



Case Report: Inspirational Changes



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CASE STUDY REPORT

INSPIRATIONAL CHANGES

AREA: Green skills of trainers and staff

SYNOPSIS

The report presents 4 initiatives we took after assessing work of sTOP association with the SMALEI matrix, apart from the Green Compass code of conduct (described as a separate case study report).

ABOUT THE PROCESS

NGO Trainers Association (Stowarzyszenie Trenerskie Organizacji Pozarządowych, sTOP) in Poland is a member based organisation gathering more than 250 trainers and educators across Poland, mainly activists, NGO managers, project managers and adult learning experts in their respective contexts. At the stage of piloting SMALEI matrix in the association, we called out to our members to initiate a participatory process of green transition. We formed a working group, which focused on developing a green transition process in/for our organisation, relevant to our context and tailored to member needs and our daily work.

The working group of 9 was formed in February 2024 and the results of work were prominent and inspiring, some of them are being in further progress after the end of piloting phase (which officially ended in June 2024).



*As a result, a green transition working group has been formed, composed of 4 board members (being organisation members in the same time), 3 regular members and 2 office employees.
photo: green transition working group: from left Piotr Uzbiak, Agnieszka Borek, Grzegorz Idziak (online), Marcin Sobaszek, Anna Wojciechowska, Ewa Duda - Maciejewska, Anna Skocz, Paulina Sierzputowska, Adam Markuszewski.*

The collaborative and participatory approach resulted in the following initiatives undertaken within the organisation (apart from the Green Compass code of conduct, reported separately):

1. Eco-audit of the office.
2. Eco travelling- a member meeting.
3. European context and frameworks for green transition- a member meeting.
4. A workshop 'In search of green tools for trainers'.

ECO AUDIT

The audit was initiated in February 2024 however, due to time constraints and the fact that sTOP shares office with another organisation (BORIS), more actors needed to be involved in the process as well as the agreements, arrangements and interviews took more time than expected. However, the team kept determined to implement it :)

The eco-audit of the office undertook 5 interviews with office employees, 10 written surveys as well as electricity bills check.

The questions addressed electricity policy of the office users and resources management.

Electricity check included:

- working stations
- common space (corridors, meeting rooms, toilets, entry hall)



- kitchen use (fridge, dishwasher, microwave, kettle, coffee machine and use of thermoses for hot drinks)

Resources check included:

- paper use,
- printing,
- pens and markers (including refilling policy),
- creating waste and garbage/reusing materials
- waste segregation.

The report came out with the following reflections:

- 1) The topic of ecology is relegated to the background, and it is often not a priority in the daily work routine.
- 2) If there is no strategy, i.e. a document where eco-friendly behaviour is written into a procedure, but is maintained by the will of individuals, then there is less chance of maintaining green standards when a person in the team changes.
- 3) The best solutions are systemic - e.g. setting the printer to go to sleep mode faster, double-sided printing rather than relying on a human attention span every time (to remember to press a button or choose the right option and type of printing).
- 4) It is useful to dispel doubts - give the necessary information and talk about it as a team, e.g. how to separate rubbish (where to dispose a wet wipe or paper towel), whether the charger itself plugged into the socket draws electricity or not etc.
- 5) People are influenced by numbers, so it is worth measuring with a watt meter which device uses how much electricity and how much it costs. When buying appliances, the energy class is rarely important. It is more the purchase price that matters-still.
- 6) There is a change needed also in the working culture of the team - in small behaviours, such as boiling a whole kettle of water for someone (just in case) who might need it. It is better to ask around to see who needs it.

ECO TRAVELLING

member meeting under 'sTOP for a coffee'

The meeting was organised with members under 'sTOP for a coffee' framework - monthly, short, 1h meetings taking place every 2nd Thursday of the month, in the morning (08:30 - 09:30) creating space for member to get to know each other and chat about topics relevant for them, accompanied by a warm cup of coffee.

The meeting was organised with an ecoactivist, educator and sTOP member - Artur Wieczorek, who uses train as his main mean of transportation in Poland (e.g. has a 1-year train ticket :) and abroad. The meeting was organised shortly before summer break to scaffold train travelling opportunities in Poland and abroad, suggest convenient train routes as well as share with tips and tricks on how travelling by train works and operates in practice, especially when travelling internationally (including connecting trains, delays and financial responsibility of the providers). Participants could learn about Interrail ticket and useful Interrail app for planning their trips.



Result: the meeting took place in June 2024 and was followed by a written article shared with the members in our July 2024 newsletter.

The full article in Polish language is available [HERE](#).

EUROPEAN CONTEXT AND FRAMEWORKS FOR GREEN TRANSITION member meeting under 'sTOP for a coffee'

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The meeting about European context and frameworks for green transition has been organised with sTOP member-Marta Brzezińska - Hubert - a trainer and educator working closely as a trainer with Polish National Agency of Erasmus+ programme in the youth sector with sustainability topics. Marta spoke about [GreenComp](#), bringing it closer to the participants, about emerging tools to work with green transition in practice as well as shared her experienced of how sustainability is being implemented in the places where she is active.

The meeting was very popular among members. Marta shared a [PADLET](#) board, where she stored relevant materials from the European context which could be useful for the participants as well as, soon after, shared a new tool for educators to work with 4 areas of main EU competences, including GreenComp- Scaffold cards.

