

GREENER EU

Integrated Development Network Design - Europe

D1 Planning report



**Co-funded by
the European Union**



This project is developed under the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2: Partnerships for Cooperation, ADULT EDUCATION SMALL-SCALE PARTNERSHIP – KA210, with AGREEMENT NUMBER: 2021-2-PT01-KA210-ADU-000049313, Project Title “Integrated Development Network Design - Europe”, and Project Acronym “GREENER-EU” (inteGRatEd dEvelopment NETwoRk design - EUrope).

The sole responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the authors. It does not necessarily represent the opinion of the European Union. Neither the Erasmus+ Agencies nor the European Commission are responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Deliverable N.	D1
Activity	A3
Dissemination Level	Public
Due Date	28 February 2023
Submission Date	28 February 2023

Author(s)

Partner	Name	Email
ZIRAK	Filippo Basso	f.basso@zirak.it
AMPT	Fernanda Koch	f.koch@anandakalyani.org
PUDK	Robert Steven Green	dadamp@prout-global.org

Versions

Version	Date	Released by	Comments
0.1	15 May 22	Fernanda Koch	Initial version
0.2	1 Nov 22	Fernanda Koch	Added: Reasons list
0.3	1 Dec 22	Fernanda Koch	Added: Strands & WG
0.4	1 Feb 23	Fernanda Koch	Added: Dissemination & minor sections
0.5	5 Feb 23	Filippo Basso	Added: Digital Platform
1.0	15 Feb 23	Robert Steven Green	Added PUDK sections
1.1	28 Feb 23	Robert Steven Green	Final review

- Gender-proofing last check: 28/02/2023
- Inclusion-proofing last check: 28/02/2023

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	6
AMPT Responsibilities.....	6
Sharing the Needs.....	6
Diagnosis of Difficulties.....	7
Functionality of the Network.....	7
Development of the Digital Platform.....	8
PUDK Responsibilities.....	8
Education Networks.....	9
Collaborative Spaces.....	10
Methodologies.....	11
Dissemination.....	12
ZK Responsibilities.....	12
Reasons List.....	14
Increased Access.....	14
Increased Efficiency.....	15
Multiplier effect.....	16
Support between MUs.....	18
Needs and Challenges.....	21
Strands.....	22
Communication Strand.....	22
• MUN Communication WG.....	22
• MUN Information Technology WG.....	22
Coordinated Cooperation Strand.....	22
• MUN Financial Sustainability WG:.....	22
Education Strand.....	23
• MUN Education WG.....	23
Safety and Security Strand.....	23
• MUN Safety and Security WG.....	23
Research Strand.....	24
• MUN Research WG.....	24
Coordination WG.....	25
Digital Platform.....	26
Dissemination Channels Statistics.....	27
Facebook.....	27
Others.....	29

Introduction

This document summarises and clarifies the planning strategies for a future European Master Unit Network (EMUN), with the identification of obstacles, objectives, methodologies and evaluation mechanisms. This is known as deliverable D1, and represents the first step in the structure of a formal network of Master Units (MU), based on the experience and characteristics of two MUs (Portugal and Denmark based).

This planning document is divided into 2 main focus areas, with responsibilities of AMPT and PUDK teams, with a supporting function from the ZK team.

AMPT Responsibilities	PUDK Responsibilities	ZK Responsibilities
1) share the needs	5) education networks	9) platform requirements
2) difficulties diagnosis	6) collaborative spaces	10) platform architecture
3) network functionalities	7) methodologies	
4) digital platform	8) dissemination	

AMPT Responsibilities

Sharing the Needs

AMPT is responsible for actively sharing the needs of the participating Master Units (MUs) within the GREENER-EU project. This involves identifying and articulating the specific requirements, challenges, and priorities of the MUs involved through monthly meetings or one-to-one discussions, conducted in the context of environmental sustainability and socio-economic development within an educational framework. By effectively communicating and regularly iterating on the importance of these needs, AMPT ensures that the project activities and outcomes are aligned with the current concerns and objectives of the individual MUs. This process takes into account various factors, including the diverse nature of the MUs, such as their geographical location, level of establishment, and areas of focus (e.g., environment, art and culture, societal issues). Through these efforts, AMPT facilitates a collaborative approach that addresses the unique needs of each MU while contributing to the overarching goals of the GREENER-EU project.

This aspect of the process involved compiling a comprehensive list of "Reasons" tailored to each individual MU, gathering relevant materials to contextualise the specific scenarios, and organising and categorising the collected reasons into four broad categories. This iterative

process encompassed sharing, collecting, and classifying the information to ensure that the needs and priorities of each MU, collected at different times and with MUs with different characteristics, were accurately represented and addressed.

Diagnosis of Difficulties

AMPT undertook a thorough diagnosis of the challenges encountered by the participating MUs, aiming to understand the barriers, constraints, and recurring challenges hindering their efforts in promoting sustainable practices and community engagement. This involved a systematic assessment of the obstacles faced by MUs, considering factors such as resource limitations, institutional constraints, and socio-cultural dynamics. Through extensive analysis and consultation with other European MUs, AMPT and the participants to the MUN monthly meetings gained valuable insights into the underlying causes of these difficulties. These insights not only inform the strategic focus of the MUN but will also guide the activities of individual MUs in addressing their specific challenges.

It became evident that many of the identified needs were common-themes shared among multiple MUs. To address these needs effectively, AMPT emphasises the importance of identifying and focusing on a few key shared needs and providing practical solutions or processes to address them. By doing so, the network can demonstrate its capacity to address real pressing challenges, fostering a sense of trust and belonging among its members. Some of these needs directly relate to the educational content provided by the MUs, while others are indirect dependencies that influence the effectiveness of educational initiatives.

