

20-25 AUGUST 2024 | ÄNGSBACKA, SWEDEN



REPORT

December
2024



GEN EUROPE
GLOBAL
ECOVILLAGE
NETWORK



ÄNGSBACKA
COURSE & FESTIVAL CENTER

ecovillagegathering.org

FOREWORD

The 2024 European Ecovillage Gathering in Ängsbacka, Sweden was attended by 794 people, making it the biggest Gathering yet!

The Gathering was co-created by the collective efforts of the GEN Europe Staff and Council, the on-site Dream Team & Pollinators Team, hundreds of contributors from our network and Ängsbacka volunteers, holding various spaces, roles and contributing in different ways, and with 90 workshop holders and 5 keynote speakers!

This report distills the main feedback, learnings, and celebrations from the Gathering, providing a comprehensive overview of the event from multiple angles. By sharing the feedback in this way, we aim to provide a rich and nuanced understanding of the Gathering's impact and value.



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Event Overview



1.0 Attendance & Demographics

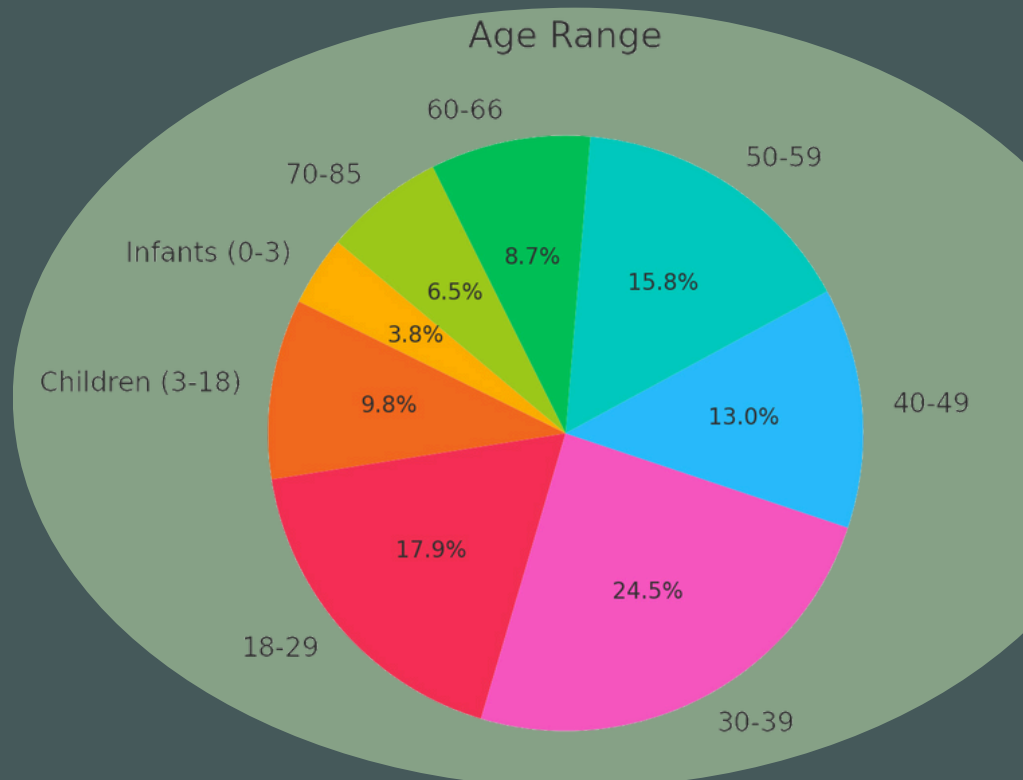
Total participants:

With a total of 794 people at this year's Gathering, it marks the most attended European Ecovillage Gathering ever!

There were 519 people from the Global Ecovillage Network (participants, staff, council, delegates, workshop leaders, programme coordinators, keynote speakers, children) + 275 Ängsbacka staff & volunteers.

Age Distribution:

The age distribution of attendees highlights the gathering's wide-ranging appeal across various life stages. This broad age range demonstrates the inclusive nature of the gathering, attracting individuals and families alike to participate in the ecovillage movement.



