



# BEST PRACTICE IN ADULT EDUCATION FOR A JUST TRANSITION

## Green Embrace

Promoting Sustainable Living  
Practices among Individuals with  
Disabilities

**JULY 2024**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

## Green Embrace

### – Promoting Sustainable Living Practices among Individuals with Disabilities

#### Context and Initiative Details

Name of the initiative	Green Embrace
Geographical scope	Örebro County, Sweden
Sources of funding	Co-funded by the European Union Additional funding from local and regional organizations
Duration of the initiative	2017 – 2020
Target audience	Individuals with disabilities or mental health issues Youths with disabilities transitioning into adulthood People at risk of social exclusion
Social justice focus area	
Goals of the initiative	To create a sustainable environment where individuals with disabilities or mental health issues can grow and participate in meaningful activities. To provide ADL (Activities of Daily Living) training through practical involvement in managing a hostel. To integrate therapeutic recreational activities using nature. To reduce social isolation and improve overall well-being and quality of life for the target group. To support the EU Green Transformation by promoting sustainable living practices and environmental stewardship among participants.

#### Good Practices Description

##### Stakeholder engagement in the process

Collaboration with the Municipality of Örebro, Sweden's Veterans Federation (Fredsbaskrarna), and ABF/Green Embrace.

Regular meetings and consultations with local authorities, healthcare providers, and community organizations to ensure alignment with community needs and objectives.

Involvement of environmental organizations to incorporate green practices and sustainability education.

##### Methodology used

Use of nature-based therapeutic activities to improve mental health and social skills.

Practical involvement in managing and operating a hostel to provide real-life ADL training.

Structured programs and activities that encourage social interaction and community participation.

Integration of green practices such as recycling, energy conservation, and organic gardening to promote sustainable living.

### Teaching approaches

Experiential learning through hands-on activities and responsibilities.

Group activities designed to foster teamwork and communication. Individual support and mentoring to tailor the experience to each participant's needs.

Workshops and educational sessions on sustainability and environmental practices in line with the EU Green Transformation goals.

### Challenges and outcomes

#### Key factors contributing to success

The success factors of the project are that the deaf associations, together with ABF, have broadened their perspective from a previously one-sided disability perspective to recognizing that they can actively change their conditions by working together and actively trying to strengthen themselves as individuals and organizations. From there, they can create networks for citizens interested in Swedish Sign Language and culture. Within this network, they can form a competency capital, find door openers, enablers, and coordinators, act as a link between the deaf and the hearing, and thereby become involved in democratic processes such as participating in the green transition and advocating for that issue in Swedish society, as well as among the deaf. This will lead to the deaf strengthening their significance with various authorities and cultural institutions at both local and national levels (the infrastructure for marketing sign language events in the country is lacking), becoming bearers of democracy – the list can be long.

#### Encountered difficulties and challenges

The “Green Embrace” project faced challenges such as ensuring continuous funding and financial stability, maintaining participant engagement, managing daily operational and logistical tasks, effectively coordinating between various stakeholders, and integrating sustainable practices in line with the EU Green Transformation. Adapting to external changes and overcoming social and cultural barriers were also crucial for the project's success.

#### Recommendations

Policy recommendations for national and regional governments to support similar initiatives that align with the EU Green Transformation goals.

Implementation recommendations for municipalities, regional public employment services, and companies to incorporate green practices in their operations.

Course-level adjustments and enhancements to improve participant engagement and outcomes, with a focus on sustainability and environmental responsibility.

#### Impact

Improved mental health and reduced stress levels among participants.

Enhanced social skills and reduced feelings of isolation.

Increased employability and practical skills for participants.

Promotion of sustainable living practices, contributing to the EU Green Transformation.

Positive feedback from the community and stakeholders, indicating a strong potential for the initiative to become a permanent part of the local support infrastructure and a model for green and inclusive community projects across Europe.