One-to-one meetings and monthly gatherings emerged as effective forums for collecting and discussing these difficulties and needs. These meetings provided opportunities for open dialogue and collaborative problem-solving, facilitating the sharing of experiences and best practices among MUs. Additionally, gatherings involving representatives from multiple countries were noticed to offer valuable insights into the diverse challenges faced by MUs across different contexts, enriching the collective understanding of the network's challenges and opportunities.

Functionality of the Network

AMPT plays a crucial role in defining and establishing the functionalities of the network, which encompasses the participating MUs. This includes determining the scope, structure, and objectives of the network, as well as identifying the key activities, methodologies and interactions that will occur among the member MUs. By delineating the network functionalities, AMPT ensures a coherent and efficient operation to promote collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective activities among the MUs.

Moreover, being the network a new reality, were analysed different methodologies and processes to include more MUs, ways to allow wider cooperation between established MUs, checklists and guides for newly created MUs, and periodic identification of shared focus areas.

Additionally, AMPT conducts informal evaluations of the network's annual activities to identify areas for improvement and mitigate any limiting factors that may hinder wider acceptance and the full realisation of the MUN's benefits.

Development of the Digital Platform

AMPT focuses then on the requirements and architecture of the digital platform that will serve as one of the primary tools for communication, collaboration, and resource sharing among the MUs. This involves designing and configuring the digital platform to meet the specific needs and requirements of the participating MUs, as identified through the needs assessment and diagnosis process. AMPT ensures that the digital platform is user-friendly, accessible, and equipped with the necessary features and functionalities to support the activities and objectives of the GREENER-EU project. Additionally, AMPT oversees the ongoing maintenance, updates, and improvements of the digital platform to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness throughout the project lifecycle.

A more complete description of the digital platform will be presented in deliverable D2. Therefore, this document will focus solely on analysing its functional aspects, including how it connects to the identified reasons, strands, working group needs and difficulties.

PUDK Responsibilities

Within the GREENER-EU initiative, PUDK assumed a leading role in nurturing collaboration and knowledge exchange within educational networks. This involves cultivating synergies and joint initiatives among participating Master Units (MUs) to enhance the project's educational impact.

During the activity A1 an exchange between participants was made, to share ideas about all the kinds of collaborative spaces that can be activated, and brainstorm collectively about the MUN. In this space were discussed also the methodologies of the network, and proper space was kept about educational processes.

It was created a list of important workshops and training for the MUs staff; it was created a list of offers of training for the general public that lives in the local area near the two MUs (in Portugal and in Denmark), with a possible chronogram that would fit specific necessities of the team of volunteers of the two projects. In both A1 and A2 it was discussed how to become a certified professional training center, the steps, the curriculum and the involvement of a third party to support the process. It was also spoken about the exchange of trainers and facilitators to plan future activities, and the enlargement of the network with activities that are already happening inside the System Change Alliance, the Global Ecovillage Network, the Prout Global, and the Planetary Leadership Training (PLT) initiatives. Several of the MU volunteers already participated in a PLT or a Prout training program.

PUDK hosted a GEN event, participated in several GEN trainings, and AMPT was included in a research project and added to few GEN joint project proposals. Retreats and gatherings in both Portugal and Denmark were planned and executed along the GREENER-EU project, as well as cultural and artistic events, like the Ananda Festival of Bliss, happening every year in Ananda Kalyani.

Education Networks

With a primary focus on fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange within educational networks, PUDK aims to create synergies and facilitate joint initiatives among participating Master Units (MUs), emphasising shared training to achieve knowledge transfer and excellence in specific topics. This involves identifying existing educational networks, both locally and internationally, and exploring opportunities for partnerships and collaborations to enhance the educational impact of the project.

PUDK begins by analysing the existing educational networks surrounding each MU, ranging from local grassroots organisations to national and international associations. This analysis helped to understand the structure, scope, and thematic focus of these initiatives, identifying potential areas for collaboration and synergy. Typically, these organisations or informal groups are active and inspired by the mission of the specific MU, with a shared dedication to specific themes such as education, art and culture, environment, social service, activism, and self-development.

During this process, PUDK and the MUN members have recognized a recurring pattern highlighting the importance of formal organisational structures in sustaining collaboration. Consequently, PUDK explores strategies to bolster and give better structure to these networks, potentially through the establishment of associations, cooperatives, or foundations with a specialised thematic focus. This initiative aims to enhance the networks' capacity to drive impactful change and optimise volunteer efforts, ensuring sustained momentum beyond the initial stages of topic development.

A recurring observation in informal groups of volunteers associated with MUs is the tendency for the same volunteers to engage across multiple groups and topics. While this demonstrates their enthusiasm and proactive nature across various domains, it may lead to dispersed efforts as projects progress. In later stages, more formalised structures supported by dedicated volunteers and sometimes employed experts who commit to specific entities or topics for extended periods can prove to be more efficient and sustainable.

Additionally, PUDK facilitates cross-thematic engagement within and across MUs, encouraging the formation of sub-networks centered on specific topics of interest. By promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge sharing, PUDK seeks to maximise the collective impact of the project and effectively address complex socio-environmental challenges.

Based on the collective expertise of MUN members and external specialists, PUDK leverages diverse methodologies and processes with proven success in identifying and mobilising educational networks. By integrating insights and strategies from initiatives such as the Global

Ecovillage Network (GEN) and Transition Towns Network, PUDK adopts effective approaches for network mapping, engagement, and capacity building tailored to the unique context of the MUN.

Collaborative Spaces

PUDK analysed various opportunities to efficiently establish and utilise collaborative spaces where project participants can converge to share ideas, resources, and best practices. These spaces serve as vital hubs for communication and cooperation among participating Master Units (MUs) and other stakeholders, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

These collaborative spaces encompass various channels and platforms, both physical and virtual, tailored to accommodate different modes of interaction and engagement. Online platforms have been identified as central to this endeavour, providing digital forums for ongoing communication and resource sharing. These platforms enable participants to access project-related materials, engage in discussions, and collaborate on initiatives regardless of geographical constraints. Concurrently, physical meeting venues have been considered as spaces for in-person gatherings, workshops, and retreats, fostering deeper connections and collaborations among project participants.

