2026 Gathering Report



Nature Community

13-18 July 2026

EUROPEAN ECOVILLAGE GATHERING

Foreword

The 2026 European Ecovillage Gathering brought together 715 people from 50 countries.

This Gathering was made possible by the dedication of the GEN Europe staff and council, and our hosts from Nature Community. Thanks to the on-site Dream Team, with other volunteers, coordinators, and more than 70 workshop holders, we co-created this temporary community.

In this report, you'll find numbers, stories, feedback, charts, and learnings to summarise the Gathering experience, collect memories, and sow seeds for the future.

With heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made this possible - we hope you find this report insightful!

The Gathering Coordination Team - Bernarda, Aurélie and Heloisa



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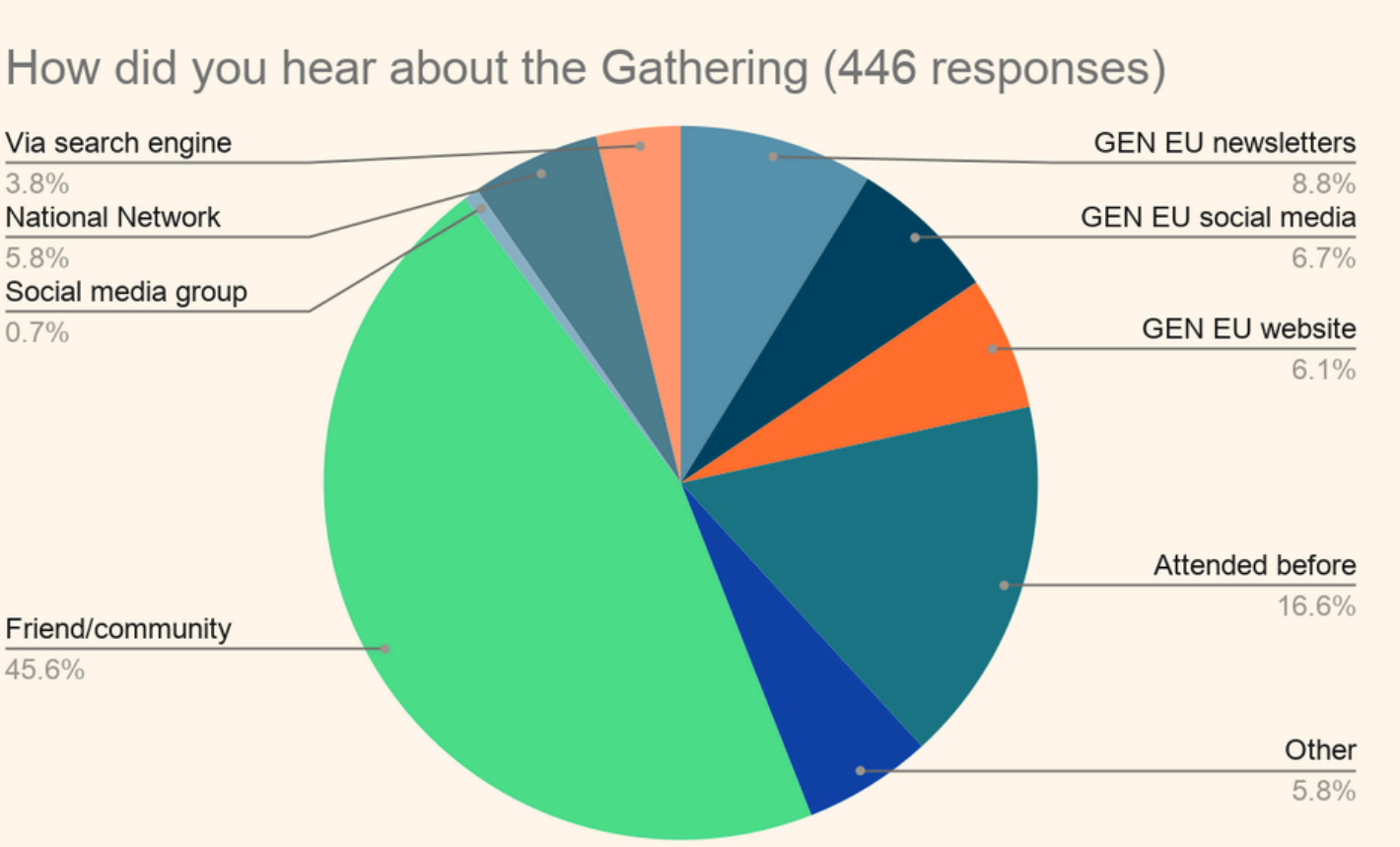
Section 1: Event Overview

1.1 Attendance & Demographics

Based on CiviCRM registrations

Total Participants: 715

- 615 people from the Global Ecovillage Network (participants, children, delegates, workshop leaders, staff, council, programme coordinators, keynote speakers, MCs, and volunteers)
- 100 Nature Community staff and volunteers
- Divided between 424 paid tickets and 291 free tickets