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ECO TOOLS FOR TRAINERS

As a result of the working group works, a sense of insufficiency came out, together with a need to act further on the development of tools and methods supporting trainers and educators in their green transition and development of their green approaches. Since there is a high need among member to work more sustainably and to use sustainable tools, two questions arose-what tools do we have and what tools do we need, to work sustainably? To answer these questions, 2 members of the working group organised a workshop during [Trainers Festival 2024*](#) based on Action Research methodology, placing a learner far more in the centre and making them experts of their needs and solutions. A workshop was open and was implemented on 26th October 2024, for 11 participants (among which 3 were sTOP members) and resulted in formulation of a list of questions in search for solutions. It finished with 2 ideas of prototypes for tools useful for trainers to be more sustainable. Further works of the open group are being planned.

*Trainers Festival is an open, collectively organised event of sharing good practices and mutual exchange among adult trainers and educators, including sTOP members. The event takes place annually, is open and charges symbolically to support coffee breaks and lunch.

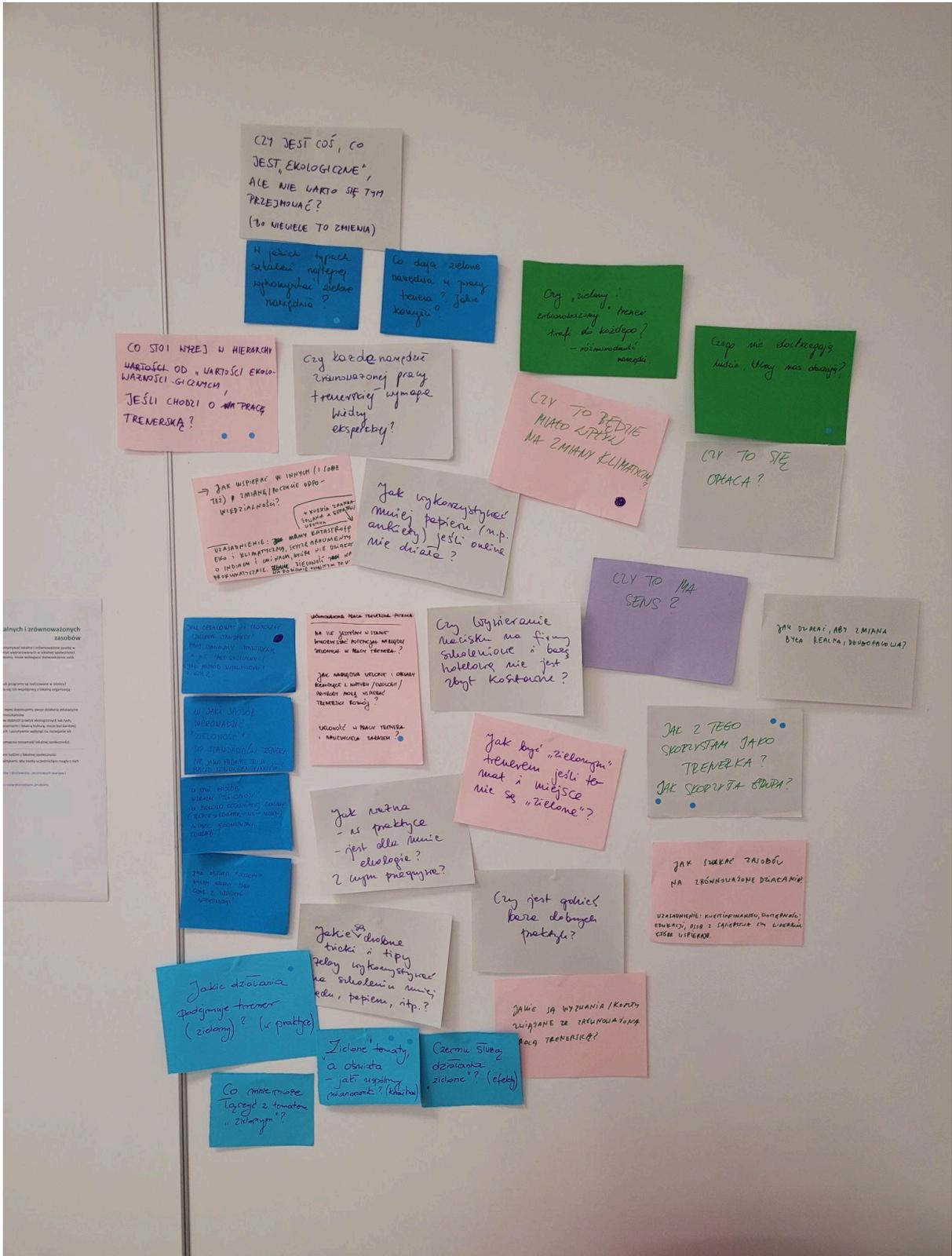




photo: Questions listed by the trainers which they would like to have answers too in reference to being more sustainable.



photo: Prototyping works.

Why is this initiative sustainable and innovative?

Inviting members to work on the topic of sustainability of trainers resulted in very creative, independent processes launched as a result. Apart from Green Compass code of conduct for the educators, we managed to broaden the understanding of the green transition, including European context, we reached out to our inner and external expertise, we managed to mobilize our resources (time, attention and effort) to take another steps for green transition. The process has been participatory and, once allowed, surprising and rewarding, establishing and developing relationships within the organisation as well as with the external actors (both individuals and institutions).

Resources and financial issues



The process has been implemented voluntarily by members of the association and the Board members, however the operational side has been supported by the office employees partly financed with the SMALEI project.

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