Event Overview

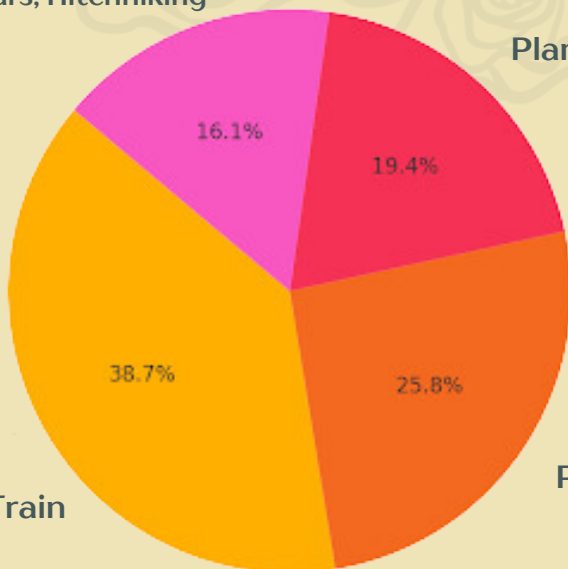
1.0 Attendance & Demographics

Attendees came from 39 different countries

Germany	Portugal	Cyprus	Albania
Sweden	Switzerland	Spain	Croatia
Netherlands	Iceland	Turkey	Dominican Republic
Italy	Lithuania	Ukraine	Mauritius
Denmark	Estonia	Slovenia	Russia
France	Norway	Australia	Serbia
United Kingdom	Belgium	Canada	Singapore
United States	Israel	Greece	Slovakia
Finland	Austria	New Zealand	Uruguay
Poland	Brazil	Ireland	

Shared rides
Bla Bla Cars, Hitchhiking

Plane



Bus, Train

Personal Car

Travel Method

Participants traveled to the gathering using different methods out of which mostly greener traveling options.



“

It's wonderful to have people from so many different countries and backgrounds, it's like a big family
Workshop Holder

“I was longing for deep connections with people who want to bring positive change to the world. This gathering fulfilled that need beautifully, allowing me to connect with my ‘soul tribe.’”

Participant

“The atmosphere was amazing! I loved the community vibe, the support, and the feeling of being surrounded by people with shared values and visions.”

Participant

”

“

“This gathering was transformative. I feel more inspired than ever to bring back these ideas and practices to my own community.”

Delegate

“It was life-changing. I felt a deep sense of healing, connection, and growth, and I’m leaving with renewed energy and purpose.”

Volunteer

”



Event Overview



1.1 Event Structure

The Gathering is the heart of our movement, a vibrant picture drawn with the threads of our values and vision for a better world. Co-created with friends, members, and hundreds of participants who come together every year, the Gathering offers a diverse array of experiences that inspire, educate and delight.

From the various program streams that collectively provide a holistic perspective, to the numerous components that make up the event, the gathering program is designed to take our community on a journey of discovery, connection, and growth.

Below, you'll find the comprehensive list of components that make up this year's Gathering program, carefully curated to nourish body, mind, and spirit.



