditional working methods, local natural materials and landscape management. The fence built during the course supports

<p>the natural grazing and biodiversity of the monastery, while at the same time the participants learn about a sustainable lifestyle and environmental responsibility in practice. The activities concretise the goals of SDG 4.7 at least: ecological education, preservation of cultural heritage and communal learning</p>
<p>Otava College's Upper Secondary School for Adults' Sustainable Future study module: https://otavanopisto.fi/aikuislukio/ketu-oppiaine/</p>
<p>Every autumn, we hold a yard work event, where we learn the basics of recycling, volunteer traditions and take care of the different vegetation of our beautiful mutilation. Immigrants also get to know our country's ways of taking care of the environment.</p>
<p>Organising international and nature days with our students in a nearby primary school</p>
<p>We have developed the communal campus area as a versatile and comfortable learning environment. One example is the nature trail, where studying strengthens the students' relationship with nature.</p>
<p>Participation in the events of the Lahti Health Forest project as part of learning.</p>
<p>The curricula describe which sustainability perspectives each course contains and which themes are discussed in more detail. In addition, there is an annual clock of community, which has an environmental theme during certain weeks, within the framework of which events, challenges, competitions and campaigns are organised for the entire institute.</p>
<p>Course on the effects of climate change on working life and one's own opportunities to make a difference</p>
<p>An annual theme day for sustainable development, with practical workshops on the environmental theme organised by partners.</p>
<p>The Forest: Environment and Ecology in Visual Arts study module, organised in cooperation with Turku University of Applied Sciences.</p>
<p>Launching and implementing the operations of the Fanni tupa recycling centre</p>
<p>The generation of plate waste is prevented by providing information, reminding people of the possibility of taking the tray, weighing + informing the generated plate waste in connection with the theme weeks. In addition, the plate waste collection containers are quite small and transparent.</p>
<p>The staff of Joutseno College have visited Schumacher College and students and some of the teachers have visited the Tyynelä farm near the institute, which implements regenerative farming, to learn and be inspired by regenerative farming. Inspired by the visit, the institute established its own vegetable garden, where it has been possible to implement participatory, experiential learning through growing one's own food.</p>
<p>Participation in the Finnish National Agency for Education's indicator survey (2025)</p> <p>Improving recycling in both the educational institution and the dormitory.</p>
<p>Sustainable development workshop days with different workstations from several perspectives.</p> <p>Finnish language students' discussion exercises on environmental topics.</p>

Our institute has implemented practices that support environmental education, such as nature education and theme days. The students focus on sorting, recycling and the importance of biodiversity in our daily activities. We make use of the unique national landscape of Punkaharju in teaching, as excursions, hiking in nature and exploring the local nature are part of our students' learning. We want to guarantee our students the ability to act responsibly for the benefit of the environment in their own lives and work.

Reducing the number of paper copies, making recycling more efficient. Vegetarian food as a student lunch.

The so-called Oikos project, where we aim to use locally produced supplies and energy-saving products

Number of respondents: 27

Norwegian answers

We have, among other things, a swap day. People bring nice things they are tired of. Then you go in and look at what the others have and exchange for things they would rather have.

It becomes a kind of market. And they find it fun.

Construction of new passive house dormitories, renovation of the main kitchen incl. new refrigeration / freezer units and modern ventilation systems, installation of geothermal heating,

The development of the concept "Important travel" has been in focus for us for the past 5 years - and sharpens how we think holistically about our travel business.

We have had both a food auk - project and a food waste - project in collaboration with "The future in our hands" this autumn.

The start-up of a sustainability line and a focus on locally produced and short-distance food are other examples.

Garbage collection

Food waste

renovated building stock instead of new with the use of new natural areas

The most noticeable thing is that the accounts should not contain anything that is aircraft-related.

Collection of plastic from the fjord/sea.

Local food with a focus on food waste.

Beach clean-up day: cleaning up the coastline in the local area in collaboration with rydde.no and Remidt.

I'm completely new as a principal so don't have much to share here.

We have started a project: The practical life - where we focus on practical skills throughout the year: Restoration of old buildings. Focus on litter and food waste. Participation in joint volunteer work for outdoor areas and gardens.

<p>We have a program together with VIIB that has been developed based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, IDG, which we run over 5 days during the school year.</p>
<p>Annual flea market for the entire region, where more than 1000 people visit the school. Reuse, inclusion of the local community and surplus that goes to education and leisure activities for the most vulnerable in Tanzania are some of the benefits of this event.</p>
<p>Arranged cooking course</p>
<p>The collaboration with his own owner organization on an aid project in Nepal.</p>
<p>Teaching plan - optional subject - where students with motivation developed different fields of interest and strengthened knowledge and commitment further out in the student and staff group.</p>
<p>Energy savings through various measures.</p>
<p>The student council had a nice session with waste sorting on the agenda. They made a nice program with information, sorting competitions and reflection</p>
<p>The work towards certification as an Eco-Lighthouse and all work on recertification.</p>
<p>Participates in actions, TV campaign has its own aid project</p>
<p>See sustainability strategy</p>
<p>The school has its own sustainability committee that organizes workshops, swap evenings, collaborates with the kitchen on sustainable food and prevention of food waste.</p> <p>Together with FIVH, the kitchen has switched to a more sustainable diet.</p>
<p>Among other things, we have the joint project MATAUK, which includes several of the SDG's goals. The project gives students knowledge about raw materials that can be harvested, either in the forest, at the farmer's (surplus potatoes/carrots), picking apples, chopping wood and other self-sufficiency tasks. We are largely around local farmers and the students gain knowledge, build relationships and learn about how climate change affects crops. The students gather and cut sheep and prepare this year's Christmas food from A-Z. It all ends with an autumn party where the students make a feast of everything we have gathered and harvested during the project.</p>
<p>Have carried out "Green Week" for a few years, where we have worked with various sustainability themes in project form. Worked out a counter-presentation for the rest of the school on the last day of the project.</p>
<p>Beach clean-up - permanent clean-up of the beach zone in the local area</p> <p>Traceless traffic - we leave no trace, and clear nature if we come to areas that are characterized by human activity.</p> <p>Local food - use of local food (moose and sheep) as well as gathering berries and mushrooms</p>
<p>Implementation of a local flea market</p>

3.3.2. Social sustainability

Social sustainability focuses on ensuring the well-being and quality of life of all citizens. This includes promoting equality, reducing poverty and realising social rights. Social sustainability ensures that future generations will have good living conditions and opportunities. The key value of folk high schools is to maintain social justice, and according to the response rates, these measures are carried out a lot in educational institutions.

