



NEETS TRAINING EXPERTS

Compendium No 2



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Introduction

NEETs for NEETs (N4N) trainings comprise a number of innovative elements ranging from a selection of energisers that pave the way to trainings with a lot of fun factors to a series of tools that address future skills to be obtained by all groups of society in a fast-changing world. These elements guarantee an up-to-date learning and teaching scenario that refers to current trends in education and training for adults.

However, the most innovative approach of N4N trainings is the reversal of roles that takes place in all N4N training concepts: Disadvantaged groups of society take the role of teachers and trainers while staff working with the persons with fewer opportunities is learning. NEETs add their perspectives to such programmes. Like this, the N4N trainings go far beyond the usual approaches of empowerment and participation of target groups which have been implemented by the international partners of this project consortium in other contexts as well as by many other stakeholders.

The principle of reversed roles is the main basis of the training concept „NEETs training experts“ as described in the following compendium. This training addresses experts from the field of adult education which work together with NEETs. The group of “experts” include teachers, staff planning and organising education, guidance counsellors, pedagogical staff, social workers, and similar groups. The following compendium refers to trainings in which NEETs are the driving forces, unlike the concept of the local trainings as described in PR 1 in which NEETs learn about the N4N tools and acquire teaching skills.

The “NEETs training experts” format meets the experts’ need to be able to better understand the NEETs, their backgrounds, their motivation and dreams. On this basis, the experts and staff will be able to find new strategies, pedagogical approaches and counselling methods to improve counselling work, teaching work, CSO service providing and voice raising work as well as social work with young adults. This improvement is an essential step as the methods used so far have not entailed the desired impact with view to the impact on young adults (NEETs in particular). Aforementioned staff needs to be equipped with the necessary competences to organise and run inclusive pedagogical concepts, integrating the learners themselves into the learning process, making them steer their own educational, career and life path.

In the framework of the NEETs for NEETs project, the concept “NEETs training experts” has been piloted in two so-called Learning, Teaching and Training Activities (LTTs) on an international level. For the NEETs, these trainings in English were particularly challenging but successful – as surveys among participants showed. A significant impact of the training concept both for the trainings’ target group of experts from the field of adult education as well as for the group of NEETs was reported in surveys among participants after the trainings. Staff was equipped with the necessary competences as described above that allows fundamental innovation concerning the work with NEETs. The group of NEETs experienced self-sufficiency and, as a consequence, enhanced abilities to affect their own reality. (see also N4N handbook). As the compendium on a training concept “NEETs training experts” ensures that the training concept can be easily transferred to other European regions this impact is not only expected in the project regions.

This compendium comprises

- **background information** on the development and adaption of the N4N training concept with view to challenges of reversed roles of clients and staff
- **tips and guidelines** on implementing the trainings

- a **model training concept and curriculum** including learning goals and a description of hybrid training methods, learning material both traditional paper-based material and digital training tools
- an **online learning environment** that can be integrated into different types of learning management systems

Background information on the development and adaption of the N4N training concept

Adapting the ReACT empowerment model to become part of a workshop concept “NEETs training experts”

The ReACT model and the „NEETs training NEETs on local level“ concept (PR 1 – see concept above) was – as a first step - developed by the Swedish N4N project partners – together with the group of NEETs. On a local level in Sweden, first workshops took place to pilot and analyse, if the ReACT empowerment methods and workshops could be adapted to the new target group of NEETs. The concept as a draft was designed.

In a second step, local pilots were carried out in Oslo/Norway and in Stuttgart/Germany. To ensure, on the one hand, a high-quality transfer of the concept to other European countries, these local pilots in Oslo and Stuttgart were held by the Swedish N4N project team in co-operation with the local teams. On the other hand, in the context of these mutually organised trainings, the Swedish team as well as the N4N teams from Germany and Norway had the opportunity to further develop the training in a common approach. As a consequence, experiences from three different countries and the work with different groups of participants could be considered in order to improve PR1 as well as the training concept NEETs training NEETs on a European level.

Context of this part of the project work

The “NEETs training experts” concept is the output of a collaborative analysis of main principles of the ReACT model carried out together by all international project partners in the course of the N4N project. The commonly designed tools and descriptions of training methods as well as learning and teaching material flew into a documentation on the project’s online space. In collaborative online focus groups with NEETs and the experts that are the target group of the training and in many personal meetings on a local level the needs of the target group (the experts) were collected. This process resulted in a definition of learning goals, learning contents and methods of the trainings on the basis of the analytical work and the results of the focus group meetings. During the piloting of the concept, in particular during the international LTTS and the evaluation process feedback of the participants was analysed and the concepts were amended. This final compendium includes the revised description of the training concept, curricula, description of hybrid training methods, learning material etc.