**Theme of
the Year**

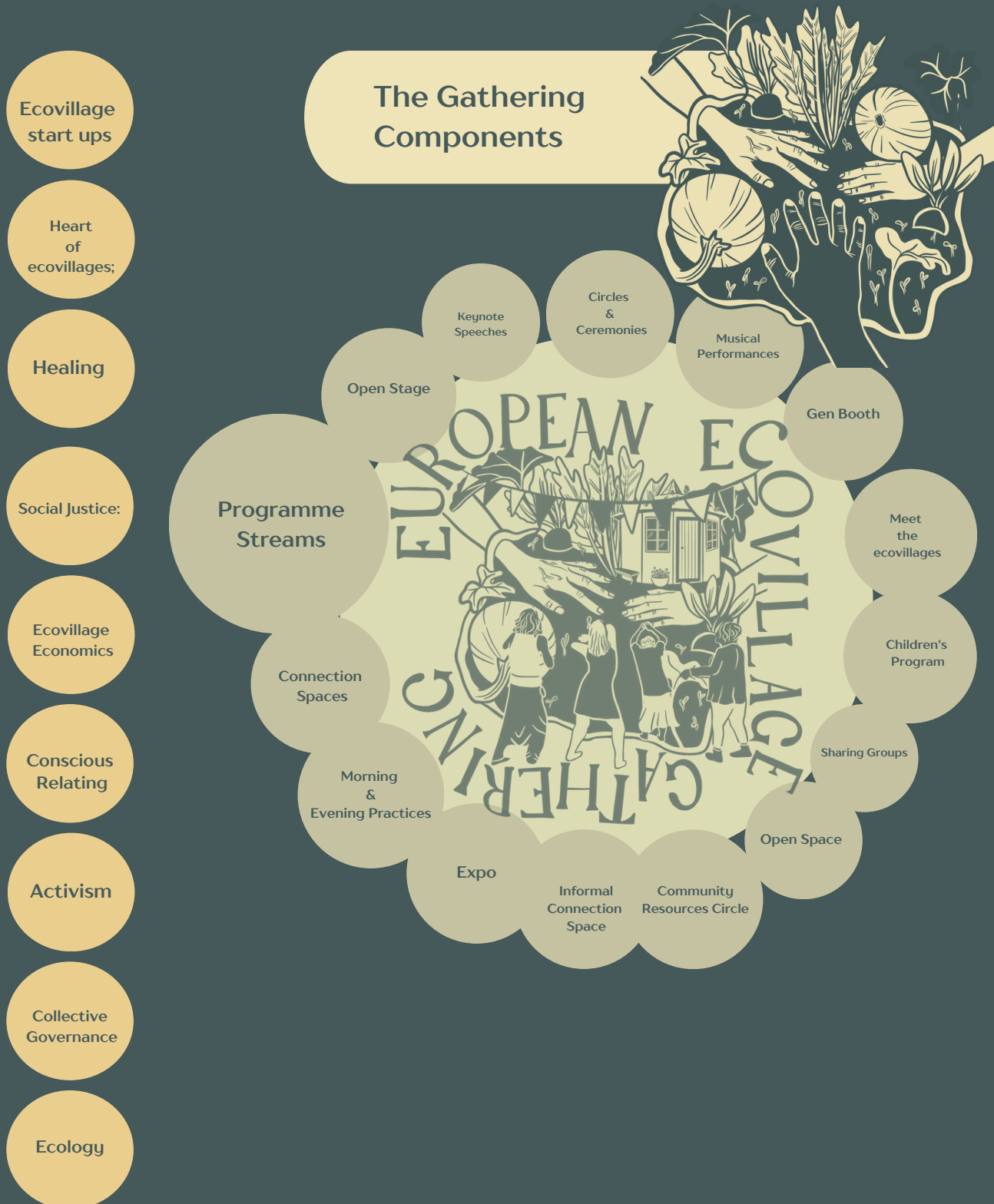
Urgently slowing down

This year, our Gathering invitation was to embrace the radical act of slowing down. A journey that urgently shifts gears away from the relentless pace dictated by capitalism and consumerism.

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Event Overview

1.1 Event Structure



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The Gathering Components

1- Keynote speeches

2- Musical performances

3- Circles & Ceremonies

3- Program Streams

1. **Ecovillage start ups:** Workshops designed to support new groups in realising their dream community.
2. **Heart of ecovillages:** Sharing the core practices from well-known ecovillages around Europe.
3. **Healing:** Embodied practices to heal ourselves, the land and our communities.
4. **Social Justice:** Explore how to create more inclusive and brave communities while reflecting on the current pitfalls and opportunities for the ecovillage movement.
5. **Ecovillage Economics:** Sharing alternative and solidarity-based economic models and solutions for a global economic transformation.
6. **Conscious Relating:** Authentic relating, conscious sexuality, consensual intimacy. An embodied exploration of how we relate to ourselves and others within communities and outside of them.
7. **Activism:** Explore how to bring communitarian and regenerative values and solutions to the political forefront.
8. **Collective Governance:** Sociocracy, holacracy and more. Workshops on how we step into collective and empowered governance.
9. **Ecology:** Hands on workshops grounded deep in the land. We will cover food sovereignty, permaculture and more.

4- **Morning Practices:** start the day gently, reconnecting with our bodies and surroundings with yoga, singing or meditation.

5- **Evening Practices:** artistic expressions of music, films, movement and other soulful practices and dancing out with DJ sets and live performances to end the day.

The Gathering Components

16- EXPO: Our area for appropriate technologies will offer both an exposition of low-tech technologies, fire-pitch technology presentations and hands-on workshops.

7- Children's Program: It's for the child and inner child to explore and create community in the children's village. Facilitated offers for an exploration of body, mind and soul with our youngest villagers. The children could select and shape their own programme. Arts, crafts, theater, bushcraft, storytelling, meditation, games and more!

8- Community Resources Circle: Facilitated journey for the participants of the Gathering to get the opportunity to support new or upcoming communities with their skills, materials, knowledge, hands – or anything else that they feel called to offer!

9- Meet the ecovillages: Meeting and greeting ecovillages from all over Europe to discover current ecovillage projects and browse ecovillage-based products. One big market space for it all!

10- Connection Spaces: Self organized meetings with interest groups for connecting and networking

11- Sharing Groups: inspired by a tradition of daily sharing time with/ between participants in Angsbacka

12- Gen Booth: Meet the GEN EU Staff and Council and sister organizations

13- Open Space Technology

14- Open Stage

“

I became more aware of the concept of ecovillages and how they embody principles of collaboration, self-sufficiency, and sustainability. Seeing how individuals can come together to create supportive, environmentally friendly communities made me appreciate the potential for positive change. I realized that living in harmony with both people and nature is not just an ideal but a feasible lifestyle.

Pollinators Team, ESC 2024

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“

The morning speeches in the Heart Tent were very inspiring and encouraging to go on with what we do in our communities.