Ecovillage Experience Level

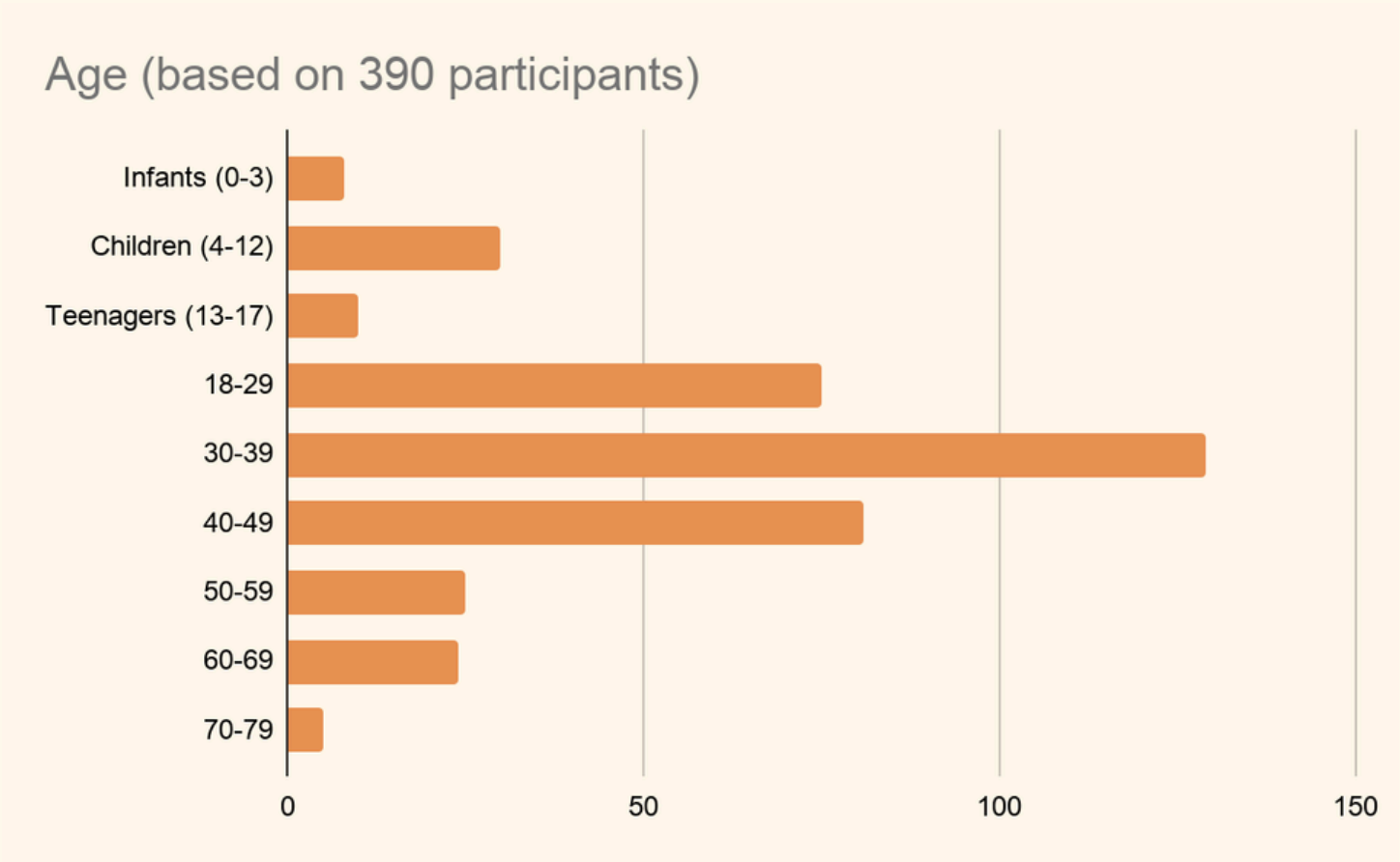
Based on 71 participant evaluation form responses

Experienced ecovillager = 45%
Newcomer = 37%
Other = 18%

Do you live in an Ecovillage?