Revised model “NEETs training experts”

The “NEETs training experts” model is based on the general approach of N4N trainings as piloted during the project lifetime, i. e.

- the local pilots in which learners with fewer opportunities (NEETs) and staff that works with this group of learners follow parts of the ReACT/N4N curriculum, learn new tools/methods and are ideally prepared to act as a trainer after the pilot and
- in a second step, the participants of the local pilots had the opportunity to take part in a similar training with the same target groups but with participants from different European countries. During these trainings, the participants with fewer opportunities acted – partly – as trainers themselves.

Eventually, the ReACT model supported NEETs enough so they could embark a journey of training staff members – both at local and European level – creating an important shift in perspective among the adult world (i.e., staff members of both public and non-governmental administrations) as regards the importance of co-creation related to complex problems.

Ground-breaking innovation of the concept “NEETs training experts”

Throughout the NEETs for NEETs project period, staff members from the NEETs for NEETs consortium members noticed for real how NEETs themselves carried many inspiring ideas and answers to their questions - on how to solve the complex problems that they are facing on a regular basis - i.e., 1.) how to find motivation to enter the labour market or fulfil your studies, 2.) how to tackle discrimination from employers due to sexual orientation, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc., 3.) how to approach youths and young adults who are struggling with mental health issues. They have helped us see how our activities - such as job-counselling, adult education lecturing and civil society work connected to marginalised youth - could be upscaled and thus becoming more relevant. In short, it has felt innovative to start focusing on how NEETs could train us and give us new insights, rather than the opposite.

To the project partners, this way of training was ground-breaking, since our staff members never before had been trained by NEETs. The NEETs for NEETs handbook shows examples of staff members sharing how they, thanks to this project, have started to see NEETs more as a resource in society, filled with experience-based knowledge on how it is to be approached by the adult world.

Moreover, throughout the project duration, staff members from the N4N project team became even more progressive when it came to safeguard the ownership of the NEETs, and their right to tell their stories and interpret their realities without being "helped" or assisted in doing so - in cases where they have not asked for this help or assistance in question. Therefore, we decided to establish a policy - saying that staff members were not allowed to be on stage without being invited by NEETs. Moreover, staff members were not allowed to interrupt NEETs while carrying out activities. This policy entailed a lot of trust between the trained NEETs and the staff from the N4N project team. Since NEETs had to feel safe enough to actually ask for assistance if they felt they needed help to carry out their presentations. Our intention with this was not to create too much pressure for them without supporting them in their activities. To the contrary, this trust was built thanks to many hours of supervision, communication, relating and team-building on beforehand.

As mentioned above, this project has moreover proven to entail a high amount of innovation, by aiming at changing rigid mindsets and patterns of today's society. By carrying out the NEETs

for NEETs project, we managed to foster new attitudes, where we started to realise that NEETs (for real!) could train us and give us new insights, rather than the opposite. We have not heard about a project before that substantially transformed participants (learners) with fewer opportunities into experts - teaching about their experiences and know-how to former experts - now transformed into learners.

The concept can also serve as a model for similar initiatives with other disadvantaged target groups like migrants, senior citizens etc.

Tips and guidelines on implementing the trainings

Analysis of local backgrounds

The abbreviation “NEETs” stands for young people that are Not in Employment, Education or Training. The NEETs represent a heterogeneous group of unemployed persons up to 24 years that might or might not be actively looking for a job, an education or a training. Staff working with NEETs and the NEETs themselves can usually be approached in some sort of educational programme or informal training or in the context of counselling offers. The aim of an analysis of local backgrounds is to identify NEETs educational programmes and classes that could become part of a transnational N4N network.

Target groups

The N4N training concept “NEETs training experts” and the related compendium refer to trainings with the target group of staff working with NEETs. In addition, NEETs as new participants should be present at the trainings, too. New NEETs enrich the training programmes that is based on learning through exchange and experience. Tools like Forum theatre (see below) and teambuilding activities need input, both from the experts and from NEETs. The NEETs that work as trainers moderate and steer the co-operative tools and give some theoretical input.