Thematic virtual communities have been recognized as playing a crucial role in nurturing collaboration, offering dedicated spaces for ongoing dialogue and interaction. Monthly virtual gatherings focused on specific Strands or Working Groups have been proposed and are being structured to provide opportunities for focused discussions and brainstorming sessions, facilitating the alignment of objectives and the exchange of ideas among participants.

Social media platforms have also been identified as significant in creating collaborative spaces, serving as channels for outreach, engagement, and knowledge dissemination. Thematic WhatsApp and Telegram channels have been explored further to enhance communication and collaboration, enabling real-time exchanges and coordination among participants with shared interests or objectives.

Furthermore, collaborative spaces extend beyond project-specific platforms to encompass the physical spaces of the participating MUs, such as Ananda Kalyani in Portugal and Ananda Gaorii in Denmark. These spaces serve as hubs for local activities, workshops, and events, fostering community engagement and collaboration within the project's broader framework.

In essence, these collaborative spaces, both physical and virtual, serve as dynamic environments where participants can connect, collaborate, and innovate, driving the collective progress and impact of the GREENER-EU initiative. In this way the MUN ensures that project participants have ample opportunities to engage, share knowledge, and co-create solutions to complex socio-environmental challenges.

The events hosted in those physical collaborative spaces, like retreats, workshops, trainings, conferences, are numerous, in both Portugal and Denmark, as well as thematic courses, like agroforestry, yoga and self-development, regenerative practices, preparedness and pollinators services. In both locations more physical infrastructures are present in the nearby city (in Portugal, local infrastructures in Paul, in Ourondo, in Covilhã and in Fundão, and national infrastructures in Lisbon, Porto, Azores and few other centres; in Denmark in Copenhagen are present several infrastructures utilised by different teams of volunteers).

Methodologies

PUDK structured, implemented, and refined/adapted various methodologies aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and socio-economic development within the MUN educational context. These methodologies are founded on principles of participatory processes, drawing inspiration from sociocracy and consensus-based decision-making, Proutistic principles and Neohumanistic approaches. In this regard, the developed digital platform (D3) will be utilised to facilitate collaborative decision-making and information sharing among project participants relative to the methodologies and processes that were identified as optimal in specific topics/situations.

One key aspect of PUDK's approach involves the creation of cooperation between MUN-related entities to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange among participating Master Units (MUs) and other stakeholders. By establishing these initiatives, PUDK aims to facilitate the sharing of resources, experiences, and best practices, ultimately enhancing the collective impact of the GREENER-EU initiative.

Furthermore, PUDK focuses on designing in a collaborative way effective and efficient training and processes for volunteers and collaborators associated with MUs. These training programs are tailored to equip participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively contribute to project activities and objectives.

Additionally, PUDK leverages existing educational materials and resources, such as those available through SALTO as well as inside networks like Transition Town Network or the Global Ecovillage Network, to support the implementation of initiatives within MUs. By adapting proven materials and methodologies, the MUN ensures the quality and effectiveness of educational interventions across participating organisations.

A critical component of PUDK's methodology involves the systematic identification of needs and difficulties within the project context. This process is conducted through participatory approaches, allowing project participants to contribute their insights and perspectives. As the project evolves and expands, the MUN remains flexible in its approach, adapting methodologies to suit the changing needs and dynamics of the project.

For face-to-face meetings and gatherings, PUDK identified established methodologies from The Art of Hosting, such as World Café and Open Space, to facilitate meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and problem-solving, as well as “Healthcheck” and “What If”, used successfully in several Transition Town initiatives. These methodologies create inclusive and participatory spaces for project participants to engage in discussions, share ideas, and co-create solutions to complex challenges.

Dissemination

PUDK implemented a heterogeneous dissemination strategy to amplify the reach and impact of the GREENER-EU project and in specific, of the Master Units Network. This strategy leveraged various channels and platforms, physical and virtual, to ensure broad visibility and engagement among relevant stakeholders.

A central component of the dissemination strategy was the ideation of a dedicated MUN website, developed as deliverable D2, providing a hub for project updates, resources, and information.

To facilitate direct communication and engagement, PUDK managed a mailing list and a vibrant **Facebook** group with over 2,300 members, called "[MASTER UNITS AROUND THE WORLD.](#)" This online community serves as a forum for generic discussions, presentations of activities inside or in collaboration with MUs, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among project participants and stakeholders. Furthermore, PUDK kicked-off accounts on the streaming platform **YouTube** to host curated playlists showcasing project-related content, and in the future including MUN webinars, conferences, and informational videos. These resources were made accessible to a global audience, contributing to knowledge dissemination and capacity building. Other platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram were evaluated, but not yet activated at the moment, to be able to focus on the most efficient ones. Regular updates, highlights, and announcements were shared across these channels to foster dialogue and participation.

In addition to online channels, PUDK and AMPT participated in various conferences, webinars, and events to disseminate project outcomes and insights. This included collaboration with organisations such as the Prout Alliance and Prout Global, where project representatives shared perspectives on the Master Unit Network and its role in advancing socio-economic development, as well as other MUs in Europe and around the world.

ZK Responsibilities

ZK team was present to learn about the eight functional responsibilities (Needs, Difficulties, Functionalities, Digital Platform, Education Network, Collaborative Spaces, Methodologies and Dissemination), to learn the dynamics and verify how these components could be better implemented in deliverables D3 (and relative architecture in deliverable D2).