Based on 467 registration form responses

Yes = 21%
No = 79%



Countries Represented

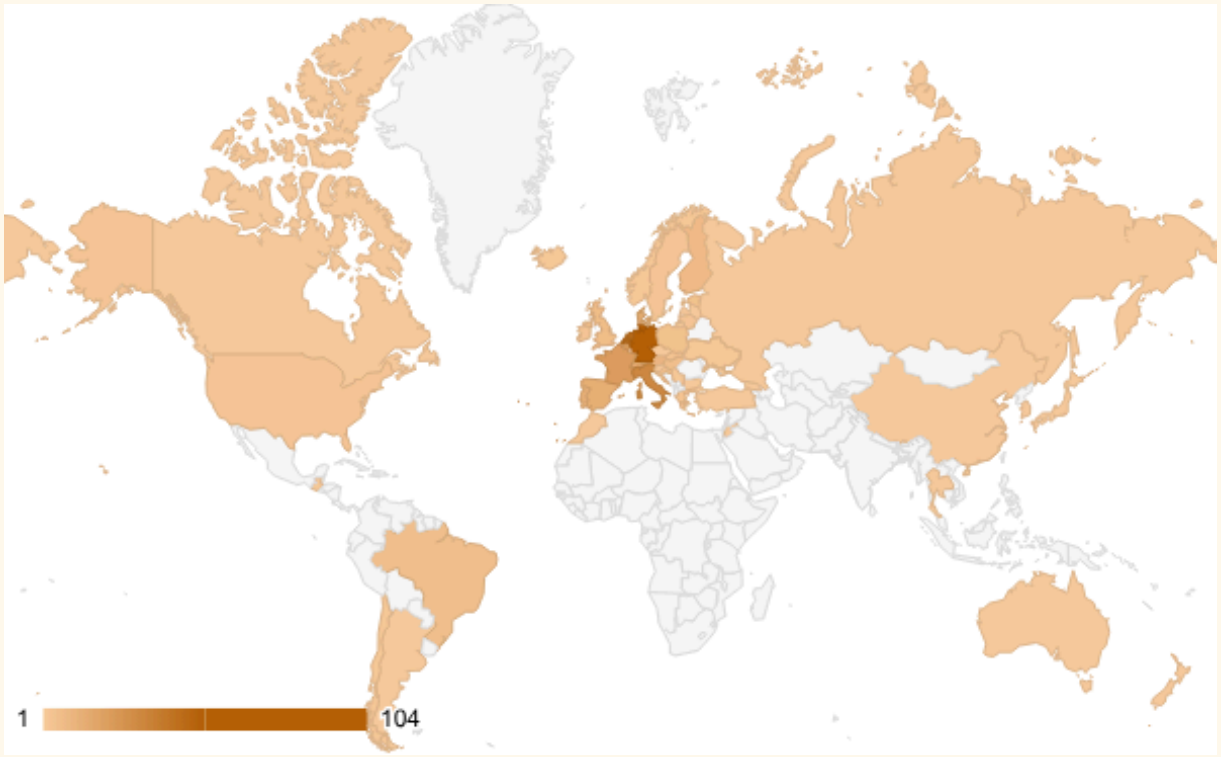
Based on 431 registration form responses

Participants came from across 50 countries:

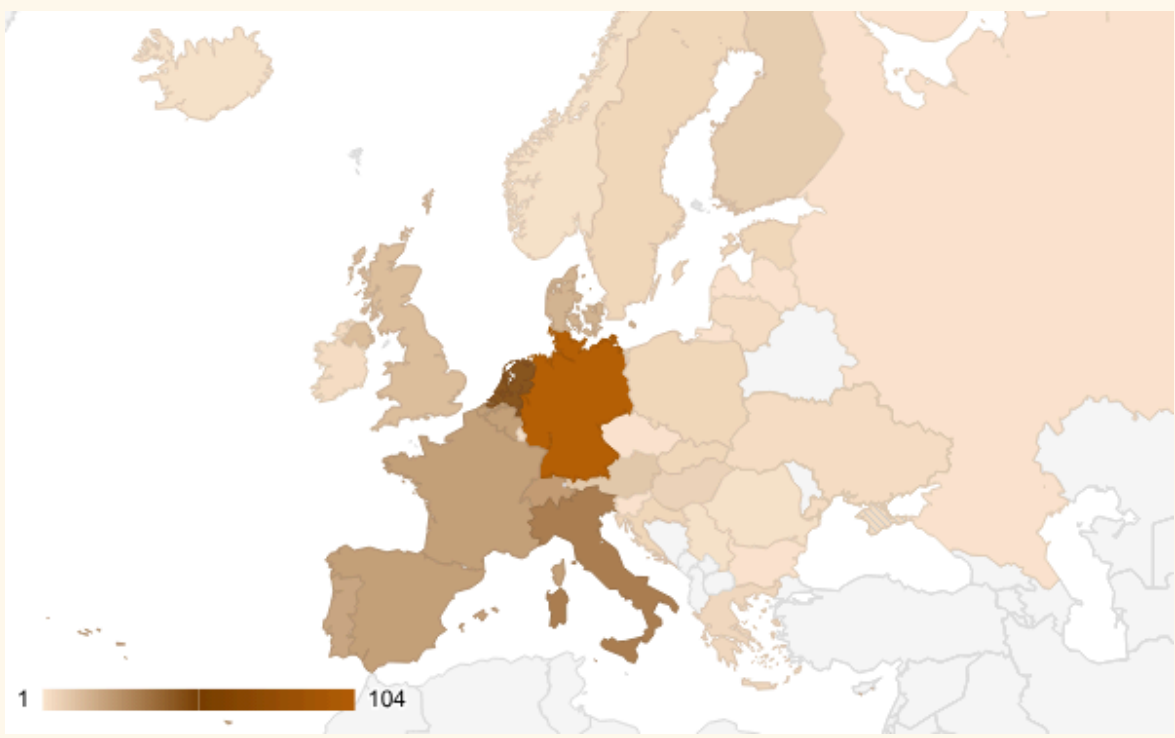
Argentina	Australia	Austria	Belgium	Brazil	Bulgaria	Canada	Chile	China	Croatia
Czech Republic	Denmark	Egypt	Estonia	Finland	France	Georgia	Germany	Greece	Guatemala
Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Italy	Japan	Jordan	Korea	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxemburg
Morocco	Netherlands	New Zealand	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Russia	Serbia	Slovakia
Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Thailand	Turkey	Ukraine	United Kingdom	United States	Vietnam

Most participants came from Germany (104), the Netherlands (45), and Italy (32)

