

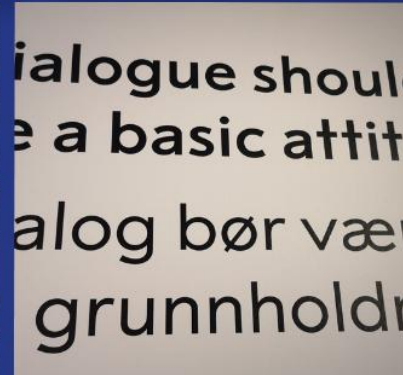
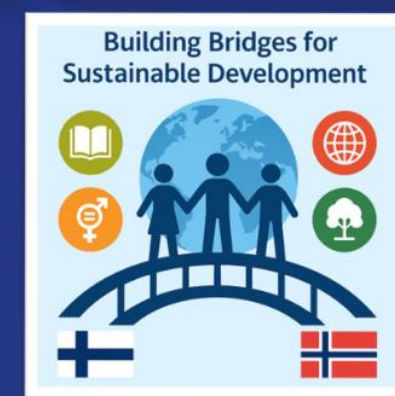
Building Bridges for Sustainable Development

Finland – Norway – Bridge 47

Agenda 2030 Target 4.7

Erasmus+ KA210-ADU

A visual overview of the project activities, learning process and results



The project explored how Agenda 2030 Target 4.7 is implemented in Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools, and how sustainability, global citizenship, inclusion and active citizenship can be strengthened in practice.



Core activities

- Comparative study and survey
- Round Table expert reflection
- Study visits to Norway and Finland
- Workshop at FFHSA 120th anniversary
- National webinars and international events
- Multi-channel dissemination

How we worked

- Joint plan and timetable
- Clear division of responsibilities and cooperation agreement
- Shared digital working platform
- Regular coordination and financial monitoring
- Self-assessment every six months, even without an interim reporting obligation
- Activity reporting in Beneficiary Module after completion

Quality assurance in practice

2

Round Table
reviews

2

self-assessment
points

7

activities
reported

When the Norwegian partner contact person changed mid-project, the team used the self-assessment process as onboarding: progress, open tasks and working methods were reviewed together.

Result: the partnership stayed on schedule, responsibilities remained clear and the change did not cause significant delays.



What was done?

- Mapped existing SDG 4.7 practices in Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools.
- Collected 36 Finnish and 40 Norwegian survey responses.
- Analysed strengths, good practices and competence needs.
- Discussed the findings in two international Round Table meetings.

Why it mattered

- The study created a shared knowledge base for the whole project: it helped partners move from assumptions to evidence and from evidence to peer learning and future development.



Programme highlights

- Project kick-off in practice: aims, management, communication and survey planning.
- SDG 4.7 dialogue: Bridge 47 introduced the broader state of SDG 4.7 and global citizenship education.
- Learning in context: visit to Oslofjord folk high school, class visits and dialogue on Inner Development Goals.
- Reflection and networks: shared reflection on what Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools can learn from each other.

Participant takeaway: new connections, clearer shared aims and inspiration for future cooperation.

60

participants in the
workshop session

2x

original target
was exceeded

The workshop brought project results to a broad and partly international audience, while also identifying staff development needs that informed the later webinars.

Discussions

Peer learning

Practical ideas

Shared mission

What participants valued

- “ Deep and valuable conversations provided both new ideas and confirmation of ongoing development work.
- “ The group format brought forward diverse perspectives from different institutions.
- “ Participants took practical insights back to their own organisations.

Two national webinars translated study results into practical learning.

10

participants
Norwegian webinar

17

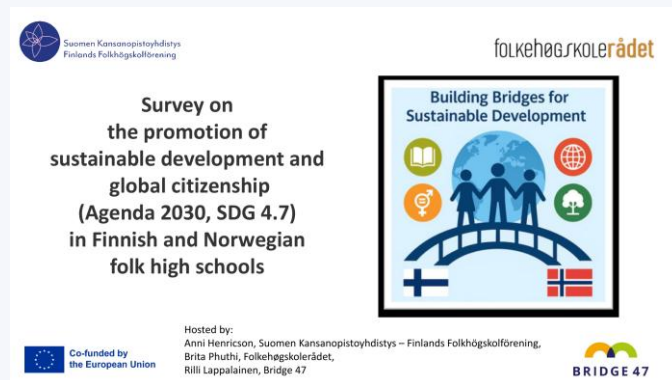
participants
Finnish webinar

160

reached at Hamburg
GCE seminar

EAEA

newsletter
visibility



The webinars presented the comparative study, highlighted practical examples and opened discussion on what kinds of support and cooperation folk high schools need next.