Almut Groeger, Delegate

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Financial Overview

2.0 Ticket Sales

TOTAL TICKET SALE = 416

Total Ticket Sales by Category	€	Tickets
Tier 1 March	40	100
Tier 2 - April - Mid June	100	61
Tier 3 Mid June - August	160	94
Group Discount (within tiers 2&3)	65 (per person)	29

Total Participant Tickets Sold: 255 tickets

Total GA Tickets Sold: 161 tickets



Financial Overview

2.1 Income & Expenses



GEN EUROPE

REVENUE

Ticket income	€25,660.00
Individual memberships	€22,940.00
Ecovillage tours	€460.00
Hübner Kennedy Funding	€10,500
total income	59,560.00

GATHERING EXPENSES

Salary Gathering Coordinators	€22,400.00
Staff Hours	€9,000.00 (this is an estimation not based on hours actually counted)
Expenses for Gathering communications, programme, materials and infrastructure, coordination team travels, keynote speakers	€16,800
total costs	€48,200

Profit €11,360.00



Financial Overview

2.1 Income & Expenses



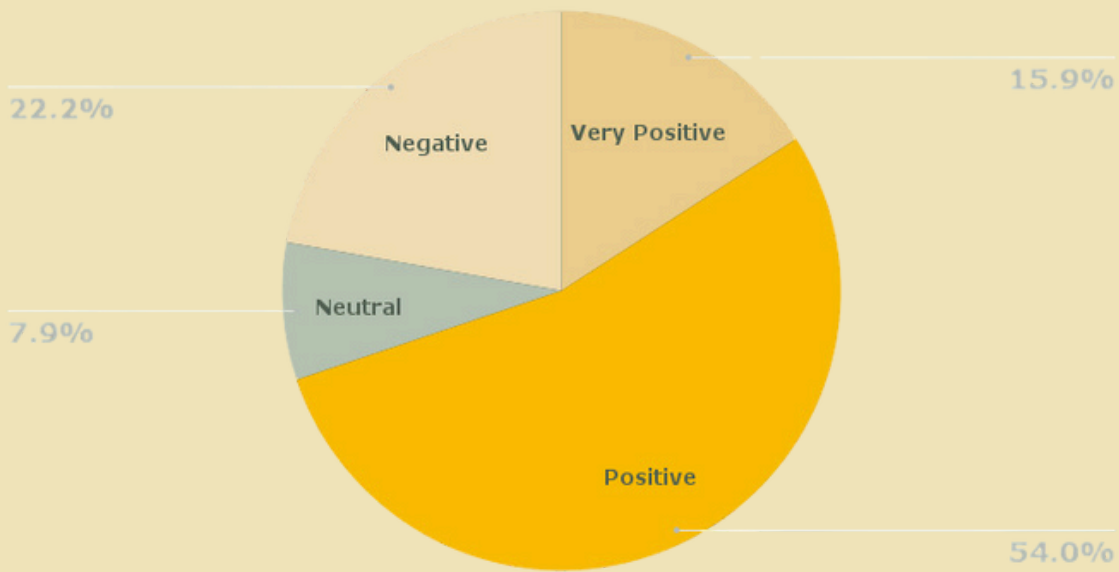
ÄNGSBACKA

REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Accomodation	€69,607.53	Food and acc. (including cafe)	€48.466,27
Café	€4,802.49		
	€74.410,02	Materials	€3,001.28
		Rented Equipment	€5831,06
		Investments	€2058,02
			€59,356.63

Profit €15.053,39



We asked if participants got the value for money after experiencing the Gathering. Most attendees were very satisfied with the ticket price and the experience provided.

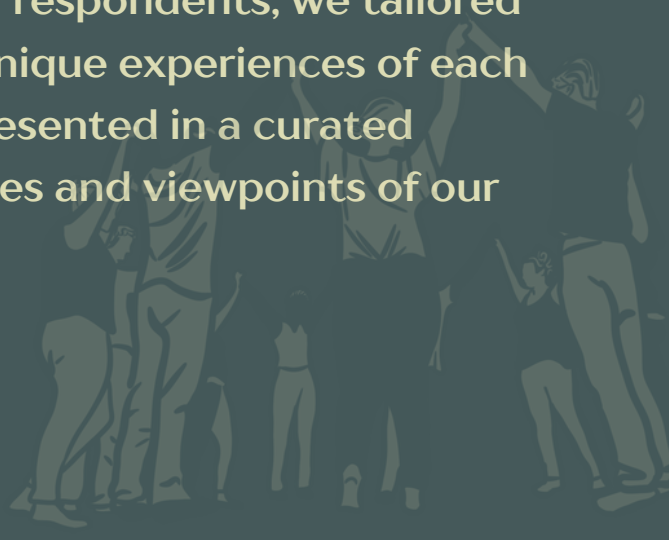


The participants who expressed some dissatisfaction with the ticket price, citing issues such as high costs, poor food quality, or inadequate amenities.



Evaluations

We collected feedback from over 130 participants, including delegates, volunteers, and workshop leaders, who shared their experiences and insights about the Gathering. To reflect the diverse perspectives and roles of our respondents, we tailored our feedback forms to capture the unique experiences of each group. As a result, the feedback is presented in a curated format, highlighting the distinct voices and viewpoints of our different audiences.



Overall, the European Ecovillage Gathering 2024 was a successful event that provided a valuable experience for participants.

While there were some minor issues with the schedule, venue, the event was well-organized, and most attendees were very satisfied.

The event facilitated community building, provided opportunities for networking and connections, and inspired attendees to take action in their own lives and communities.