World Map Participant Distribution

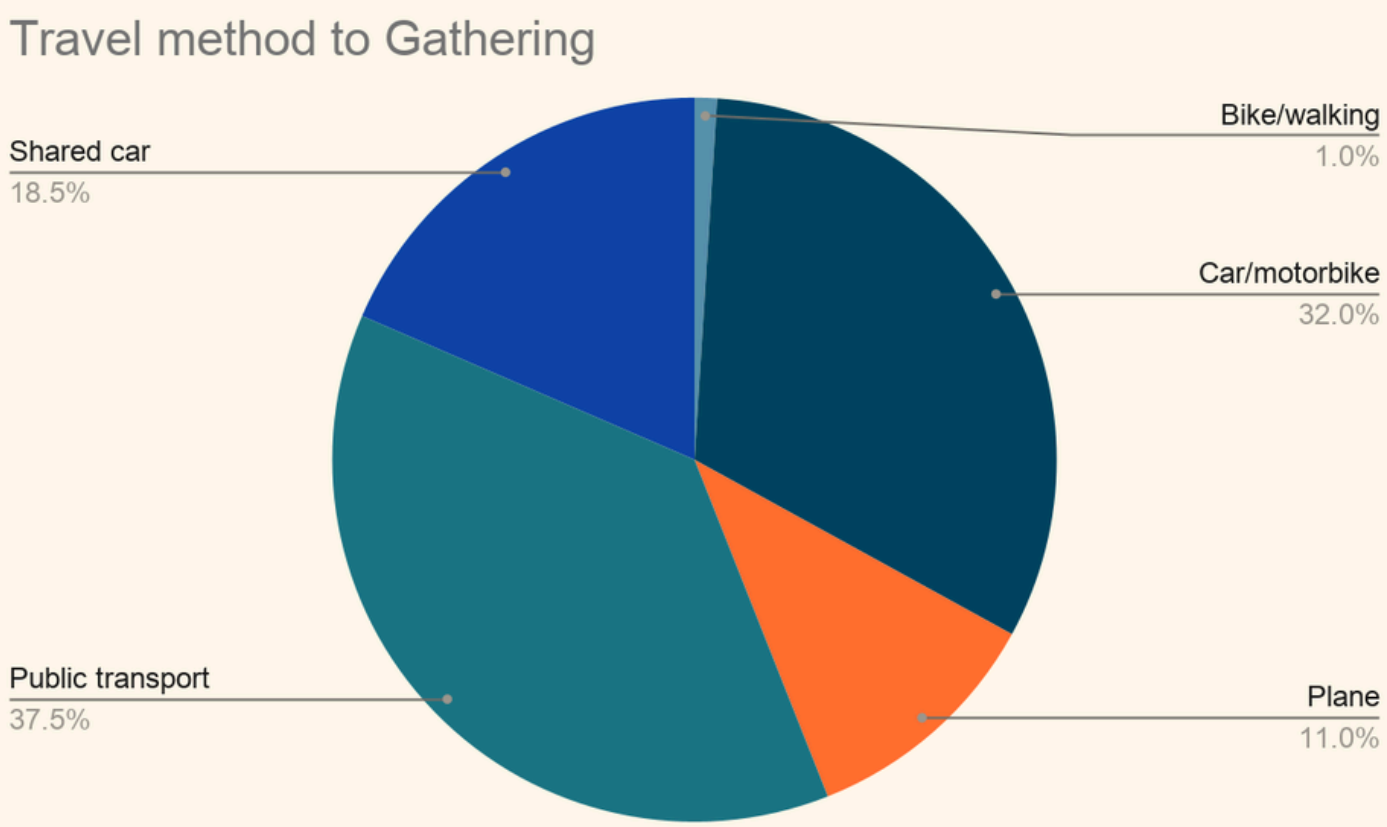


Europe Map Participant Distribution



Travel methods

Based on 400 registration form responses







1.2 Event Structure

This year, the Gathering invited us to confront a simple, demanding question: in an age of war, climate collapse, and growing inequality, will we dare to trust?

Holding the Gathering in Germany just before the far right recorded its most significant electoral gains in decades, it feels even more critical to ask ourselves what it means to trust in each other, in the Earth's capacity to heal, in new economies of care, and in our collective ability to create a liveable future.

Below, you'll find a comprehensive list of components that made up this year's Gathering program, covering different dimensions of ecovillage life and the ecovillage movement, as well as like-minded movements bringing new perspectives to our network.

Theme of the Year: to Dare to Trust

This year, our Gathering invitation centered on rediscovering trust as the foundation of resilience, cooperation, and hope in uncertain times.

The Gathering Components:

Morning Activities - Beginning each day mindfully with practices from yoga to meditation to gentle movement: for self-care and renewal before the day's learning begins.

Programme Streams:

- **Ecology -** Caring for the earth through workshops and talks on permaculture design, regenerative agriculture, wild food foraging, ecosystem restoration and more.

- **Economy -** Discovering alternative economic systems and models focused on decentralisation, solidarity and care instead of extraction.

- **Social -** Learning about effective community building, conflict resolution practices, community health initiatives, social justice frameworks, and conscious activism.

- **Worldview -** Engaging with stories and practices that reconnect us with the living world and help us change destructive narratives.

Ecovillage Starter - Essential knowledge for those beginning their ecovillage journey: from newcomers to aspiring founders.

The Gathering Components:

Ecovillage Advanced (NEW) - For seasoned ecovillagers seeking to address complex challenges faced by their communities and to define the next steps in the evolution of our movement. Deepening the questions already alive among the network after the General Assembly.