The main tasks related to the deliverable D1 were:

- Collecting the requirements, based on the objectives of the Digital Platform, rephrasing the overarching goals and objectives of the digital platform, to ensure technical alignment with the broader project aims and user needs. This involved clarifying the intended outcomes and functionalities of the platform to guide its development process effectively.
- Collecting and analysing user requirements and feedback, aiming to understand the needs and preferences of the platform's target audience. This process involved engaging with stakeholders and end-users to elicit valuable insights and inform the platform's design and functionality decisions.
- Describing the functionalities and features of the platform, outlining key capabilities such as user authentication, content management, communication tools, and data security measures to ensure comprehensive coverage of user needs and project requirements.
- Evaluating external platforms for potential integration with the (existing or optimal) project's digital infrastructure. This involved researching and evaluating third-party solutions to identify options that align with project goals, technical requirements, and budget constraints.
- Providing detailed descriptions of platform sections and components of the digital platform to guide users in navigating the interface effectively. This included defining the layout, structure, and functionality of each section to facilitate intuitive user interaction and engagement.
- Outlining key features of the internal platform, designed to support collaboration and knowledge sharing among project participants. This included implemented functionalities such as document sharing as well as features integrable in a near future, such as discussion forums, task management, and project tracking to enhance team productivity and communication.
- Establishing initial categories for knowledge base articles, by establishing initial categories for articles and resources. This involved categorising content based on topic areas, strands, working groups, and user needs to facilitate easy access and retrieval of information for different kinds of platform users.
- Assessing technical specifications and requirements for the digital platform, including content management systems, hosting providers, plugins, themes, and integration capabilities. This involved evaluating various options to ensure compatibility, scalability, and performance optimization in line with project objectives.

Reasons List

As one of the initial steps, the Project Team recognized the importance of categorising and understanding the diverse motivations behind establishing the European Master Units Network in Europe (EMUN).

The "Reasons List" was compiled through online monthly meetings among partners and one-to-one interviews with representatives from various Mater Units. The primary objective was to identify the most significant reasons that could drive the participation in the network and share them with all interested Mater Units to broaden perspectives and foster a comprehensive understanding of the network's potential.

Unlike the individual needs or difficulties faced by each Mater Unit, the "Reasons List" primarily highlights the opportunities that such a network can offer. A PDF representation of this list is available for download on the website: www.masterunits.net/reasons/.

Category	Internal/ External	Examples
		<p>The organisations, when part of a network, has the capacity to access privileged information in a regular way. We highlighted several ways that a MU can benefit from this increased access. It's possible to gather and structure better information, share the expertise of different MUs that in the years focused more in one or another department.</p> <p>The access to news from other MUs is a great source of inspiration and an engine to cooperate more strictly, not to forget the access to more opportunities, funds, grants, and financial resources that can be more difficult to obtain as an individual MU.</p>
R1.1 Structured information	Int/ Ext	Generic knowledge and structured information collected between MUs and AM departments (such as dry toilets plans and experience, emergency Storage manuals, ...), or knowledge and useful information collected from other institutions and then

structured for optimal EMUN usage.

Category	Internal/ External	Examples
R1.2 Expertise	Int/ Ext	Good practices, specialised departmental topics. Encyclopaedia of MUs' mistakes.
R1.3 MUs news	Internal	Regular flow of good work and possible issues in MU surroundings, and other information that can be aggregated for easier access
R1.4 Opportunities and financial	Internal	Sharing of opportunities for project proposals, resource donors, joint projects where the sharing will bring a WIN-WIN benefit to MUN members (e.g.Erasmus+ or grant from Foundations)

Increased Efficiency

The presence of a support network allows also some higher degree of efficiency, for the MUs that cooperate more strictly. While cooperating, MUs can obtain some degree of specialisation, some duplicated efforts can be reduced, and the individual MUs can leverage on the strengths of the network. It's easier to access larger institutions, influence policies and be listened to. The same happens with volunteers that can know and visit more MUs, other NGOs, networks of other organisations, and in general other stakeholders, when speaking to a larger network.

More opportunities are available, such as participating in events or decision making bodies where the single MU doesn't have yet the strength to participate. Also, sharing the best practices, the lessons learned and mistakes are very valuable for each MU.

Category	Internal/ External	Examples
R2.1 Specialisation	Internal	Allowing for some specialisation in the network, some MUs will develop more departments or functions and share the outcome - such as: fundraising, preparedness, network communication.
R2.2 Reduce duplication of efforts	Internal	E.g., MU research in areas such as preparedness, ideal farming and microvita, or education/pracar material and strategies, etc.
R2.3 Leveraging network strengths	Internal	The group is often stronger than any individual component
R2.4 Linkage with bigger institutions	Internal	As a network, capacity to reach bigger institutions, influence policies, increase MU visibility and strength.
R2.5 Linkage with volunteers, interested in NGOs, networks	Internal	As a network, capacity to reach volunteers MU work, and a point of contact for other moralists, organisations, networks.
R2.6 Shared access to opportunities	Internal	Participation to events, decision-making bodies or opportunities where single members has difficulty to MUN and MUs already accessing can represent a larger network.
R2.7 Lessons learned and best	Int/ Ext	Sharing KSA, in order not to reinvent the wheel each Practices time

Multiplier effect

Acting inside a network like MUN allow some sort of multiplication of the results of the daily efforts of each MU. Being exposed to other approaches, it's likely that the vision of each MU can enlarge, the impact of action of one MU are easier to be extended to other countries, while it's possible to realise to joint actions, using synergies inside MUN. When doing service work, each MU can improve their response time and have a bigger awareness of some problems, due to the