1. Social sustainability measures of Finnish folk high schools

The social sustainability work of Finnish folk high schools is very extensive and strongly integrated into teaching, community spirit and student well-being.

Based on the responses, the following forms of activity can be seen:

- Cultural diversity is strengthened by days and projects (food cultures, music, dance, performances).
- Implementation of the principles of a safer space throughout the educational institution.
- Peer mediation and conflict prevention.
- The active role of the student union in building a sense of community.
- Neighbourhood weeks, campus activities, communal coffee moments.
- Multicultural projects, such as a mathematics course in Chinese, joint projects of different language groups, and consideration of indigenous cultures.

In Finland, social sustainability can be seen both in structural equality work (equality and non-discrimination plans, workshops, orientations) and as a student-centred sense of community, where people work together and learn from each other.

2. Social sustainability measures in Norwegian folk high schools

Norway's responses are wide-ranging, but they are emphasised in a slightly different way than in Finland: in Norway, well-being, security and prevention of social exclusion are emphasised, and cultural diversity and social inclusion are also strongly emphasised.

Typical activities in Norway:

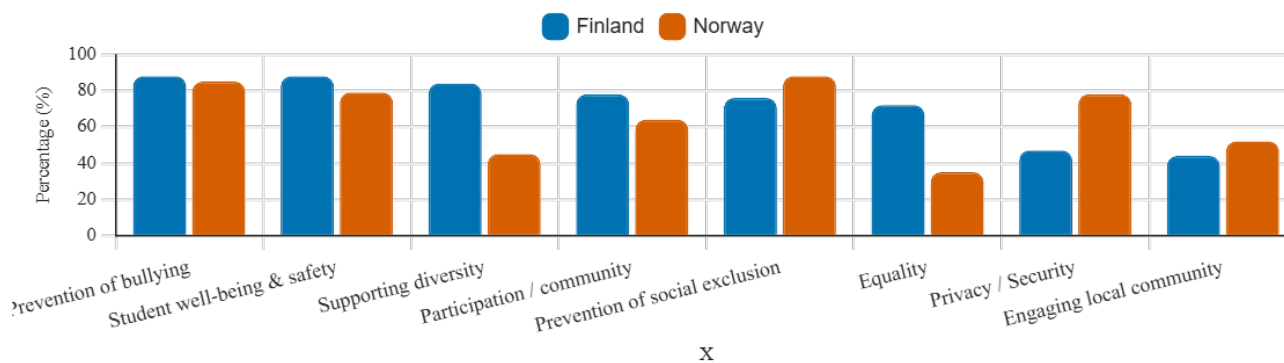
- Byttedag and loppemarked – communal exchange events that are a social and ecological project at the same time.
- Bullying prevention campaigns, workshops and training.
- Joint project weeks with themes of inclusion, community, cultural diversity.
- Involvement of the local community (e.g. school events, joint projects, volunteering).
- Everyday skills and independence programs, especially for different learners.

In Norway, social sustainability is strongly linked to well-being, security and social integration, and the traditional communal nature of the educational form is reflected in the activities.

3. Finland-Norway: comparative analysis

Theme	Finland	Norway	Differences and observations
Prevention of bullying	88 %	85 %	Strong in both.
Student well-being and safety	88 %	78–80 %	The emphasis on well-being is strong in both, slightly stronger in Finland.
Supporting diversity	84 %	33–57 %	Finland is clearly ahead in the pedagogical integration of diversity.
Participation / community	76–79 %	57–70 %	Finland is stronger in everyday communal practices.
Prevention of social exclusion	76 %	88 %	Norway first; Prevention is more systematic.
Equality	72 %	35 %	Finland is clearly ahead.
Privacy / Security	47 %	78 %	Norway places greater emphasis on legal and technical security measures.
Engaging the local community	40–47 %	33–70 %	In Norway, there is a particularly strong connection to the local community due to the tradition of folkehøgskole.

Social & Well-being Themes: Finland vs Norway



Common features:

- Strengthening well-being and safety

- Prevention of bullying
- Communal events and everyday encounters
- Supporting social skills

Differences:

- In Finland, the pedagogical treatment of cultural diversity and equality, *democratic participation and communal projects* are emphasised.
- In Norway, the emphasis is on *the prevention of social exclusion, privacy and security*, as well as *the strong integration of the local community and a holistic approach to well-being*.

4. Summary

In Finnish educational institutions, social sustainability lives strongly through diversity, community and inclusion. In Norwegian educational institutions, on the other hand, it is emphasised from the perspective of well-being, safety and the prevention of social exclusion. Both models support SDG 4.7's goal of growing active, participatory and inclusive citizens, but with different emphases.

The Finnish model is pedagogically anchored, while the Norwegian model is structurally and communally oriented.

5. Example of SDG 4.7 Social Initiative (Finland)

Cultural diversity workshop day: A multicultural theme project was carried out at the folk high school, in which students prepared cultural performances and food together, discussed stereotypes and learned about each other's customs and values.

Why does this support SDG 4.7?

- strengthen intercultural understanding
- promote peaceful coexistence
- supports inclusive and empathetic interaction
- More equality and inclusion

6. Example of SDG 4.7 Social Initiative (Norway)

Byttedag – a communal exchange event: The school organised a "byttingdag" event, where students and staff brought items to exchange with each other. The event is both social and ecological.

Why does this support SDG 4.7?

- build a sense of community and social cohesion
- teaches resource sharing and responsible consumption
- lowers the threshold for participation (inclusion)
- provides a safe, interactive and inclusive learning environment

Share one example of a successful initiative or activity that your folk high school has implemented that supports the social aspect of SDG 4.7.