Feedback signal

- Participants valued practical examples, peer learning and ideas for follow-up cooperation.

EPALE

Project website

Newsletters

Social media

Partner networks



A reciprocal learning visit

- Norwegian participants explored Finnish approaches to SDG 4.7, social sustainability and inclusion.
- Working sessions discussed survey findings, sustainability competence and next steps.
- The visit strengthened transnational cooperation between project partners, folk high schools and stakeholders.
- The lower number of Norwegian participants was complemented by Finnish participants to deepen mutual learning.



Learning focus: turning comparative findings into shared pedagogical development.



What we explored

- Laajasalo Folk High School: integration group, study programmes, teaching staff discussion and school community practices.
- Oodi Central Library: walk & talk, DemocracySpace concept and group reflection.
- Peace Station: the work of the Finnish peace movement and closing reflection on the visit.
- Together: the visit clarified next steps for dissemination and a broader follow-up partnership.

Workshop 1: Social media, AI, public debate, opinion formation

Ideas for strengthening democratic formation in a context where AI and social media algorithms shape public opinion

Dealing with hate, threats and toxic online culture

Answers:

- What can we do about hate and threats?
- Build resilience together, so young people have real friendships and support networks outside the internet.
- Do not feed the trolls — disengage and switch off.
- Work politically to strengthen the responsibility of social media companies, including through legal action and regulation.
- Talk openly about tone in public debate and how people should treat one another.
- Politicians should consider leaving platforms such as X and instead set a better example.
- Always report harmful incidents and dare to speak up. Young people must be taught that it is important to tell someone.
- Join forces and build networks for support, learning, and solidarity.
- Work against perfectionism. Encourage people to show unfinished work, art, or opinions that may change over time, as part of a creative and learning process.
- Let chance and experimentation be part of the pedagogical process.
- Talk about politics all the time, not only during election years.
- Young people may begin by looking up to leaders, but they should then learn to think independently. This requires training in argumentation.
- Sentiment leads to opinion, opinion leads to perspective, and perspective can eventually shape a paradigm.
- Do not believe everything you think, and do not act on everything you feel.
- Use role play.
- Give a class the task of exploring nine different perspectives on Iran. Let them work both with assigned material and with sources they find themselves, then present their perspectives to one another.
- Offer teaching on how to resist algorithmic bubbles. For example, create a new social media account together and discuss what kinds of content appear and why.
- Use books.
- Write by hand.
- Program five AI bots with different personalities, opinions, and biases, and let students explore them in relation to bias, ethics, politics, and similar themes.
- Train staff in conflict management so they are better prepared to handle difficult statements or tensions that arise in the classroom.
- Use role play and forum theatre.
- Practice listening exercises.
- Use feedback exercises that focus on positive recognition and seeing the good in others.
- Create spaces for democratic conversations.

1

Why Folk High Schools Matter for Advancing SDG 4.7, and Why Their Role Should Shape the Post-2030 Dialogue

As the international community begins to look beyond the 2030 horizon, discussions about the future of education for sustainable development and global citizenship are gaining urgency. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 4.7 calls on countries to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, and global citizenship. While progress has been made, one important educational model remains under-recognized in global policy discussions: folk high schools.

Originating in the Nordic countries, folk high schools are non-formal educational institutions that emphasize holistic learning, civic engagement, and personal development. They typically offer residential or community-based learning environments for young people and adults, focusing less on exams and more on dialogue, participation, and lived experience. As such, they provide a powerful, practice-based approach to SDG 4.7, one that deserves greater attention in shaping future education strategies.

Folk high schools are uniquely positioned to advance SDG 4.7 because sustainability is not treated as a separate subject but embedded in the ethos and daily practices of education. Recent findings from Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools show a strong and shared commitment to sustainability across institutions, with teaching that consistently integrates human rights, environmental responsibility, and global citizenship.