Experience & Flow

- Some participants felt that the schedule was too packed, with too many workshops scheduled at the same time, making it difficult to choose which ones to attend. and not enough downtime.
- Others appreciated the variety of activities and thought the program was well-organized, with a good balance of activities
- There was a voice of participants who felt that the evening parties were too loud and disrupted their sleep.

Networking & Connections

- This aspect of the Gathering is mostly appreciated by participants, the connections they made with other attendees and the sense of community is the core of the Gathering for many
- Sharing circles were a great way to connect with others and share experiences.
- A few participants felt that there could be more facilitated opportunities to network and make new connections.

Inspiration and Action

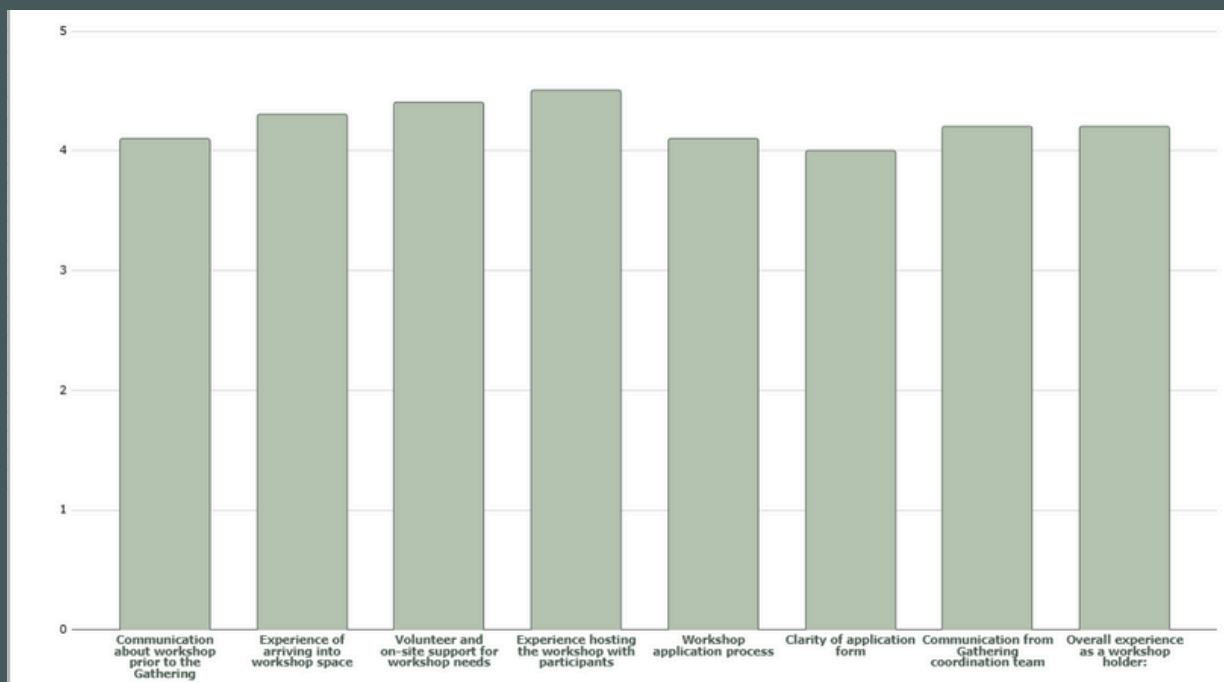
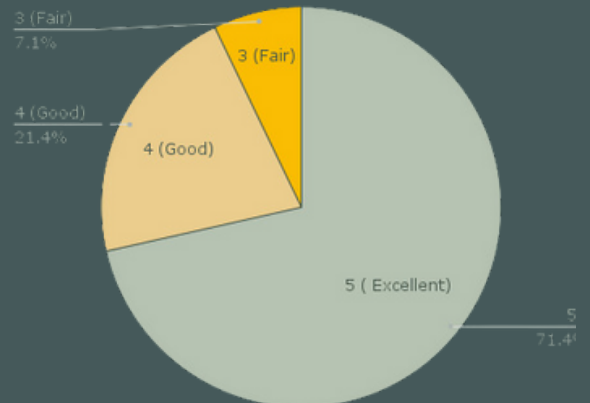
- Many participants felt inspired by the keynote speeches, workshops, and connections they made during the gathering.
- The gathering motivated participants to take action in their own communities or to get involved with GEN.
- A number of participants felt that the gathering provided them with new skills and knowledge that they can apply in their own projects.
- Some suggested having more hands-on workshops, therapy and healing spaces, and more focus on community building.



Workshop Holders

The Ecovillage Gathering received positive feedback from workshop holders, who appreciated the sense of community and connection with participants. However, there are areas for improvement, such as communication, application process, and logistical support. Most workshop holders were happy with the support they received. Some had minor issues with the schedule, venue, or technical equipment, but overall, they enjoyed the experience.