Number of respondents: 27

Finnish answers
For example, the implementation of MOD training.
In which groups of Finnish and international students planned and prepared performances of their own cultures and prepared dishes from their own cultures.
One of many: we will soon have a seminar day on the subject together with other educational institutions in the community.
The school organised a theme day with several different Workshops in the spring of 2025. A different school day that in many ways activated the students and gave space and time for reflection on the war theme.
- Rainbow evenings organized by young people and young adults. Implemented as part of the project. - Safer Space Principles project with the whole school.
We have now planted potatoes for three springs and in the autumn lifted and taken them to the kitchen in cooperation with MSL. And at the same time, there has been a discussion about the sufficiency of the world's food.
Student-developed Chinese course on mathematics
Students' own projects Displays Neighbourhood Week
The Cultural Diversity theme project, in which the institute's Amm. koul. The students carried out a communal and experiential workshop. All the students of the institute participated in this. Activities include learning by doing and experiencing (food), cultural differences (clothing, music, discussion of the topic), discussion of stereotypes, and finally sharing experiences and increasing common understanding
Active student union activities. The institute has a student union board elected annually, to which each study group elects its own representative. The board of the student union promotes a sense of community and student well-being and is involved in developing the institute's activities.

Peer mediation is used to resolve conflict situations.
Silence retreats support the social dimension by providing participants with a space for peace, listening, and communal presence. The courses strengthen interaction and mental and spiritual well-being, which are the basic values of a sustainable society. The participants practice being together without pressure to perform and learn to appreciate each other's experiences and different life paths. The activities promote peaceful and participatory learning and deepen understanding of the importance of human dignity and community.
The course "KETU 3 - Resilience and psychological flexibility online" of the Sustainable Future study module of the upper secondary school for adults. Also dormitory/campus activities guided by basic education for adults and a community educator (multicultural students).
Every year, we hold the Day of Cultures, where we celebrate all kinds of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, food, costumes, music, dances and facts about the peoples of the world, and we also introduce immigrants to Finnish customs and traditions with sketches and self-made video clips. Digital skills courses for all ages significantly increase experiences of inclusion
Collecting trash together with students after an educational event for young people.
Together with students and staff, we organize various communal events throughout the year. For example, "A Moment for You" coffee breaks every month.
Activities of the Peace Ambassador Academy. Corps. KAPOS badges
The curricula describe which sustainability perspectives each course contains and which themes are discussed in more detail. In addition, there is an annual clock of communality with a theme of social sustainability during certain weeks, within the framework of which events, challenges, competitions and campaigns are organised for the entire institute.
Course on equality and non-discrimination
Muurlan Opisto comics-24h event, which is an annual communal event where old and new students (and other interested people) gather together to make comics for 24 hours. The event can also be attended remotely.
The Good Together Day, in which the pupils go around doing the "good works" they wanted, is carried out in cooperation with the parish's diaconal work.
After a discussion led by a staff member, common rules are drawn up in the dormitories, to which the residents are committed. In addition, they are instructed in discussion in conflict situations, and in general, conflicts are avoided by anticipating (getting to know each other, rules of the game, sense of community).
As part of our equality and non-discrimination planning and work, we have built induction practices in which a participatory workshop on equality and non-discrimination issues is held for all students.
Starting the work of the sustainability working group (2024)
Participation in various projects:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening and developing communal student welfare - Learning support OTUKA - In Finnish at work and at home
<p>Sustainable development workshop days with different workstations from several perspectives.</p> <p>Finnish language students' discussion exercises on equality.</p>
<p>At the institute, we operate in a multicultural community, and at best, we have had as many as thirty different nationalities at the institute. In teaching, we create communal events and various projects, such as cultural days and various food projects in our teaching restaurant, for example. Somali Food Day. In this way, we strengthen intercultural understanding, equality and inclusion. This kind of activity teaches our students to treat others respectfully and to act in today's society.</p>
<p>Joint teachings for hearing and deaf people with a focus on cooperation and well-being</p>

Number of respondents: 23

Norwegian answers
<p>Wheelchair lifts and access for the blind/visually impaired, two student places annually for students from South Africa through a collaborative project, Nordplus collaboration on cultural exchange in the Nordic countries with a Swedish folk high school, employment of an environmental therapist and a boarding school leader with high social work expertise, and more.</p>
<p>We have several nationalities in the staff - especially in the teaching staff. We have built this up over time and it enriches the internal discussions in many cases.</p>
<p>We arranged a concert and café in collaboration with the local team for the TV campaign.</p>
<p>Partnering with the Church</p> <p>Global project with students</p>
<p>Our aid project, which is about contributing to literacy training for some of the many people who need it in Côte d'Ivoire. The project is channeled through the school's owner organization - the Norwegian Lutheran Mission Association.</p>
<p>We have students from all over the world and will continue to take in students who promote our diversity.</p>
<p>Children's second-hand market: collaboration with the local community, where students get to be involved in the planning and implementation of the event. We are raising money for the Strømme Foundation.</p>
<p>I'm completely new as a principal so don't have much to share here.</p>

<p>We have a dialogue workshop, where the student gets to express their own opinions - without talking or arguing.</p> <p>Regular café dialogues, where we address current topics, in collaboration with the student council.</p> <p>Participation in a joint art and culture project with the municipality.</p>
<p>We have a program together with VIIB that has been developed based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, IDG, which we run over 5 days during the school year.</p>
<p>Stop poverty - week where we focus on several of the UN's sustainability goals with a special focus on giving everyone equal opportunities, and where we raise money for our project in Ilula Tanzania. On Friday we have the "Ilula Live" broadcast on facebook with many drivers and sponsors.</p>
<p>Early in the year, we thematize dialogue as our most important tool for understanding the other(s). Showing examples, giving assignments to students.</p>
<p>Inclusive measures - through the social pedagogical work - are ongoing continuously.</p>
<p>Raising awareness of students in their daily lives at school.</p>
<p>Cf. answer above. We find that we spend a lot of time on the environment, and do not see that we should prioritize this even more than what we do...</p>
<p>Aid project</p>
<p>See sustainability strategy</p>
<p>In collaboration with the school's solidarity committee, we have various activities and an extensive fundraising campaign for workers, previously in India, now in Cambodia to prevent human trafficking and give young people a way into education and work.</p>
<p>Wants to highlight how integrated the school is in the local community. We participate as volunteers in local events such as SMILI (local race), we are a big part of the Sogndal PRIDE day, volunteer during the mountain sports festival, and we volunteer when the village needs it at various events throughout the year.</p>
<p>We challenge our students to become part of the school's various after-school teams, along with the teacher and research fellow. Here, those students who want an extra challenge/training get the opportunity to contribute to activities and content in everyday school time. In this case, it can be both the person who has good prerequisites for participating in such a responsibility who comes forward. But also those who have a desire to be able to contribute to the community, without necessarily having experience or capacity from before.</p>
<p>Participation in the folk high school's Kilimaløft</p> <p>Joint activities such as beach clean-ups that strengthen the community and well-being</p> <p>Activities that are shown and mean something to the local community</p>
<p>Our "Adapt Sunnfjord" where students with special needs are a natural part of the school's everyday life, helps to strengthen the students' social understanding.</p>