Relevant target groups of the N4N network and trainings are staff working with NEETs and the NEETs themselves, in particular

- young people in specific programmes for NEETs
- persons in second chance education programmes
- migrants in initial orientation classes, language classes and bridge classes to work, education or training

Main findings of the different pilot activities were that there are two different types of NEETs:

- A) “resource-strong” NEETs who felt that they can contribute to society, but that society has deprived them of their opportunity to do this due to socio-economic conditions, discrimination, etc.
- B) NEETs who lacked self-esteem, or had been characterised by “hikikomori” (i.e., the Japanese expression for youths not spending time outside of their homes for months/years), and/or had problems with mental health and/or Neuropsychiatric Disorders, and/or low levels of motivation, ambivalence towards “finding one’s inner spark”, etc.

To summarise, as a hypothesis of the project, "resource-strong" NEETs might rather be facing outer oppression, while the NEETs who did for example drop off during the first NEETs for NEETs pilots were seemingly facing a kind of inner oppression.

Recruitment of participants

Recruitment of staff and learners:

Some experiences from the recruitment of learners in the context of the local N4N pilots and the LTTs illustrate problems that might arise when recruiting, in particular learners, for N4N:

- The recruitment of NEETs for the LTT "NEETs training experts" in Stuttgart was primarily done through local pilots and vigorous recruitment through meetings, digital information and follow ups with the NEETs. Two of the partners in the project were unable to recruit NEETs for the LTT, due to NEETs dropping out. This might also be due to the international aspect of traveling for the NEETs, which some of the participants were quite unfamiliar, and comfortable with. Some local NEETs from Stuttgart faced the problem that they were part of an educational programme financed by the German national level. Quality rules connected to the funding didn't allow too many absences from classes that took part daily. Only some students from the programme got the allowance to participate in the LTT in Stuttgart. Partners recruited staff closely connected to NEETs, some previously involved in the project and some new to the project. This was done to have the NEETs train the trainers, and to secure the scaling of the project in the partner organisation.
- Based on the reports from the partners, the recruitment of NEETs was easier for the LTT2, there were more staff members and NEETs familiar with the project. hence the recruitment of "experienced" parties was easier. The LTT2 in Borås included a larger number of both NEETs and staff, and most of the parties combined staff and NEETs attending the last LTT with newly recruited participants. The staff also utilized contacts that work with NEETs (teachers, counsellors etc) to secure participation.
- The Stuttgart partners mainly recruited by approaching NEETs through personal contacts in trainings and other educational or counselling programmes and although through "mouth-to-mouth propaganda"
- Some recruitments of the NEETs (i.e., participants with fewer opportunities) took place via Discord, a social media platform targeting gamers and e-sport practitioners. These recruitments were made thanks to relationships established on this social media platform during previous projects (Mainly VGR – the We project) - thus; this should not be seen as a recommendation to actors - to try to recruit randomly on Discord without previous bonds being made.

Criteria to select target groups and participants can be:

- **flexibility of the educational programmes for NEETs:** in the N4N pilots in Stuttgart, it turned out to be a big problem that participants from "certified" classes took part in the N4N trainings. They were not allowed to miss lessons in their training programmes and thus couldn't participate in any international activity. Moreover, they had to pass exams and it was most difficult to find a time slot where they could participate in trainings
- **personal circumstances** (e.g. childcare for children): We also had the experience that a significantly high share of persons couldn't participate in all sessions because of their family etc

- **consideration of health and mental issues:** in the group of NEETs, these issues have to be considered
- **financial aspects:** when working with disadvantaged learners all costs should be covered through funding
- **motivation:** from a potential target group those people with a personal motivation should participate – from experience, there are a lot!

Specific tip for Germany: In classes that are financed through national funding (e.g. Bildungsgutscheine, linked to AZAV certified classes) the planning has to start long before the training programme starts, the training module is ideally part of the “certified” curriculum, it can for example be linked to classes like English or Social Sciences/Politics.

Tip: The original idea of N4N trainings was to invite learners and staff to trainings – so that staff can learn from the NEETs and the other way round. However, if the staff involved is actually working with the very NEETs that participate in the training, the NEETs might not be as open and free as necessary. Thus, it has to be considered whether staff that is not working directly with the NEETs should be participating or staff unknown to the NEETs participants.

Financial issues related to trainings with disadvantaged learners and staff

The current concept of “NEETs training experts” was financed through funding of the ERASMUS+ programme. It became obvious, at least for the NEETs, all costs have to be covered, including travel to the meeting venue, food etc. Also staff working with NEETs might not be willing to pay for a training of this experimental type – not having an obvious added value for the staff. Thus, financial One option is to lift the “NEETs training experts” trainings to the international level, organise European seminar concepts and like this have access to ERASMUS+ KA1 money which can be used not only to finance travel costs but also on-site costs for rooms, food and trainers.