How would you rate your overall experience as a workshop holder at this



Developments for Next Year:

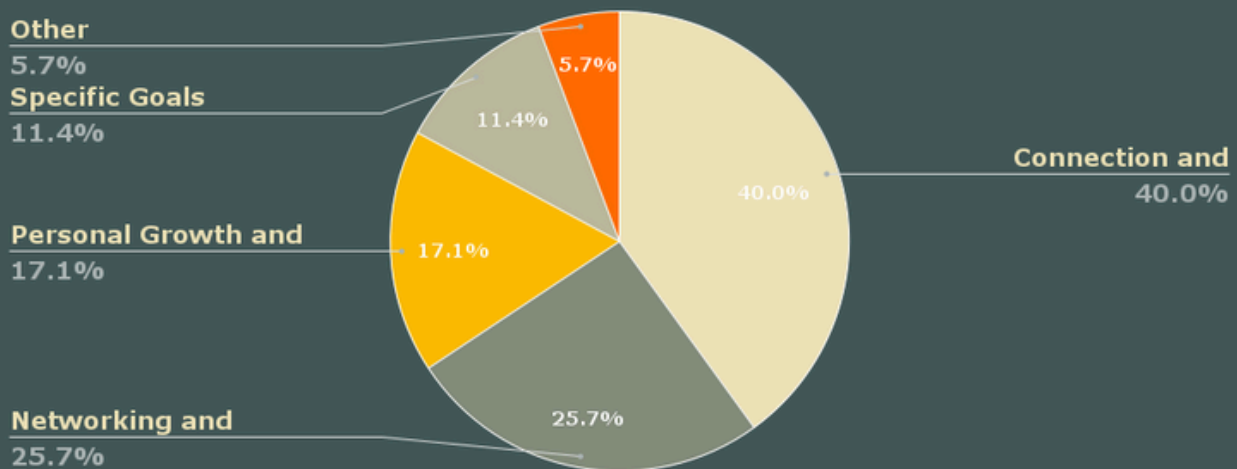
- Recognition of WL such as name tags or accreditations with names
- Clarifying expectations and providing clear guidelines for workshop holders.
- Implementing a clear and effective feedback system for workshop holders.
- Providing more opportunities for workshop holders to connect and network with each other.



Delegates

- Most of the Delegates found the event a great opportunity to connect with other GEN Europe members and learn about ecovillage projects.
- Some delegates felt that the event could have been more focused on ecovillage development, but overall, they appreciated the diversity of topics.
- Some respondents felt that there was not enough time for meaningful connections, and that the event was too focused on presentations and workshops.
- Some respondents felt that the Gathering could benefit from more structured activities for those who already know the network, while others suggested more space for silence and relaxation.

WHY DID YOU ATTEND THE GATHERING?



- Some suggested that the Gathering could benefit from more consideration for diverse needs and perspectives, including those of elderly and disabled participants.
- Respondents suggested more accessibility and inclusion for people with limited financial means and from diverse backgrounds.



Dream & Pollinators Team / ESC Team Volunteering

Participants have shared their honest opinions, including both positive and negative experiences.

- Many respondents emphasized the **importance of clear communication, expectations, and plans before and during the Gathering.**
- Participants valued the **teamwork and collaboration** aspects of the experience, but some felt that the division between Dream Team and Pollinators created unnecessary separation.
- The Gathering was seen as a valuable opportunity for **personal growth, learning, and networking**, with many respondents expressing gratitude for the experience.
- Some respondents mentioned **logistical challenges**, such as time management, boundaries, and workload, which affected their experience.

How well do you think this experience prepared you for future involvement in the ecovillage movement?



“

Knowing that my contributions were appreciated made those experiences particularly rewarding. It motivated me to put in my best effort and reinforced my belief in my abilities. Those moments not only boosted my confidence but also made me feel more engaged and connected to the team's success.

Pollinators Team , ESC 2024

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“

“I learned a lot about community living and groups dynamics. Non violent communication tools, holding spaces, manage of conflicts, setting guidelines and boundaries, how to say no. And since i participate holding the space for collective governance and Tamera's workshops I learned a lot about Collective governance (being a focalizer, sociocracy and holocracy) as for Love and Sexuality topics in community.

Dream Team , ESC, 2024

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STAFF AND PROGRAMME COORDINATORS FEEDBACK



4.0 Staff feedback

MEMBERSHIP & MEET THE ECOVILLAGES

Strengths: The concept was highly valued by attendees, meeting a core interest in connecting with ecovillages.

Challenges: Noise levels hindered effective communication. The condensed session limited ecovillage networking.

Proposals: Consider spreading MTE over multiple days or by region to improve interaction and reduce noise. Explore setting up networking spaces in different areas organized by geographic region.

PROJECTS & PROJECTS MARKET

Strengths: Visually engaging setup with well-prepared materials. Engaging for attendees when project representatives were available.

Challenges: Early-stage projects lacked depth in presentation. Placement of stalls in high-traffic areas detracted from meaningful engagement.