3.3.3. Cultural sustainability

Cultural sustainability enables cultures to survive and develop from one generation to the next. It supports people's spiritual growth and cultural diversity, which is important for humanity's identity and sense of community.

Cultural sustainability consists of supporting diversity, fostering cultural heritage, increasing inclusion, and promoting cultural understanding and education. The responses show that these themes are strongly present in the activities of the institutes in both Finland and Norway.

1. Promoting diversity and tolerance – the strongest area

The most important dimension of cultural sustainability is the promotion of tolerance, which receives very high support in both countries: Finland: 90% and Norway: 88%.

In addition, the promotion of multiculturalism (Finland 88%, Norway 65%) and integration into the local community (Finland 71%, Norway 60%) are key themes.

In practice:

- Promoting diversity is already clearly at the core of our operations.
- Linguistic sensitivity in teaching supports integration and the improvement of cultural accessibility in particular.
- Cultural diversity is seen both as a value and as a practical activity (education, joint events, community work).

2. Cherishing cultural heritage and traditions – a significant but varied emphasis

In Finland, the preservation of cultural traditions and cultural history receives high support:

- Cherishing cultural traditions: 78%
- Cherishing cultural history: 62%

In Norway, the corresponding figures are lower:

- Cultural traditions: 53%
- Cultural History: 38%

The teaching of traditional handicrafts is a clear, concrete way to preserve cultural heritage. Crafts, local skills and regional traditions are key to strengthening cultural sustainability in practice.

3. Accessibility and inclusion of culture – an area for development

In both Finland (43%) and Norway (23%), the promotion of cultural accessibility is clearly a poorly recognised area compared to others. This suggests that participation in cultural activities is not yet evenly distributed and that accessibility, language support and participation structures need to be strengthened.

The solutions identified were that involving the community in the area in events and training responds to this need. Linguistic sensitivity also improves cultural accessibility, especially for those who do not have strong local language skills.

4. Promoting Bildung and Education – the Core of Cultural Sustainability

In Finland, the promotion of non-formal education (93%) and the strengthening of civic skills (74%) are particularly high. In Norway, similar themes are also important, but at a slightly lower level: socially useful basic skills (73%) and the promotion of education and culture (48%).

Education and critical thinking are prerequisites for a culturally sustainable society. They support the ability to understand different cultures, active citizenship and democratic participation.

5. The role of art in cultural sustainability

The promotion of the arts is a significant but not a leading theme in both countries: 71% in Finland and 45% in Norway. However, art acts as an important bridge-builder between different cultures and creates space for creativity and identity building.

6. In practice, cultural sustainability is promoted

By strengthening diversity:

- Strengthens cultural understanding.
- Brings different groups into interaction and increases the sense of community.
- Supports both tolerance and integration (high percentages in both tables).

By increasing linguistic sensitivity:

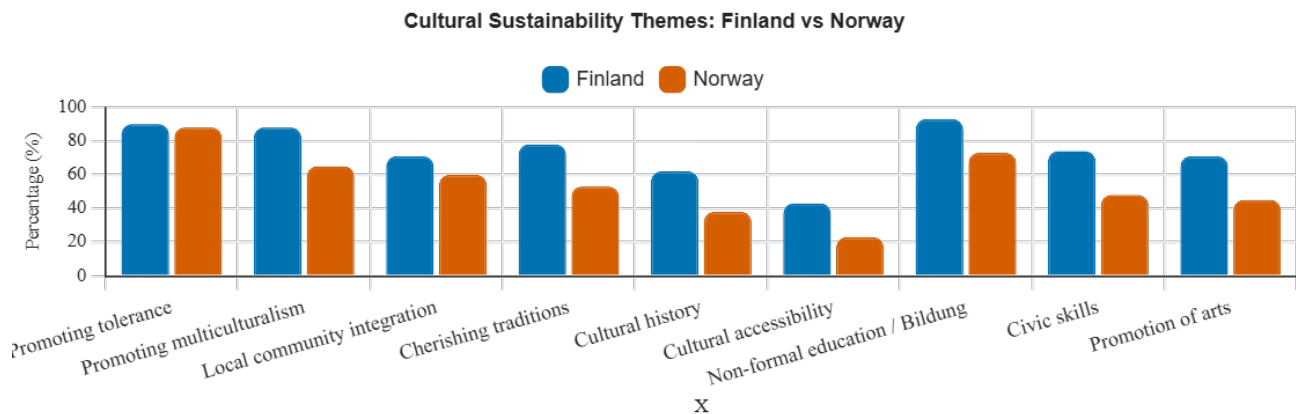
- A key way to reduce barriers to cultural participation.
- Improve accessibility — a clear area for development for both.
- Especially important in multilingual and multicultural learning environments.

By nurturing traditional handicrafts:

- A direct way to preserve intangible cultural heritage.
- Supports identity, rootedness and continuity.

By increasing community involvement:

- To improve local inclusion and cultural accessibility.
- Supports integration and intercultural understanding.



Summary

Folk high schools are already very committed to strengthening cultural sustainability, especially from the perspectives of diversity, tolerance and education. The clearest areas for development are related to improving cultural accessibility, where language sensitivity, community cooperation and more open channels of participation can bring clear progress.