Category	Internal/ External	Examples
		network dynamics. It's possible to support new and smaller MUs, while stronger MUs can cooperate better, and always including some smaller MU to allow their growth. In a network there is increased credibility of the work done by individual MUs, and the public can access good quality information, thus raising awareness of the public about MUs.
R3.1 Enlarging the vision	Internal	Exposed to other approaches, individual MUs can enlarge their vision, methodologies and approaches
R3.2 Increased impact	Int/ Ext	Impact can be extended partially to other MUs, directly or indirectly
R3.3 Joint synergic	Int/ Ext	Several joint actions, from fundraising to projects, also including third parties, using synergic complementarities
R3.4 Raise awareness and quicker	Int/ Ext	In case of emergencies, a network can provide response time methods for quicker response time and larger awareness raising capacity
R3.5 Support smaller MUs	Internal	Including smaller MUs in bigger joint projects, with mentoring or knowledge-base, will help them to grow and establish themselves
R3.6 Better cooperation between can stronger capacity	Internal	MUs with stronger capacity in one department join the efforts for a better cooperation in projects execution, proposal and dissemination of results stronger MUs
R3.7 Increased credibility	External	The capacity of the network can increase credibility to smaller MUs, and validate MU access to larger entities/public bodies
R3.8 Capacity building	Internal	Best practices sharing, such as volunteers management, financial backup support, access to fundings and grants, burnout and

Category	Internal/ External	Examples
R3.9 Public information and	External	<p>staff stress management, energy, water, resources</p> <p>Enhance the quality and the detail of information awareness about MUs and awareness that public has about MUs</p>

Support between MUs

One of the most important traits of MUN, the reciprocal support and solidarity between different MUs is enhanced, having more clear understanding of each other needs and available resources. It is easier to provide tailored support, in terms of knowledge, trainings, mentoring on specific topics where one MU has deeper experience. It's possible to support in a more structured way in issues that are transversal, or common to more than one MU. Again, the support to smaller MUs is very important for their success, but in general an overall improvement of resilience is expected for all MUs. Departments with less capacity can have their voice better heard, and working together, in projects and concrete issues, is an optimal way to establish a common understanding and reducing larger conflicts. It can help to mitigate risks, and can help more isolated MUs to get part of the bigger picture.

R4.1 Shared needs	Int/ Ext	Needs can be explicit and visible, some also to outside the MUN, so that other entities can help directly the interested MU
R4.2 Shared resources	Int/ Ext	Resources available in a MU can be shared, some also to outside the MUN (local community), so that other MUs can know where to ask for support

Category	Internal/ External	Examples
R4.3 Tailored knowledge-base & mentoring	Int/ Ext	More experienced MUs or departments can support directly with tailored documents or mentoring new projects (can be partially open to other organisations)
R4.4 Assistance to transversal issues	Internal	Reciprocal assistance in case of specific topics (like new policies in a continent) that can be similar in larger geographical areas
R4.5 Support smaller MUs	Internal	Direct support, focused on smaller MUs, to enable an easier kickoff phase
R4.6 Resilience improvement	Internal	Indirectly, every active member of MUN will increase its resilience and response capacity
R4.7 Contributions of	Internal	Smaller departments can have their voice better underrepresented departments heard when joining together
R4.8 Conflict prevention measure	Internal	Networks and joint projects are optimal ways to establish a common ground leading to a reduction of larger conflicts
R4.9 Risk Mitigation	Internal	Networks can help to establish quicker and more effective mitigation measures
R4.10 Reduced isolation	Internal	Being part of MUN can help isolated MUs to get part of the bigger picture

In more generic terms, joining a Master Unit (MU) network unlocks a wealth of benefits for participating units. Internally, the network facilitates seamless knowledge flow and expertise exchange, empowering MUs to elevate their understanding and impact. Externally, it connects MUs to relevant news and grant opportunities, fostering collaboration and securing resources.

Furthermore, the network promotes efficiency through specialisation and shared strengths. MUs can focus on their areas of expertise while leveraging the network's collective capabilities, reducing duplication and optimising their efforts. This collaboration strengthens the entire

network, granting larger institutions greater outreach and influence over policy and decision-making.

Beyond improved efficiency, the network amplifies the impact of individual MUs. Exposure to diverse approaches sparks innovation and expands perspectives, leading to more impactful individual and collaborative actions. The network also plays a crucial role in raising awareness and supporting smaller MUs, fostering cooperation, and building collective credibility and capacity.

The network fosters a spirit of mutual support and solidarity among MUs. Collaborative knowledge sharing, tailored assistance, and mentorship empower individual units to thrive. By tackling common challenges collectively, the network enhances resilience, mitigates risks, and reduces conflicts, ultimately leading to a stronger and more effective community of MUs.

These points were elaborated and adapted to the Mater Units network based on a significant USAID report by Claudia Liebler and Marisa Ferri, with title "**NGO Networks: Building Capacity in a Changing World**" - *A Study Supported by Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation*. This thorough study provided a foundation by offering a state-of-the-art description of generic reasons applicable to NGO networks in a broader context. Subsequently, it was tailored to the Mater Units Network (MUN) scenario, omitting minor points and expanding on relevant ones. This process aimed to provide examples that could broaden each MU's understanding of the potential opportunities within the network.

Needs and Challenges

Following the exploration of the broader and more “visionary” perspectives outlined in the “Reasons List,” individual Master Units (MUs) engaged in monthly meetings or one-on-one discussions, where they were asked to address more specific, time-sensitive inquiries: “What are the primary needs and challenges of your Master Unit?”

With guidance from expert facilitators, MUs were supported to move beyond their conceptualizations of how a network could support them and articulate the tangible difficulties that could impede or diminish the impact of their projects. In general, the Challenges identified were then mirrored to a specific Need, so here are presented only the “Needs” as an important part of the MUN process.

Through collaborative discussions, the following list of common and recurring needs emerged:

- N1. Enhanced **collaboration** between projects to foster **financial stability**, facilitate knowledge exchange, improve efficiency, and foster innovative solutions.
- N2. Improved **communication** between projects to foster inspiration, facilitate knowledge transfer, exchange volunteers, and cultivate a sense of belonging to a larger project.
- N3. Streamlined **volunteer** processes encompassing opportunities dissemination, remote training, on-site support, trainer training, weighted evaluations, and other contemporary practices.
- N4. Alignment of **educational** curricula and **research** efforts across European MUs to ensure coherence, uphold higher standards, and cultivate specific areas of excellence within the network.
- N5. Sharing of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to **preparedness** and **safety and security** topics to systematically organise available resources and training in a scientific and rational manner.