Proposals: Dedicate space in the GEN Booth for permanent project displays. Allocate a dedicated budget for shipping and printing project materials, and improve stall positioning for better attendee interaction.



REGISTRATIONS

Strengths: The use of CiviCRM simplified registration and membership management. Increase in individual members noted as positive.

Challenges: Complex registration flow with multiple forms; issues with auto-renewal and PayPal integration; device-related access problems; lack of checking tickets at registration desk.

Proposals: Add registration improvements, including less steps, detailed documentation and specific registration checkpoints at reception.

COMMUNICATIONS + WEBSITE

Strengths

- The new Instagram account for the Gathering and META ads garnered significant engagement
- First time having European Ecovillage Gathering merchandise and it proved popular

Challenges

- Website usability concerns, particularly with layout and theme
- Communication and collaboration with Angsbacka's comms team were problematic
- Sourcing ethical and eco-friendly merch was challenging

Proposals

- Transition to a Kadence theme for a more user-friendly website
- Start ad campaigns earlier, incorporate Meta Pixel for better tracking, and explore additional ad platforms like Google Ads
- Set clear expectations with hosts in pre-event agreements



GEN BOOTH

Strengths: Comfortable and informative space, well-utilized for networking and merchandise display.

Challenges:

- Limited table availability and uneven shift distribution among booth staff
- Uneven shifts between staff
- Not enough advertising and promotion of the booth

Proposals:

- Increase tables and comfortable seating, incorporate GEN Europe Stripe QR for donations, and make more booth announcements during Morning Circle.
- Adjust rota shifts based on availability to ensure equitable workload distribution

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Strengths:

- Three-day GA format proved effective. Quality sound and camera setup improved the hybrid meeting experience.

Challenges:

- Annual sociocratic elections demand significant time and energy.

Proposals:

- Maintain three-day GA, consider adding a fourth day for deep-dives into strategic topics.
- Evaluate a biannual election cycle for council members to promote continuity and reduce onboarding demands.



GENERAL FEEDBACK

Program Management: Advance planning and early program lock-in needed for workshop logistics. Round tables suggested over keynote speeches for a more diverse perspective.

MC Styles: Integrate varied styles of presentation to cater to a wider audience.

Hosts and Planning: Address members' hesitance to host future gatherings due to increasing event scale.



4.1 Programme Coordinators

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Strengths:

- The designated children's area near the stage and an opening ceremony acknowledgment made families feel included

Challenges

- The program lacked practical and nature-focused workshops like bushcraft or building activities
- Food lines were long

Proposals

- At check-in, give parents a concise info sheet on the children's program, key expectations, and contact info
- Incorporate more hands-on, practical workshops
- Add a registration form question on the number of children to help with planning



EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

Strenghts

- Starting meetings early allowed for thorough planning, role distribution, and establishing a collaborative relationship between the EMO and Gathering teams
- Dedicated safe spaces, allowed for individual emotional support and quiet areas.

Challanges

- Communication with the ÄB emotional support team faced issues, with unclear roles and expectations leading to misunderstandings and friction
- The EMO team received unclear information about supporting potentially triggering workshops, stretching their resources

Proposal

- If merging EMO teams, clearly outline responsibilities and protocols well in advance, ensuring unity and mutual support between teams.
- Establish a “cozy corner” with mattresses at keynote sessions and ceremonies on the front side, closer to stage, allowing individuals needing support a place to decompress and for EMO team to have a clear overview the crowd
- Consider creating reusable, highly visible badges (bright-colored) for easy identification

HOUSEBAND

Improvements

- Share daily scripts in advance, set boundaries for equipment, and organize pre-gathering meetings with HB, Imaginal, and MCs
- Have someone from the GEN movement be more involved with the HB (Ricardo song was great, more of that)
- Purposeful music transitions can deepen engagement, enhance ceremony flow, and better connect participants to keynote themes.



COMMUNITY RESOURCING CIRCLE (CRC)

Strengths

- Strong rapport with applicants was fostered through consistent and clear communication, creating a supportive environment
- The CRC's setup, including stage design and dynamic resourcing session after presentations, worked well

Challenges

- Many participants were unfamiliar with the CRC and its purpose, limiting attendance and interest
- Minimal presence from GEN staff, council members, and ESCs made the CRC feel isolated from the core gathering activities

Improvements

- Promote the CRC earlier in the program and hold it in the first half of the event when participants are more energized
- Add brief descriptions of the CRC in the program in info gallery
- Encourage GEN staff and council attendance to elevate CRC's priority within the gathering

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Improvements

- Harder topics need to be addressed more firmly with all involved in the gathering
- Signed agreements with keynote speakers, to avoid the kind of confusion that happened around the fee and VAT this year
- Assign a designated support person for keynotes to provide ongoing guidance
- Offer a panel/fishbowl where all keynotes can share their perspectives collectively



EXPO

Strengths

- Reliable assistance from GEN and the Angsbacka team during challenging moments.
- Introduced new members to the tech working group, fostering ongoing involvement

Challenges

- The EXPO placement wasn't visible and saw limited attendance (~30 visitors), faced difficulties attracting exhibitors
- Appropriate technology remains a low-priority topic for many in the movement.