As a whole, cultural sustainability is reflected in the activities of folk high schools as a strong, diverse and developing area.

3.5. What do Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools want to achieve with sustainable development measures?

Finnish folk high schools – value-based, educational and communal emphasis

The sustainable development work of Finnish folk high schools is primarily aimed at strengthening values and social mission, not at economic growth or maximising innovation. The main objectives of the measures are:

1. Strengthening values and social mission

- Affirmation of values (78%)
- Influencing a better world (72%)
- Increasing inclusion (69%)
- Equality, non-discrimination and justice (56–59%)

2. High-quality education and educational mission

- Ensuring the quality of education (63%)
- Development of the content of teaching (53%)

- Strengthening students' basic skills (60%)

3. Resource wisdom and continuity of operations

- Cost savings and efficiency (57%)
- Process development and reliability (44%)
- Supporting reputation and visibility (43%)

4. Communal and student-centred approach

- Strengthening inclusion and community (69%)
- Improving satisfaction (37%)

5. Goals that are not in focus

Economic growth, risk management, innovation and the expansion of partnerships (6-21%) are clearly secondary.

Finnish folk high schools see sustainable development first and foremost as value-based, education-strengthening and community-building activities that support equality and responsible citizenship. Financial goals are included, but clearly in a secondary role.

Norwegian folk high schools – in addition to values, a strong emphasis on well-being and safety

In Norwegian folk high schools, the emphasis is similarly value-based, but they emphasise well-being, safety, social sustainability and the well-being of the community even more directly.

1. Values and educational mission

- Strengthening values is very important (95%). Educational institutions build their operations on a clear value base: responsibility, equality, participation and a sustainable lifestyle.

2. Wellbeing, health and safety

- Student well-being, health and safety (88%)
- Strengthening cohesion (79%)
- Prevention of social exclusion (76%)
- Experience of meaningfulness (63%)

In Norway, sustainable development works especially as a builder of a safe and humane learning environment.

3. Equality and pedagogical development of education

- Increasing equality (72%)
- Quality of education (57%)
- Accessibility (59%)
- Content development (55%)

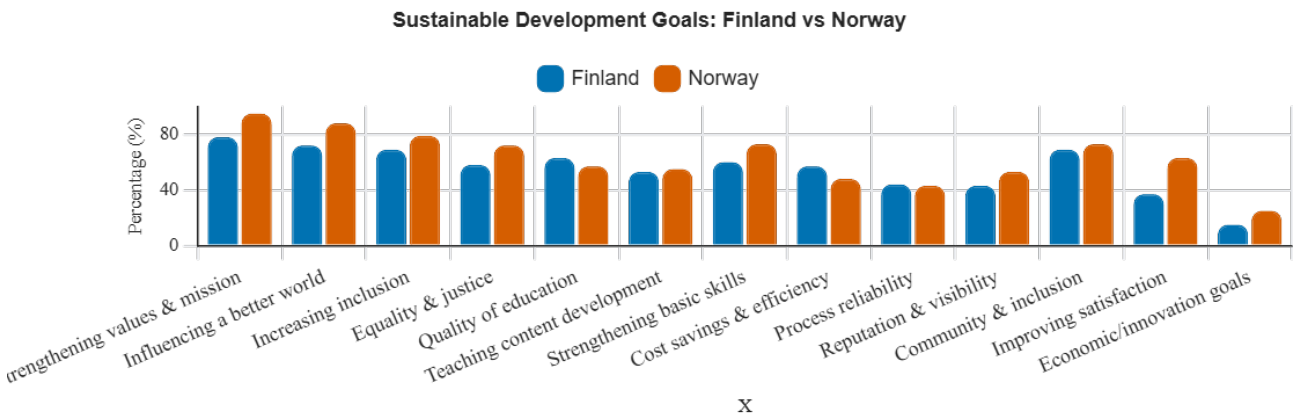
4. Community spirit and employee commitment

- Employee engagement (73%)
- Improving the health and well-being of the community (81%)
- Reputation Enhancement (53%)

5. Long-term development of operations

- Cost savings (48%)
- Ensuring financial sustainability (43%)
- New ways of working and innovations (25%)

The sustainability work of Norwegian colleges has a strong focus on student well-being, safety and community strengthening, in addition to values. The financial targets are present, but softer than in Finland.



Overall comparison – what distinguishes the Finnish and Norwegian goals?

Theme	Finland	Norway
Affirmation of values	Strong	Very strong (highest weight)
Community and inclusion	Important	Even more important (well-being and safety are emphasized)

Quality and content of education	Strong weight	Equally strong, but combined with accessibility
Well-being and safety	Less visible	Very central emphasis
Financial/operational sustainability	Reasonable, resource-wise	Involved, but not in the lead role
Growth and innovation	Low weight	Minor but slightly higher than in Finland in certain places

Finnish folk high schools use sustainable development measures to strengthen their values, promote equality and ensure high-quality adult education, while financial goals remain secondary.

For Norwegian folk high schools, sustainable development is primarily a way to strengthen not only values, but also the well-being, safety and community health of students, which clearly distinguishes them from Finns in its emphasis on social sustainability.

3.5. Support and guidance

The Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools that responded to the survey describe sustainable development work as an important and sought-after part of the activities of educational institutions, but at the same time, the work is still in the development phase in many places and requires clear structures, concrete tools and joint discussion to support it. Based on the responses, it can be stated that the need is not so much for new goals as for the ability to implement them in practice.

1. Hands-on support and clear tools

Above all, both Finnish and Norwegian educational institutions hope for concrete and easy-to-implement tools for planning and implementing sustainable development. Ready-made templates, easy-to-read materials, content packages aimed at young people and simple monitoring tools would lower the threshold for making sustainability visible in everyday life. Many feel that the current certification systems are cumbersome, and that practical "ready-made packages" would be a more effective way to promote the work.

2. Training and competence strengthening

The competence of personnel and management is repeatedly highlighted in both countries. Educational institutions need to see the big picture, concrete support for starting work, expert visits and continuing education, as well as practical examples for teaching and everyday life

The concept of sustainable development is considered extensive, and many people wonder what it would mean to rise to the "next level" in their own organisation.