Preparation of the trainings

Preparatory work of staff

Staff supporting the N4N trainings take care of organisational issues:

- planning of the **date of the training** together with the international partners/sending institutions
- planning of the **budget** available
- arranging/booking of **rooms and facilities**
- **catering and meals**
- planning of the **curriculum including leisure activities**
- booking of **trainers** (ideally NEETs that have been trained as trainers in the context of NEETs for NEETs, usually supported by trained staff working with NEETs)
- **acquisition of participants**

Preparation of NEETs trainers

NEETs have to become prepared enough for carrying out competence development activities for job guides, teachers, youth workers, civil servants, etc. During the N4N project, this preparation was done first of all in the context of two pilot trainings – one two-day training introducing the N4N tools and a second two-day training offering the NEETs trainers the opportunity to moderate some tools. In addition, personal support and supervision was offered before NEETs adapted trainer roles in the context of the LTTs. By presenting, first of all, just some tools at different occasions the NEETs became more self-confident and they were – by the end of the project – able to run N4N trainings by themselves.

Co-creative preparatory activities of learners and staff

Sending institutions also take care of organisational issues. They might carry out an organisational day to present and co-creatively develop the project, to make organisational arrangements (organised together with the participants) and to check personal circumstances (how to organise the care of children etc.)

Model training concept and curriculum “NEETs training experts”

In the following, a model training concept and curriculum is presented. From the N4N pool of tools, a selection of themes, exercises, methods and social activities has been made. The curriculum below comprises themes and tools that seem most suitable for the European training format. More themes and tools are presented in the online learning environment of the N4N project:

1) Welcome session including energisers

Learning goal	Activity name	Description of the method/content	Material and tools	Time
Feeling at home	Presentation	Short welcome speech of hosting team,		10 minutes, depending on the group size
Getting to know each other, team-building among staff and NEETs participants	Bingo	The participant will receive a paper including table, in each one there is a short sentence ex: “i have a cat” each participant will ask others if the statement is correct they should put a cross on the word if not they can continue with other players till they java (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line), the player yells “Bingo!” and they are declared the winner of that round. More information and alternative exercises: View the training concepts presented in the annex of this compendium.	Paper with table, pen	30 minutes
Getting to know the programme	Presentation of the agenda	The participants receive the written agenda before the training; discussion of the programme in an interactive questions and answers style	A4 paper	15 minutes

2) Thematic session: Story-telling

Learning goal	Activity name	Description of the method/content	Material and tools	Time
	Circle theatre	Used as a general presentation exercise Performed together with the whole group. Step 1: Everyone positions themselves in a large circle with an opening that is the stage.		20 minutes

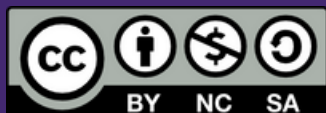
		<p>Step 2: A person goes to the "stage" and makes a charade/gesture/movement while saying: I am.. (description).</p> <p>Ex. I am a tree, shape the body like a tree.</p> <p>Step 3: Person 2 in turn goes to the tree and makes a gesture, saying: I am... related to the tree</p> <p>Ex. I am the bird that flaps around the tree and flaps around the tree.</p> <p>Step 4: Person 3 goes up and does the same but relates to the first 2.</p> <p>Ex. I am the Hunter who shoots down the bird!</p> <p>Step 5: Person 4 takes the stage and replaces Person 1 (the sun)</p> <p>Ex. I the dog that jumps in the way of the hunter's bullet!</p> <p>Step 6: New person replaces the character who has been on stage the longest until everyone who wants to participate has participated.</p> <p>Purpose: The exercise is a neutral presentation and ice breaker. Shows the human imagination.</p>		
Getting to know principles of story-telling	Presentation story-telling	<p>Presentation of the trainer and interactive discussion.</p> <p>ppt slides available as PDF format in appendix 2 of this compendium</p>	ppt	60 minutes

3) Thematic session: Forum theatre

Learning goal	Activity name	Description of the method/content	Material and tools	Time
Making oppressions visible which participants experienced in the past, reflecting on the oppressions	Forum theatre: presentation and implementation	<p>Presentation Forum theatre: ppt slides available as PDF format in appendix 3 of this compendium</p> <p>Participants plan their own scenarios (20 minutes)</p>	Forum theatre ppt, basic theatre requisites	3 hrs

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