Improvements

- A more accessible location within the event can increase visibility and attendance
- Combining EXPO with other program elements (e.g., arts, crafts) may increase appeal, especially for those less interested in tech
- Clear communication with ESCs about expectations, roles, and schedules is essential for smooth operations

IMAGINAL

Strengths

- Joining morning sessions with keynote speakers created alignment and an understanding of the event's "field" for that day
- Imaginal's role in interpreting keynotes through pantomime enhanced attendee engagement and understanding, highlighting the value of multi-sensory facilitation

Challenges

- Imaginal members' commitments to their communities limited their availability for online meetings in the weeks before the event
- Some logistical details (like available instruments) were not shared in advance, causing minor complications

Improvements

- Coordinate meeting schedules earlier, considering Imaginal members' availability
- Share lists of onsite instruments to avoid unnecessary packing

“

- “The participants were interested, engaged and engaging. I felt a lot of love and gratitude from the participants.”
Workshop Holder

- “To feel that I am part of this beautiful family. To feel the love in the GEN family and that I am not alone.” *Delegate*

- “I met amazing people and have some new friendships. I went through some personal process. And I fell in love with GEN Europe (even more than before)” *Participant*

- “I took so much with me. First I take with me the feeling that I am not alone and that there are some many people at the same path. What else I take with me is a lot of insights about relationships and free love (which I haven't expected in advance) and also some indigenous views.” *Delegate*

- “The most impactful moment during the Gathering was when I realized how many like-minded people were around me, all working towards similar goals. It was a powerful feeling to see that we shared the same values and visions. That sense of community made me feel more connected and reassured that positive change is possible when people come together. It wasn't just the work we did, but the collective mindset that left a lasting impact on me. This realization has inspired me to keep striving for what I believe in.” *Pollinators Team , ESC 2024*

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KEY LEARNINGS FROM EVENT MANAGERS

5.0 KEY LEARNINGS

- Participants highly valued spaces dedicated to **networking and spontaneous conversations** throughout the gathering and would like more such areas.
- Meet the ecovillages was informative but too overwhelming for both participants and presenters
- **The program felt overwhelming** to many due to the high number of concurrent workshop streams at the same time.
- **Workshop leaders** appreciated the platform but felt that **clearer recognition** would enhance connection and interaction with participants.
- The workshops were generally highly appreciated and good quality
- ESC volunteers noted that **pre-event communication** about roles and responsibilities could be clearer, with an early **on-site team formation** meeting to clarify tasks.
- **Programme volunteers** are putting in a lot of work to make their area run smoothly, there is a need of **higher recognition or financial support**
- **Sharing Groups** were very appreciated
- Children's programme and **inclusion of children was highly encouraged**
- Level of **loud music every night** and DJ sets were overwhelming to many participants
- Opening and closing **ceremonies** were appreciated but **too long, too "spiritual"**
- Incorporate more **knowledge from the lands** where we are gathering
- The EMO team is highly needed!
- CRC needs more dedication

5.1 FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Event Structure and Flow

- Simplify the program by **reducing the number of concurrent workshops** at the same time
- **Balance workshops across the day**, with practical, **hands-on sessions** in the morning and lighter activities in the afternoon.
- Consider offering more **in-depth workshops** or sessions on specific topics, rather than a large number of shorter workshops.
- **Improve evening celebrations** by incorporating quieter, **acoustic, live music** limiting noise in sleeping areas, and reducing late-night DJ music (only for open/close ceremony DJs after concerts).

Support and Recognition for Contributors

- Provide **badges or name tags for workshop leaders** to increase visibility, appreciation, and ease of participant connection.
- **Clarify communication and task details for ESC** volunteers, establishing roles and teams on the second day of on-site meetings for smoother coordination.

Inclusivity and Conflict Facilitation:

- A need for **improved handling of polarising or heavy topics**, with more structured spaces for open conversations and **conflict resolution**.
- Participants desired more **freedom from structured language norms**, allowing for natural expression without enforced terminology.

5.2. ALIGNMENT WITH GEN'S VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

More Inclusivity and Open Dialogues

- Provide more welcoming spaces that facilitate **open, respectful conversations on challenging topics**, with tools like **fishbowls, fireside chats and panel discussions**, honoring diverse perspectives and promoting community unity.

Practical Knowledge Sharing

- Focus on **practical workshops that strengthen connections to nature and sustainable living**, reinforcing GEN's values of ecological and social sustainability.

Fostering Community Bonds

- Encourage deeper community connection by balancing structured program time with dedicated spaces for **organic interactions and networking, enhancing participant engagement and community-building**.
- **More intergenerational storytelling and connections around the fire**

EUROPEAN EC GATHERING ANGSBACKA ECOVILLAGE

Thank You!



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