3. Cooperation, networks and exchange of experience

The responses of both countries emphasise the strong hope that sustainable development would not be a project of individual educational institutions, but a shared, shared process. Educational institutions need peer networks, joint projects, workshops, training and meetings where good practices are shared. Cooperation is seen as a way to reduce overlapping work and strengthen the competence of the entire college field.

4. Strengthening resources

In both Finland and Norway, it is clearly pointed out that resources, especially time and money, are the biggest bottleneck in sustainable development. Educational institutions have a desire to do more, but the practical implementation is often overshadowed by other work. In addition, the Norwegian responses highlight the need for financial incentives, as sustainable activities (e.g. non-flying travel) are often more expensive.

5. Motivating and engaging students

Many Finnish institutes are considering how students could be better committed to the themes of sustainable development, especially in those degree programmes where sustainable development is not a natural part of the curriculum. In Norway, on the other hand, they are considering how student democracy and the community could be used more strongly as an engine of change. In both countries, the need to find pedagogically meaningful ways to bring the themes close to students' everyday lives is emphasised.

What kind of support and guidance do you need for the planning and implementation of sustainable development?

Number of respondents: 36

Finnish answers
Sharing together, for example. through project work.
Our idea is to apply for the Okka Foundation's certificate and we will certainly get help with the planning that way. When we have applied for it, I can answer this better :)
free advice and support.
Continuing education for staff – also for management – on the theme of how to start a process in which the entire school community works to promote sustainable development.
It feels like you should step into the so-called "Conservative Party". "to the next level", but now we are only wondering what it can mean and how. We are currently making a call for projects on the subject.
Easy-to-read material would be necessary.
Informational communication

Materials, electrical
Structure, modeling
Practical guidance and tools for drawing up and monitoring a sustainable development plan. For example. Distance training, etc. with other institutes would help to share good practices.
Resources for encounters.
Ideas for course content.
Material and financial.
Good tips for producing sustainable development
Easy and simple tools. Long certification programs, for example, are not attractive.
Material support
Good examples from other similar actors.
Concise content suitable for short courses, suitable for adults in working life.
Training and exchange of ideas with other institutes about successful sustainable development measures.
It is always easier to start tailoring college-specific training if there is a framework. It can then be modified and built to suit local activities, where applicable.
Knowledge of different funding channels (other than the Ministry, Finnish National Agency for Education, ELY Centre), competence and resourcing of project management
The big question is motivating and committing students, and we have not come up with a solution to this. The feeling is that there is less and less interest in sustainable development every year, even though the issue itself is becoming more and more important
We can certainly develop a lot further, but we recognize that we are already well advanced and can gladly offer our expertise to others.
Time resources and financial resources do not seem to be enough. e.g. There are already a lot of training courses and materials but bringing them to the level of practical work requires work. Larger projects, such as the renovation of properties, are also topical, where these issues are central.
Different models, examples and concrete tools to make guidance even more natural among different student groups.
Ready-made material for use
These are not very strongly present in the core curriculum for integration. And it is difficult to motivate students to study outside of language training that exceeds (or even includes) the curriculum
Certain areas have been working for us since 1995 (Oikos project), but more experts to organize workshops for the school.

Number of respondents: 40

Norwegian answers
Teaching is always good.
Professional knowledge, buildings, resources (people and well-proven teaching materials)
- Visits by inspiring resource persons.
Employee information and training
Very positive with collaboration with organizations and several folk high schools in joint projects, e.g. The sustainability project with a focus on food and food waste, which "Future in our hands" is still running together with fhs. It is easier to participate when there is a good structure and plan over time, and a "ready-made package" you can sign up for. The exchange of experience and joint courses across professional groups and schools is very meaningful.
No urgent need
Fact-based education and student seminars.
Collaboration with the academic community
More knowledge.
Key courses
Increased competence, more time.
That such topics are once again given a slightly higher priority from central quarters in the Norwegian folk high school.
Development of teaching material aimed directly at 19-24 year olds!
Meet others and gain new practical knowledge. Workshops
Any help we can get. We are a school far from big cities, so we do not have many resources in the local area that can help in this work.
Workshops, etc.
Courses, workshops and exchange of best-practice. Resources and materials
We have the support of a local consulting company, VIIB
Ideally, the opportunity to apply for financial project support
Competence enhancement and good examples that provide motivation to carry out. Also financial incentives that can push us in the right direction.

Simple and clear arrangements that can be implemented without too much cost and in terms of time are beneficial.
Examples of projects
Incentive to carry out projects that cost more than less sustainable alternatives. For example: it is much more expensive to travel by train/bus than to fly on school trips. We don't fly, but there are no incentives not to
Competence! Financial incentive, to be able to clear space in strategies.
Help from organizations with knowledge. Course.
Access to good teaching tools adapted to the student group. There is a lot at the upper secondary level, but the students have already been through this and are tired of
We try to solve this through our solidarity lines, using our own teachers and possible help from external organizations.
Offer of courses and activities for teachers and staff
Good teaching plans
Central and approved teaching modules.
Help on how we can make bold choices about sustainability without compromising on marketing and enough applicants
We don't need much here at our own school - we are an Eco-Lighthouse, have our own sustainability strategy and have worked with this for decades. This includes staff with expertise. However, we need a boost at the level of school kinds. There is probably a lot of good work going on at our 80 folk high schools. We should concentrate on some focus areas and ensure cooperation/dialogue with relevant organisations/agencies, and not least highlight the work/results internally and externally.
Not sure, we have many things we can improve on, and it could be useful to hear how other schools solve it with student democracy and engagement to anchor and inspire work on these topics. Manuals, manuals and people from outside who are supposed to tell us how to do things are rarely very successful. I already experience in some of the question formulations here a somewhat "scholastic" approach that we as a folk high school try to move away from, among other things by using the students as important resources here. The staff can initiate, speakers from outside can inspire, but much of the work is done by students in committees outside ordinary school hours. That said, boarding school life 24/7 helps to meet several of the goals that have been set.
We have good resources that can be built on. Resources to integrate strategic plans into everyday life to achieve sustainable goals, as well as resources to motivate all employees to work towards the same goal.
Contribute to the establishment of groups of schools more locally, where both staff and students have the opportunity for physical meetings without too much cost and planning.