In Finland, sustainability themes such as human rights, gender equality, and environmental responsibility are present in approximately 94% of schools. In Norway, institutions place particular emphasis on climate responsibility, sustainable lifestyles, and global solidarity. While the specific focus areas differ, both systems demonstrate how SDG 4.7 can be implemented comprehensively, through curricula, pedagogy, and community life.

This integrated approach stands in contrast to more fragmented models where sustainability is added as a discrete module or optional course. In folk high schools,



New report highlights strong commitment – and different national strengths – in Finland and Norway

A new Finnish-Norwegian report examines how folk high schools promote sustainable development and global citizenship in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 (SDG 4.7). Based on survey responses from over half of all folk high schools in both countries, the study shows a strong shared commitment to sustainability, alongside clear differences in emphasis, implementation and development needs.

Sustainability is Embedded in Everyday Education

In both Finland and Norway, sustainability is not treated as a separate theme but as part of the core mission of folk high schools. Teaching widely covers human rights, environmental responsibility, sustainable lifestyles and solidarity.

Finnish folk high schools stand out for their strong pedagogical integration of sustainability.

- Human rights, gender equality and environmental responsibility are each included in teaching at around 94 % of schools.
- Cultural diversity is also highly visible.

Norwegian folk high schools place particular emphasis on:

- Climate and environmental responsibility
- Sustainable lifestyles
- Global citizenship and solidarity

Global citizenship is more strongly emphasised in Norway, while gender equality and peace education are more prominent in Finland.

Different Teaching Approaches, Shared Values

Teaching methods in both countries rely heavily on discussion and critical reflection. However, approaches differ:

- Finland emphasises experiential learning, nature education, futures thinking and sustainability as part of everyday school life.
- Norway relies more on project-based learning and cooperation with local communities, organisations and partners.

Both models support active citizenship, but through different pedagogical traditions.

Environmental Action: Common Foundations, Different Focus

Basic environmental measures – such as waste sorting, vegetarian food options, reducing food waste and saving energy – are widely implemented in both countries.

Differences emerge in focus:

- Finland highlights biodiversity, cultural landscapes, traditional skills and nature-based learning as part of environmental education.
- Norway emphasises climate mitigation, energy efficiency, technical solutions and sustainable food systems, including self-sufficiency projects.

How dissemination expanded

- Project results were shared in Nordic and international events, including workshop-based discussions at Bosön and international GCE dissemination.
- Articles translated the findings into accessible messages for adult education and sustainability networks.
- The results were further shared through the FFHSA newsletter, EPAL, partner channels and wider European networks such as EAEA.
- International visibility supported follow-up planning with new countries.

Communication was part of the whole learning process — not only a final dissemination step.

1050

readers reached by
newsletters

2300

social media
audience reached

160

participants reached at
the
Hamburg GCE seminar

94

participants at the
Nordic Summit

Channels used

Project website

EPALE

Newsletters

Social media

Partner websites

Articles

Nordic networks

International events

Dissemination exceeded the original plan: results were also shared through EAEA channels and international events. The project website remains available after the project, supporting continued use of the study, examples and lessons learned.

What the activities made possible

Shared knowledge

A comparative overview of SDG 4.7 implementation in Finnish and Norwegian folk high schools.

Practical learning

Examples, methods and peer exchange for embedding sustainability in teaching and school culture.

Stronger networks

New contacts between folk high schools, partner organisations and international experts.

Wider visibility

Results shared nationally and internationally through events, EPALE, newsletters and articles.

Next steps

Cooperation has continued into planning a broader international project with new countries.



Together for sustainability, democracy and active citizenship in folk high schools.

Next steps: from results to wider cooperation

The project created a practical foundation for continued Nordic and European development work on SDG 4.7.

1

Use the results

Keep the study, examples and recommendations available through the project website, EPALE and partner channels.

2

Continue peer learning

Build on webinars, study visits and theme discussions to strengthen sustainability competence in folk high schools.

3

Expand the partnership

Invite new European countries and organisations into the dialogue and prepare a broader follow-up project.

4

Strengthen impact

Connect sustainability, global citizenship and active citizenship with the wider post-2030 education dialogue.

A wider bridge for sustainability education, global citizenship and active participation.