Youth Hub (NEW) - Living, youth-led space designed to activate participation, creativity, and intergenerational exchange. Co-created by Uniartcity and NextGEN, offering a welcoming environment where young people and allies can meet.

Red Tent (NEW) - Soft, hosted space for conversations, circles, listening, and shared reflection around bodies, cycles, fertility, pregnancy, birth, postpartum, family support, and community resilience. Rooted in women-centred knowledge and care traditions and welcoming all genders.

Tech & Craft - Exploring the world of appropriate, sustainable technologies, and traditional and innovative handicrafts developed by our communities.

Kids & Teens Programme - Offering a space for children and teenagers to create their own transformational experience with the support of adults through movement, play, crafts, and more.

The Gathering Components:

EXPO - Exhibition space for appropriate technology and handicrafts developed by our ecovillages and ecoprojects: efficient, easy to replicate, open source, and designed to reduce their impact on the planet.

Open Space Technology (OST) - An open canvas shaped by the community for whatever is alive and wanting to emerge: self-organised sessions to offer space for collective wisdom and authentic connection.

Open Stage - A spontaneous performance series made up of musical performances, poetry readings and anything else that came up, hosted by two MCs that weaved together the performances comedically.

Evening Activities - Celebrating through dance and music, enjoying storytelling circles or jam sessions, connecting with fellow participants, and learning about conscious relating.

Community & networking spaces



Collective Morning Circle / Keynote Speeches - Starting each day together as one community with inspiring speakers bringing big-picture perspectives to frame our daily explorations.

The Gathering Components:

Meet the Ecovillages & Ecovillage Market - A dynamic hub open daily where ecovillages, ecoprojects, networks, and EU projects could showcase their initiatives.

GEN Booth - A space to meet the GEN EU Staff and Council, as well as purchasing Gathering merchandise and printing the Gathering logo on clothing and textiles.

Sharing Groups - Intimate circles for participants to process and integrate their experiences in a supportive environment.

Emotional Support Angels and Tent - Contributing to a nourishing, welcoming, and relaxing gathering by offering participants emotional support wherever needed.

Informal Networking Areas - Spaces for informal connections, including the cafe, bar, wellness, and sitting area.

Musical Performances - Uplifting, live performances from local bands and a final evening of energising DJ sets.

1.3 Heartfelt Quotes

What makes this Gathering unique among summer events? Why do you attend?

This movement fills me up with hope and courage to continue to do peacework throughout my daily life.

By attending, I feel part of something bigger than my own community, part of a wider movement.

It draws unique people from all walks of life, united in their love of nature, includes unique workshops that shed light on alternative ways of being and, lastly, because the places for the Gathering are each one of a kind.

Section 2: Financial Overview

2.1 Ticket Sales

Tiers and Discounts	Price (€)	Number Sold
Tier 1	50€	132
Tier 1 Delegate	30€	41
Tier 2	100€	58
Tier 2 Delegate	50€	29
Tier 3	150€	70
Tier 3 Delegate	70€	18
Group Tickets	70€	61
Low income ticket (-50€)		15
Total Paying tickets		424
Total Free Tickets*	0€	276
Total attendees onsite		700

**Workshop holders, GEN EU staff, council, volunteers, NC community members & volunteers, and kids.*

2.2 Revenue, Expenses, Total Income

Gross Revenue

Total tickets revenue (minus platform fees)	€31,748.38
Total memberships revenue*	€19,588.53
Total Market Sellers Donations	€20
Total Merch Sales	€734
Total gross revenue	**€52,090.91**

**Minus individual members who didn't buy a Gathering ticket*

Costs

Hours of Gathering Coordinators	€15,840
Hours of other staff	€11,660
Contributors fees & travels	€6240.47
Contributors food	€2923.09
Artists	€750
Comms & Promotion	€3503.63
Materials & Equipment	€906.91
Total	**€41,824.10**

Net Income

Gross revenue - Costs =	**€10,266.81€**

Section 3: Feedback and Evaluations

3.1 Collection Methods

We gathered feedback from 71 participants, 13 workshop holders, and 4 Dream Team volunteers through evaluation forms, as well as an additional 30 workshop feedback forms.

Workshop Feedback Form
Accessible via QR codes printed out and posted in workshop spaces at the Gathering. Participants were encouraged to fill it out after each workshop. This form focused on collecting specific feedback about the workshop and workshop holder.

LimeSurvey Form
Sent through email to all attendees on the last day of the Gathering: focused on collecting feedback about the overall Gathering experience. There were three different versions of this survey: for participants, for workshop-holders, and for Dream Team volunteers. This feedback represents the views of around 10% of all Gathering attendees.

Open Feedback
Feedback from Gathering contributors and staff was collected during and after the Gathering via a RocketChat channel and through more in-depth evaluation meetings with Gathering coordinators.

3.2 Workshop Feedback

A total of **30 workshop feedback forms** were completed: 19 from professional workshop-holders, 0 from fellow Gathering workshop-holders, and 11 from regular participants.