Knowledge bank with examples and ideas.
We are a school with a large predominance of teachers with a sports background. They often do not have the knowledge and commitment to sustainability and citizenship/equality. We will benefit from being drawn into the folk high school movement's focus on these topics!
Economical

4. Future challenges

The survey also asked the respondents' views on what issues and also what kind of challenges will increase in relation to sustainable development in the future.

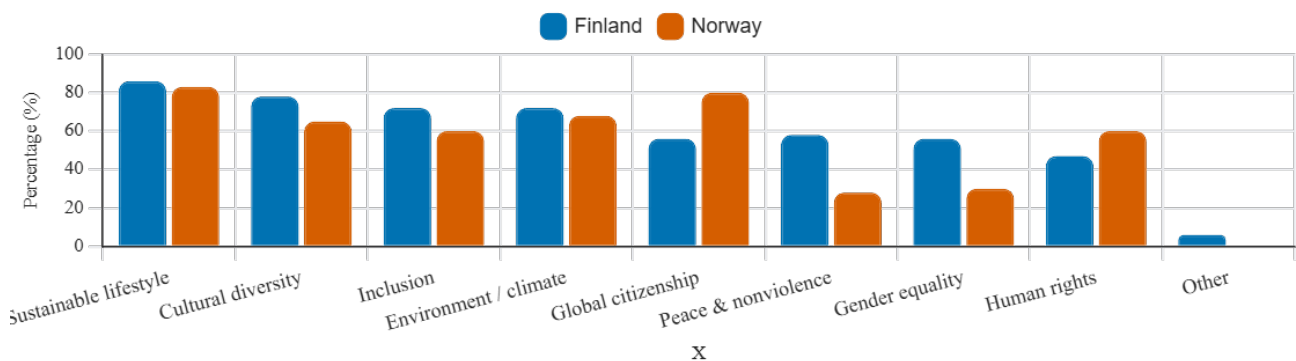
In Finland, the focus is growing especially on sustainable lifestyles, referring to the emphasis on everyday choices, consumption and resource wisdom in teaching and operating culture. Understanding of cultural diversity and cultural literacy are strengthened, and social participation and concrete environmental activities are strongly increased.

In Norway, global citizenship, sustainable lifestyles, climate and human rights are emphasized. The growth prospect for gender equality and peace/non-violence is clearly lower than in Finland.

Finland–Norway: comparative summary

Theme	Finland	Norway	Findings
Sustainable lifestyle	86 %	83 %	Very important in both
Cultural diversity / mangfold	78 %	65 %	Finland emphasises this a little more.
Inclusion/inclusion	72 %	60 %	Finland > Norway (social participation, sense of community).
Environment/climate	72 %	68 %	Strong in both and almost on the same level.
Global Citizenship / Global Citizenship	56 %	80 %	Norway is clearly ahead of Finland (global dimension).
Culture of Peace & Nonviolence	58 %	28 %	Finland is clearly ahead of Norway.
Gender equality / likestilling	56 %	30 %	Finland is clearly ahead of Norway.
Human rights	47 %	60 %	Norway first.
Other / Offerings	6 %	–	Finland: a small number of other withdrawals (no separate value in the Norwegian figure).

Finland–Norway Comparative Summary of Themes



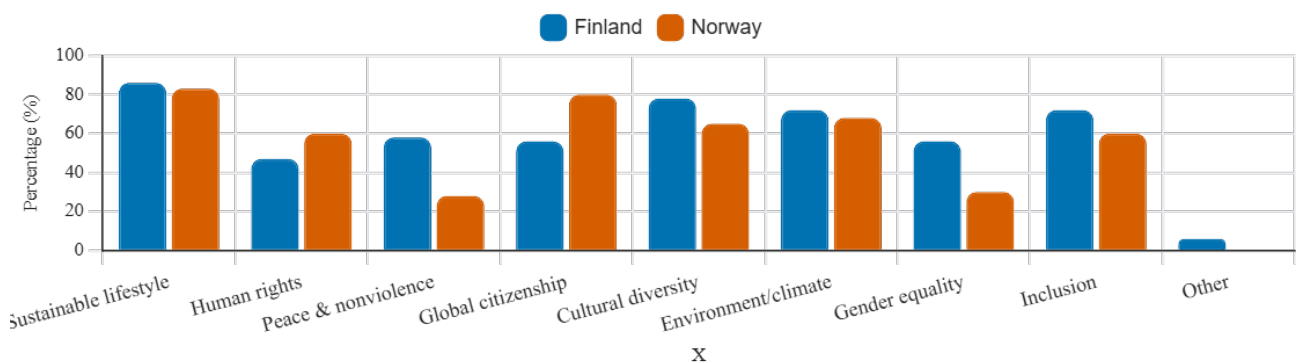
Summary:

Both countries should strengthen the long-term learning path of sustainable lifestyle and climate/environmental skills (from basic studies to elective, project and working life cooperation). Finland can balance the whole by deepening the content on human rights and global citizenship, so that the international dimension is strengthened at the same pace as social/cultural sustainability.

Norway can invest in strengthening the themes of peace-non-violence and gender equality and bring them more closely into everyday pedagogy and campus activities – while utilising its own strength in global citizenship to internationalise learning environments.

Which topics are likely to become more important in your folk high school by 2030? (Select all that apply)

Topics Likely to Become More Important by 2030: Finland vs Norway



5. Key observations and development needs

The results of the survey show that both Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools are strongly committed to promoting sustainable development, but the emphases and needs of the countries differ clearly. In both countries, sustainability is widely visible in teaching, everyday operating culture and community activities, but there are shortcomings in the systematic, evaluation and resourcing of work.

In Finland, sustainable development is strongly integrated into education, with a particular emphasis on human rights, gender equality, cultural diversity and environmental responsibility. In Norway, on the other hand, the focus is more strongly on global citizenship, climate and environmental responsibility, and supporting the well-being and safety of students. The activities of Finnish institutes emphasise pedagogical and communal solutions, while Norwegian institutes emphasise technical solutions, the sustainability of the food system and the reduction of climate impacts.