Strands

Based on the identified Reasons, Challenges and Needs, the European MUN defined his strategic Strands, thematic areas or focus points. These Strands serve as the foundational pillars around which the network organises its activities, initiatives, and collaborations. They represent key thematic domains or priorities that guide the MUN's efforts towards addressing common challenges and advancing shared goals.

The priority Strands defined up to now, are five:

Communication Strand

The Communication Strand acts as a bridge for information exchange between Mater Units, partners, the general public, and community networks, enhancing the establishment, visibility, and impact of Mater Units.

It facilitates the dissemination of information pertaining to Mater Units, such as: volunteering opportunities, educational events, third sector involvement, and work prospects.

This Strand comprises two Working Groups:

- **MUN Communication WG**

This group focuses on enhancing communication aspects within the network, ensuring effective dissemination of information and fostering engagement among Mater Units and stakeholders.

- **MUN Information Technology WG**

Dedicated to IT infrastructure, knowledge management, and process optimization, this group leverages technology to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Communication Strand.

Coordinated Cooperation Strand

The Coordinated Cooperation Strand serves as an efficient channel for collective growth through collaboration at every level of joint projects, as well as the sharing of best practices between MUs.

It aims to enhance internal integration among Mater Units, fostering synergy and cohesion within the network, under the direction of the key Proutistic concept called "*coordinated cooperation*".

This Strand encompasses the following Working Group:

- **MUN Financial Sustainability WG:**

This group focuses on ensuring the financial sustainability of Mater Units by exploring funding opportunities, developing fundraising strategies, and promoting financial best practices across the network.

Education Strand

The Education Strand aims to strengthen the tools and skills necessary for the physical, mental, and spiritual development of humanity and all beings.

It aims to facilitate and provide MUs with structured comprehensive education in areas such as: environmental sustainability, agriculture, preparedness, sustainability practices, art, health, and spirituality.

This Strand includes the following Working Group:

- **MUN Education WG**

This group focuses on developing and implementing educational initiatives and resources to support the professional development and capacity building of Mater Units and their members. It provides training resources, including online courses, workshops, and educational materials, to enhance skills and knowledge in relevant areas. Additionally, the Education WG facilitates knowledge sharing among Mater Units by providing platforms for sharing best practices, lessons learned, and educational materials on various topics relevant to their work and mission.

Safety and Security Strand

This Strand of critical importance for the MUN focuses on ensuring the well-being and protection of Mater Units and their communities, local and bioregional area particularly in times of emergencies or crisis situations.

The Safety and Security Strand encompasses various initiatives and resources aimed at enhancing preparedness and response in the face of potential threats or hazards, as well as to provide comprehensive support and guidance to Mater Units in navigating safety and security challenges effectively.

This Strand includes the following Working Group:

- **MUN Safety and Security WG**

Three key components of this Strand were identified as:

Emergency Response Plans: The MUN offers resources and tools for Mater Units to develop and implement emergency response plans and protocols. These plans are designed to ensure swift and coordinated action in response to emergencies, safeguarding the safety and well-being of Mater Units and their communities.

Safety Guidelines: Mater Units have access to safety guidelines, protocols, and resources to address safety and security concerns proactively. These resources help MUs identify potential risks and implement measures to mitigate them, promoting a safe and secure environment for all stakeholders.

Crisis Communication: Effective communication is essential during emergencies or crisis situations. The MUN provides communication channels and resources for crisis communication, enabling Mater Units to disseminate important information, updates, and instructions to and through their communities. By facilitating timely and accurate communication, MUs can enhance preparedness and response efforts, ensuring the safety and well-being of all involved.

Research Strand

The Research Strand, although categorised as a minor strand within the MUN, has been integrated into the network's foundational pillars since its inception; while not as urgent as other strands, the Research Strand offers immense potential benefits that contribute to the long-term plan, innovation and advancement of MUs and their initiatives.

This Strand includes the following Working Group:

- [MUN Research WG](#)

Three key components of this Strand were identified as:

Knowledge Generation: Research activities enable Mater Units to generate new knowledge, insights, and solutions to address complex challenges and opportunities in areas such as sustainability, community development, and environmental conservation. By conducting research, Mater Units can deepen their understanding of relevant issues, inform decision-making processes, and contribute to the collective knowledge base of the network, both in terms of scientific, technological, and social advancements.

Innovation and Improvement: The Research Strand fosters a culture of innovation and continuous improvement within Mater Units. Through research-driven initiatives, Mater Units can identify innovative approaches, technologies, and practices that enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. Research also encourages experimentation and adaptation, empowering Mater Units to evolve and respond effectively to changing circumstances and emerging needs.

Capacity Building: Engaging in research activities strengthens the capacity of MUs and their members by providing opportunities for skill development, learning, and professional growth. Research projects often involve collaboration, critical thinking, data analysis, and problem-solving skills, which are essential for building resilient and adaptive organisations. Additionally, research findings and insights can be shared within the network, facilitating peer learning and knowledge exchange.

Coordination WG

It was created from the beginning a working group that was not included in any functional Strands, the “Coordination WG”, serving as a central hub for facilitating strategic coordination and alignment across various activities within the European MUN, providing a way to support the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the network's operations.

Here are some key areas of focus for the Coordination WG:

Strategic Planning and Coordination: Develop and implement strategic plans and action agendas to guide the activities and priorities of the network. This involves coordinating with member MUs to identify strategic objectives, set priorities, and allocate resources effectively to achieve collective goals.

Strategic Alliances and Coalitions: Forge strategic alliances and coalitions with like-minded organisations and networks to amplify advocacy efforts, share resources, and achieve common goals on regional, national, and international levels. Foster collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders from diverse sectors, including academia, media, and philanthropy, to leverage complementary expertise and resources for mutual benefit

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): Ensure that the network promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in its policies, practices, and decision-making processes. This includes implementing measures to address systemic barriers and promote equal opportunities for participation and representation among member MUs.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact and effectiveness of network activities and initiatives. This includes defining performance indicators, collecting data, and conducting assessments to measure progress and outcomes.