Overall feedback

Rating: 1 = lowest and 5 = highest

- Economy workshops: average of 4.2 out of 5 (9 respondents)
- Youth Hub: 5 out of 5 (1 respondent)
- Evening activity: average of 4.7 out of 5 (11 respondents)
- Ecovillage starter: 5 out of 5 (1 respondent)
- Red tent: average of 3.5 out of 5 (2 respondents)
- Social: average of 4.3 out of 5 (3 respondents)
- Worldview: average of 5 out of 5(2 respondents)



- Overall, feedback results average around 4.5 out of 5, demonstrating high participant satisfaction.

As the number of responses was low for the workshop feedback forms, the following section of the report will focus on information relating to workshops from the participant evaluation form, which received 71 responses.

What people liked most about the workshops:

Embodied, participative formats: movement, ritual, circles, improvisation.

Les Pas-Sages: From Scarcity to Trust: repeatedly named for its clear framework and practical format.

From anti-oppression to Liberation for All: most cited inspirational workshop.

Red Tent: a safe, held space for authenticity, belonging, healing, intergenerational wisdom, motherhood, and parenting.

Practical, hands-on skills: through workshops such as water retention, plastering with clay, spinning wool, permaculture, and the wind turbine.



Topics that people would like more of in the programme:

More practical, hands-on, interactive workshops: such as slow travel, electricity and energy, rewilding, soil recovery, low-tech, bio-construction, composting, and local flora and funga.

Parenthood: explorations of sexuality, tenderness, breaking the patterns of nuclear families and alternative forms of nesting.

Stronger presence of diverse and marginalised identities: Non-white perspectives, climate activism and resilience, gender, queerness, neurodivergence, inclusivity and degrowth/alternative systems.



Topics that people would like more of in the programme:

Life in community: engagement in communities, decision-making and creativity, challenges in different steps of ecovillage creation, intergenerationality, grief, more information for beginners.

Connecting ecovillages and the world: storytelling, urban eco-communities, allyship with non-ecovillage actors, the place of ecovillages in a transition to a different economy.

Suggestions for next year:

Labeling the format of the workshops more clearly in the programme.

More inclusion and space for different people to participate. Awareness of who is taking up space.



3.3 General Participant and Delegate Feedback

Based on 71 participant evaluation form responses

In comparison to 2025, the ratings stayed the same, except for programme flow and structure, which improved by 0.2 points.

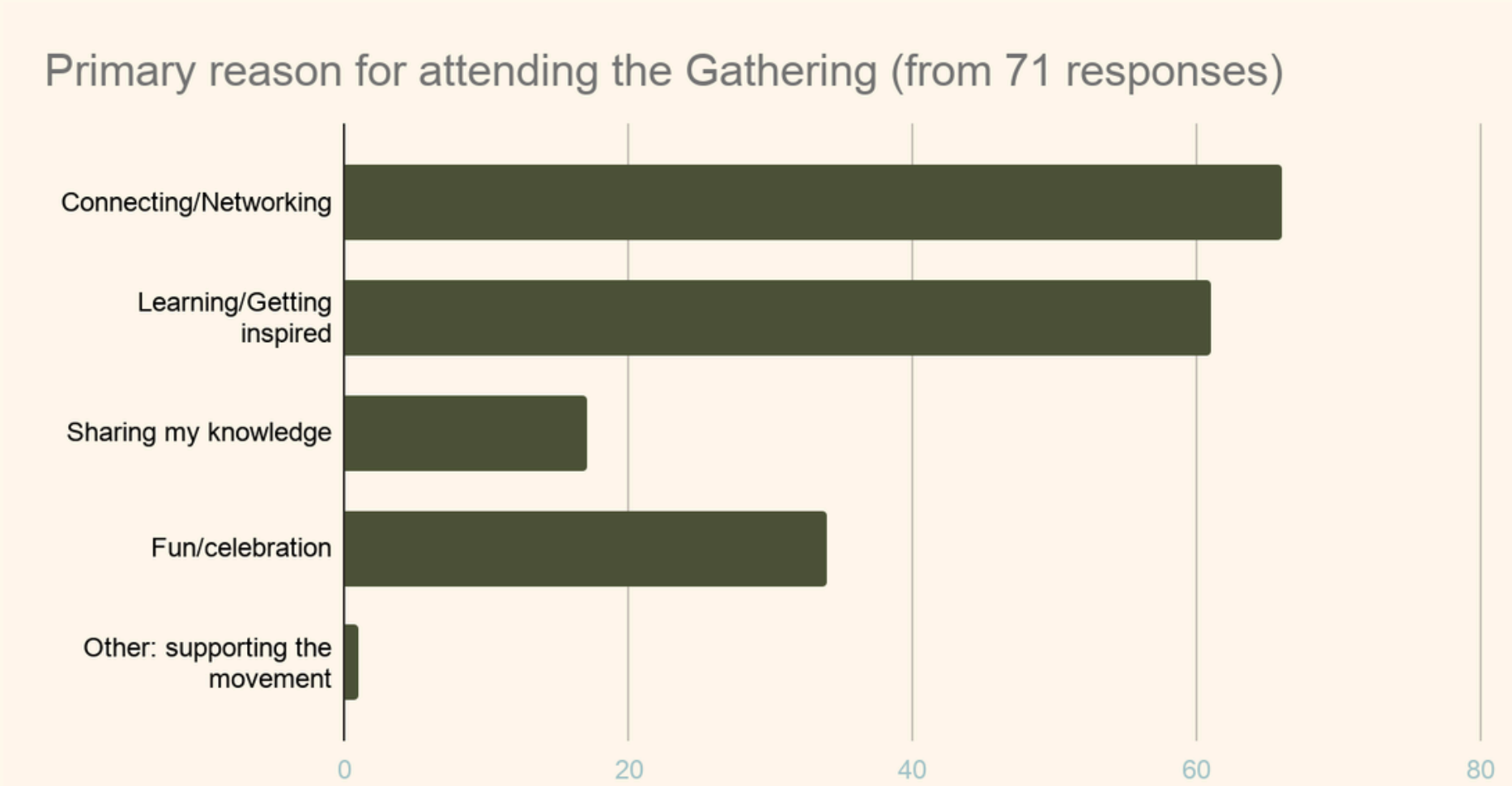
Overall Satisfaction Ratings
Overall Gathering Experience 4.5 Programme flow and structure 4.3 Inclusivity 4.2 Safety 4.7