The biggest limiting factor for Finnish institutes is clearly the lack of resources, especially the lack of funding and working hours, which makes sustainability work project-based and dependent on personnel. In Norwegian colleges, the challenges are more related to the motivation of students and staff, as well as the level of competence, which prevents sustainability work from taking root in everyday practices.

In terms of cultural sustainability, both countries strongly support diversity and tolerance, but cultural accessibility and language awareness are clear areas for development. On the social sustainability side, Finland emphasises equality, taking diversity into account and communal operating models, while Norway emphasises well-being, safety and the prevention of social exclusion.

In terms of financial and administrative sustainability, Finnish institutes already make extensive use of resource-wise operating methods – such as reuse, multiple use of facilities and good governance – but logistics, the transparency of supply chains and the systematic strengthening of financial expertise require further development.

Both Finnish and Norwegian institutes would like to see closer cooperation: concrete material packages, ready-made models, joint projects, peer learning and forums where good practices can be shared. Both emphasize practicality and easy-to-use solutions, as the current certification and assessment frameworks are perceived as cumbersome. At the same time, the institutes hope for a clearer common direction and better visibility for sustainability work as part of the role of folk high schools in society.

As a whole, the analysis shows that the sustainability work of folk high schools is strong, but it involves both structural and pedagogical development needs. Above all, Finland needs resources and structures, while Norway needs to strengthen motivation and competence. Common development targets include systematising assessment, strengthening cooperation structures, improving cultural accessibility and deepening student participation.

In order to promote sustainable development, folk high schools hope, above all, for practical cooperation, common materials, sharing of good practices and clear cooperation structures that support ecological, social and cultural sustainability. The cooperation should be continuous, easy and concrete, and it should strengthen the joint role of the institutes as builders of a sustainable future locally and nationally.

The needs can be structured into five clear entities:

1. Concrete models, materials and practical tools

Many folk high schools hope to:

- ready-made material packages for teaching
- templates and operating methods ("how can this be done in practice?")
- ready-made teaching modules that can be applied to different target groups
- Open badges and other structures for recognising competence
- establishment of a material bank

The key wish is that the cooperation should be easy, resource-wise and practical, so that even small institutes can participate.

2. Exchange of experiences and mutual learning – much more than now

The common message from both Finland and Norway is the need to share experiences. Desirable forms include:

- benchmarking and sharing of good practices
- Online meetings, webinars and theme days
- Cooperation through workshops and "best practice" events
- wider networks and permanent peer groups
- Visits and excursions to other educational institutions

The wish is for more organized, regular forums, not just casual meetings.

3. Joint projects and structures

Many institutes highlight the need:

- joint projects, preferably long-term multi-year cooperation
- project sparring (funding channels, applications, administration)
- structures that connect folk high schools and higher education institutions (e.g. teacher education)

In Norway, similar wishes can be seen, for example:

- joint projects
- D6 meetings
- projects linking democracy, active citizenship and sustainable development

In Finland, a joint project that would strengthen the role of folk high schools as training centres for planetarily sustainable teaching was mentioned as a special wish.

4. Cooperation between local stakeholders and other education actors

Many institutes emphasise that sustainability work is more successful when the following are involved:

- Municipalities
- local businesses and associations
- Operators in the agricultural and forestry sectors
- universities of applied sciences, universities and vocational institutions
- Environmental organisations and ethical brand partners

Examples of desired partnerships include:

- Companies and brands that represent ethical conduct
- organisations with the most sustainable development expertise

5. Common strategic direction and visible advocacy work

The folk high schools hope for cooperation that helps:

- define the common role and task of folk high schools in sustainability work
- increase the visibility of work nationwide
- harmonise the basics of sustainability training
- make sustainability a clearly recognizable part of the brand of folk high schools

In addition, Norway emphasizes:

- need for clearer prioritisation of central government
- for national study modules
- strengthening cooperation as part of the strategy of the entire folk high school movement

Based on the data, the following development needs emerged

The data shows that Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools are doing a lot for sustainable development, but the work is still partly fragmented and requires structures, resources and clearer guidance to support it. The development needs can be summarised into the following entities:

1. Strengthening resources and structures

- In Finland, insufficient funding and working hours are by far the biggest obstacle to sustainability work.
- In both countries, the institutes need clear operating models, ready-made tools and simple planning templates so that sustainability can be made part of everyday life without additional bureaucracy.

2. Development of evaluation and monitoring

- The assessment of sustainability learning is fragmented: 64% do not assess learning at all.
- We need a light common assessment framework that makes competence visible (e.g. demonstrations, open badges) and supports impact reporting.

3. Strengthening the competence of the personnel

- Both Finnish and Norwegian institutes need continuing education, expert support and joint training days so that the staff and management can plan and implement sustainability work in a goal-oriented manner.
- In Norway, the need to motivate and commit staff is particularly emphasised, partly because sustainable development is considered to be important to varying degrees by institute.

4. Motivating and engaging students

- Many institutes find it challenging to engage students, especially where sustainability is not a natural part of the curriculum.
- There is a need for pedagogical models, participatory projects and communal practices that make sustainability work meaningful to students.

5. Strengthening cooperation and networks

- Adult education centres need closer cooperation with other educational institutions, municipalities, organisations and companies.
- In both Finland and Norway, the need for joint projects, exchange of experiences, material banks and peer networks is emphasised.
- There is also a desire for a common strategic direction that clarifies the role of folk high schools as promoters of sustainable development.

6. Improving materials and tooling

- There is a need for easy-to-read material, content aimed at young people, ready-made teaching modules and electronic tools for planning and monitoring.
- Many feel that certification models are cumbersome and would like to see lighter, easy-to-implement solutions.

7. Strengthening cultural accessibility and language awareness

- Cultural accessibility is the weakest sustainability dimension in both countries.
- There is a need for development especially in accessibility, language awareness and participation structures so that all student groups can participate equally.

8. Development of financial and procurement competence

- There is a need to strengthen financial literacy, the transparency of supply chains and the optimisation of logistics in Finnish institutes, because the current methods do not yet exploit all their potential in an economic and ecological sense.