Conflict Resolution and Mediation: Provide support and assistance in resolving conflicts and disputes that may arise within the network. This includes facilitating dialogue, mediation, and conflict resolution processes to address disagreements and maintain harmonious relationships among member MUs.

Digital Platform

The digital platform serves as the technological backbone of the MUN, providing a centralised hub for collaboration, communication, dissemination, outreach and knowledge management. It will be meticulously designed with an architecture that can effectively capture and address the eight functional responsibilities identified by the MUN: Needs, Difficulties, Functionalities, Digital Platform, Education Network, Collaborative Spaces, Methodologies, and Dissemination.

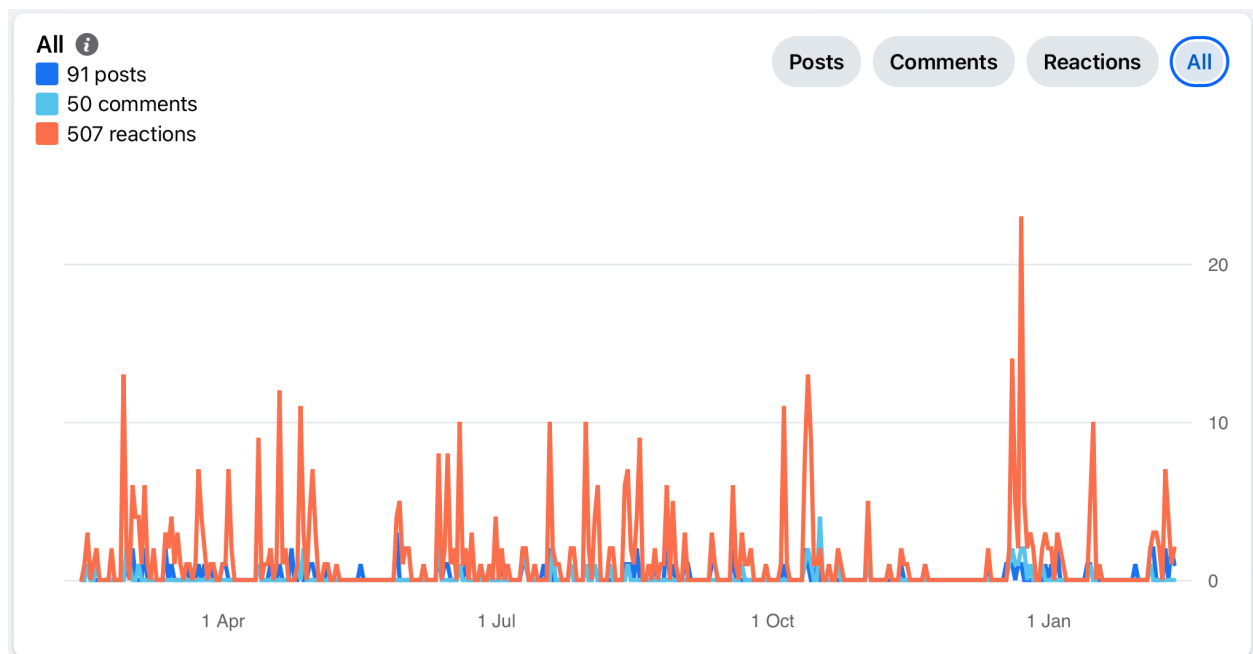
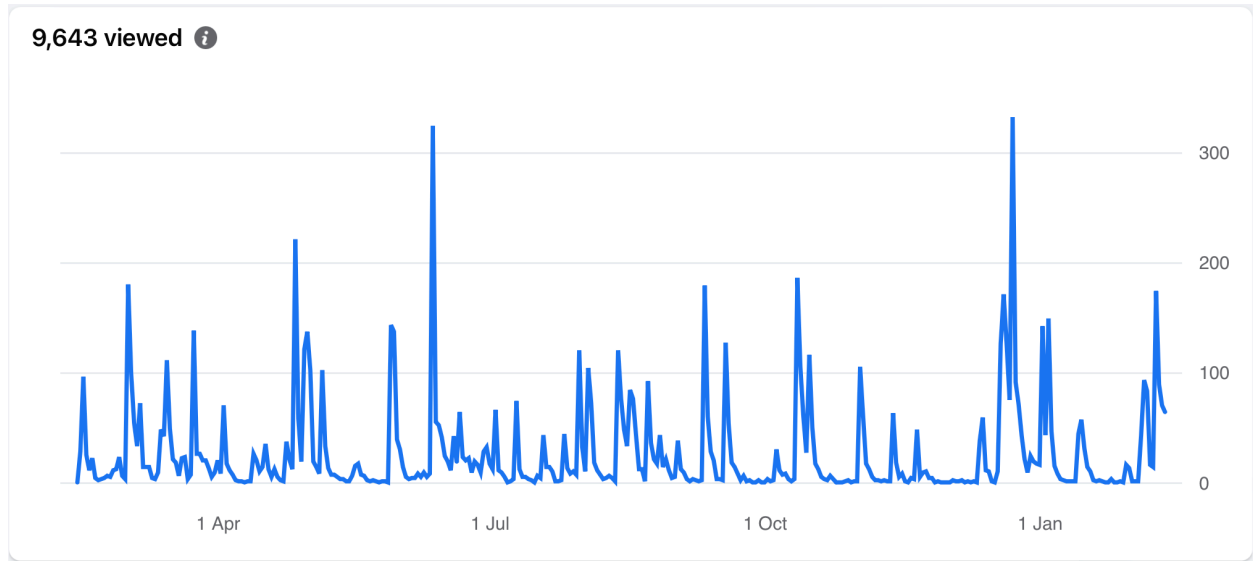
The primary objective of the digital platform is to empower Mater Units (MUs) by providing them with tailored tools and resources to support their specific initiatives and projects. Whether it's streamlining volunteer management processes, facilitating knowledge exchange among MUs, or enhancing project coordination and execution, the digital platform will serve as a versatile and user-friendly solution to meet the diverse needs of MUs across Europe.