1 out of 4 participants felt there were too many workshops in parallel

1 out of 5 participants felt there should be more space for co-creation from participants



Ratings for different programme elements
Morning activities 4.4 / 5 Collective morning sessions & keynote 4.4 / 5 Workshop quality 4.1 / 5 Workshop quantity 4 / 5 Evening activities and music 4.4 / 5 Meet the ecovillages and market 3.3 / 5 Sharing groups 4 / 5 Open Space Technology 4.1 / 5 Youth hub 4.7 / 5 EXPO 4 / 5 Kids and teens 4.3 / 5



Main takeaways from the Gathering

Inclusion, power and activism

Skills tools and practical knowledge

Inspiration and hope

Connections and networking

Personal transformation and inner work

What makes the Gathering unique among summer events?

Personal growth and purpose

Learning and inspiration

Networking and ecovillage focus

International and diverse exposure

Enjoyment and atmosphere

Meaningful conversations

Space for learning about the wider movement

Community and belonging

Trust, hope, and healing

Relationships and friendships

Space for action and collaboration

Role of storytelling and witness

Personal connection to ecovillage living

Experience beyond a typical festival

Immersive activity mix

Organisation, format, and suggestions for improvement

Atmosphere and safety: many describe the overall field as nurturing, safe, and aligned, some highlight specific processes (ex: ZEGG forum) as powerful learning moments.

Workshop quality and knowledge sharing: a few note that some facilitators struggle in sharing their knowledge and experience effectively.

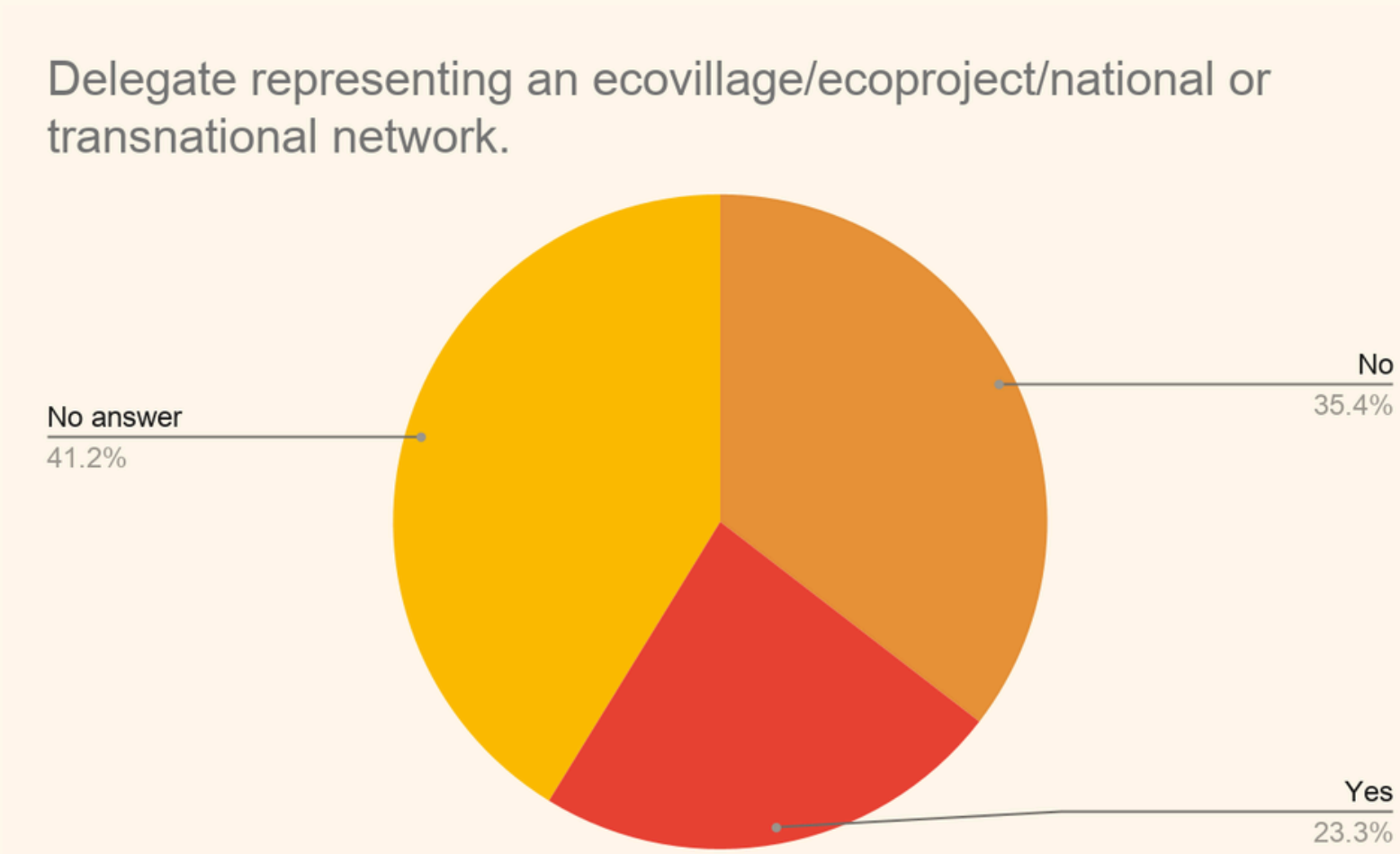
Accessibility and participation constraints: childcare responsibilities limited some people's ability to attend workshops, though they still felt inspired by the atmosphere and keynotes.