Furthermore, the digital platform is designed to foster synergy and collaboration among MUs within the broader MUN ecosystem. By offering features and functionalities that promote cross-network engagement and information sharing, the platform will facilitate the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative ideas among MUs, ultimately contributing to the collective growth and impact of the network as a whole.

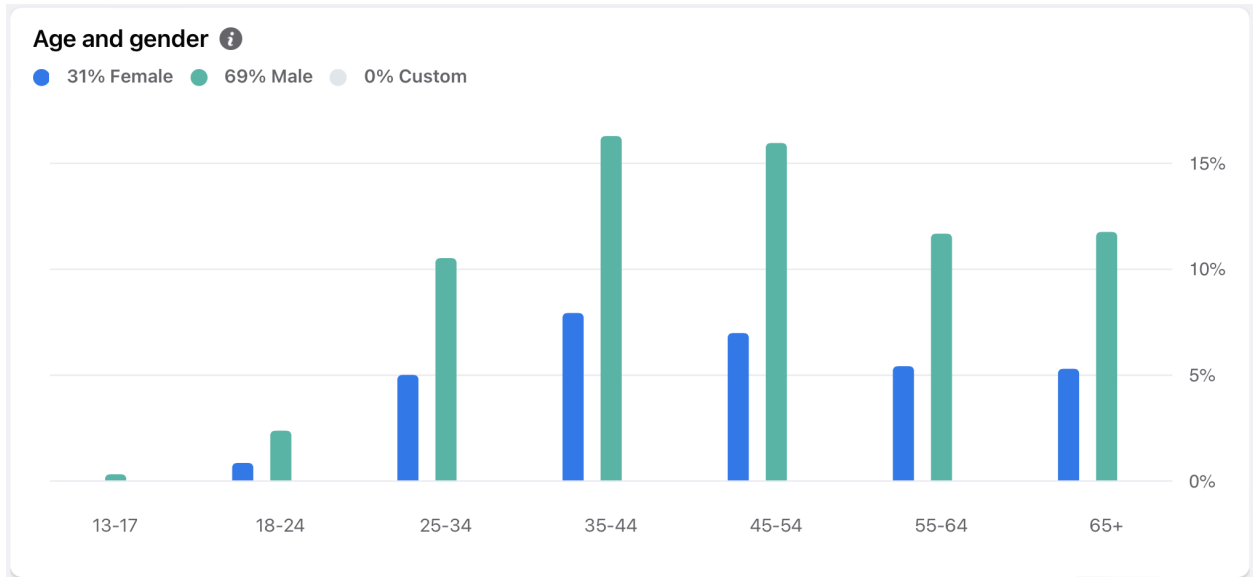
For more detailed information about the digital platform, including its architecture, features, and functionalities, stakeholders can refer to the relevant deliverables: D2, D3, and D4. These documents will provide comprehensive insights into the development, implementation, and utilisation of the digital platform within the context of the MUN, offering guidance and resources to support its successful deployment and ongoing optimization.

Dissemination Channels Statistics

Facebook



With 2.5k users (graphs from 15 Jan 2022 to 15 Jan 2023), the daily channel visits after specific messages are around 100-150 visits, well distributed along the year. The posts are appearing in an organic way, even if the moderators from MUN still have an active role in re-posting interesting posts/events, and the process is not already absorbed by the MUs volunteers.



The age distribution within the Master Unit Network (MUN) mirrors that of similar networks, exhibiting a diverse range of age groups. However, a notable disparity arises in the gender composition of the MUN group. While the male component in the MUN group is nearly double that of the female component (inside the whole age distribution), individual Master Units tend to exhibit the opposite trend. Typically, within individual MUs, the female component surpasses the male component by more than double. This gender distribution pattern underscores the need for further exploration and understanding of gender dynamics within the MUN, as well as strategies to promote gender balance and inclusivity across the network.

Audience

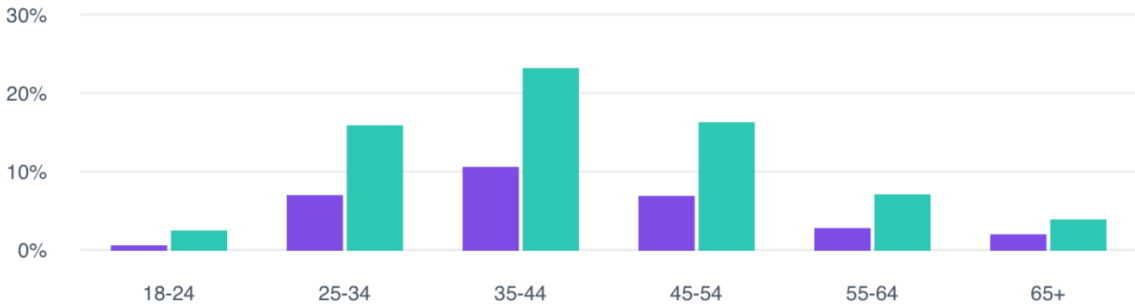
6,845 Facebook followers

Ananda Kalyani

6.4K likes · 6.8K followers

Age and gender

Men 30.60%
Women 69.40%



Others

Statistics from the other dissemination channels will be analysed when available, at the moment there is not significant statistical relevance for channels like the website, the streaming service on YouTube, the mailing list.

More data will be collected during the yearly events that are regularly happening in both MUs and in virtual events like thematic webinars where MUN are regularly presented. In 2023 MUN was presented to country-specific events (both physical and virtual) and European gatherings (again, both physical and virtual). Proper measures will be defined to evaluate the progress during the years.