Balance of content: some attended mainly because of the General Assembly but found the Gathering's group processes and transformational focus more nourishing than the GA itself.

Structural concerns: Some challenges in connecting with GEN Europe as an organisation: desire for more transparency, broader participation in leadership, and stronger ecological impact.

Delegate vs. Non-Delegate Status

Based on 536 registration form responses



3.4 Workshop Holder Feedback

Based on 13 workshop holder evaluation form responses

4.7/ 5 Overall satisfaction as a workshop holder

4.8/ 5 Likelihood to recommend facilitation to others

Same results as last year!

Would you facilitate again next year?

I would facilitate, yes! Last year, I had so much joy. Kids and Parents were just telling me how important it is to include their voice for how the future eco villages would be. And not just include their voice, but to give them the chance to co-design and co-create it with their hands.

Yes. It was an honour to be able to facilitate at the Gathering. I very much liked the atmosphere and the resonance that people shared. It felt like a safe space and a place of purpose to be there to serve with what I have to share.



What they loved

Engaged participants

Strong sense of connection

Well-organised support from volunteers and the coordination team

What could be improved

Earlier and clearer programme information

More reliable and suitable rooms

Clearer support for co-facilitation and new workshop holders

Deeper integration of initiatives such as the Red Tent into the main gathering



3.5 Dream Team Volunteer Feedback

Only 4 responses to the feedback form

It was the first time at the gathering for all the respondents

What skills, knowledge, or insights did you gain?

Relational skills

How to plan and coordinate people

Inspiration and learning regarding the creation of a more equitable future for all beings

Critical thinking

Discovering new opportunities

Practical skills such as tools for construction

How to work with kids and meet their and their parents' needs at a festival

Taking care of myself while being surrounded by a lot of people everyday

Insight into the inner workings of Nature Community and ecovillages

3.6 Coordinators and Contributors Feedback

Feedback collected from Dream Team coordinators, EXPO coordinators, EMO team coordinators, Open Space Technology Facilitators, EEN stream, Host, and GEN staff through evaluation meetings.

Dream Team Volunteer Coordinators (Pipi & Isabella)

What worked well

The team strongly embodied the GEN EU & Gathering values.

This year's team was proactive, and 21 volunteers were a good number.

Nature Community's prior experience with Gatherings and volunteer teams made them highly organised, with strong integration between both teams.

Giving volunteers space to coordinate parts of the programme and open spaces independently, and to offer their own activities during their stay, was very positive.

Keeping roles such as timekeepers, angels, and cleaning duties clearly assigned made things run smoothly.

What could be improved

Need for Dream Team coordinators to arrive a few days earlier.

Better connection with Team Leads needed.

Plan an on-site signage strategy from the start.

Find ways to prevent and manage volunteer dropouts.

Direct communication to Ecovillages about Dream Team volunteering.

Ensuring a Gathering coordinator is always available to Dream Team coordinators from day one on site.

Regular check-ins needed with the whole team.



EMO Team

The team had a really good time together and would like to stay together next year. New team members integrated very well.

Introduce a simple colour scheme on workshop listings to indicate the expected level of emotional engagement. This gives participants a shared language for choosing workshops that fit their capacity, and gives the EMO team a better overview of where support may be needed.

Create a dedicated Telegram channel for real-time Angel requests during the day. Advance scheduling is difficult because people don't yet know their plans or capacity in the morning; a live channel adds flexibility and lets Angels choose spontaneously where they can support.

Add a clear closing process on the last day to check out of the role and share important observations.

Mandatory check-in at the beginning of every shift to orient the Angels together.

EEN Team

The facilitation team collaborated well and navigated challenges together as they arose.

The systemic constellation session generated many insights and opened up different perspectives.

Beginning to explore the Ecovillage Advanced topic openly at the Gathering was a significant step forward.

Clarify roles with Nonviolent Global Liberation before the space begins rather than sorting them out mid-process.

Opening the stream to new participants forced the group to restart context-setting from scratch. Recommendation to close the stream after day one.

Book a quieter, more private room for around 20–25 people from the start.

EXPO Coordinators (Francesco & Tatjana)

Overall process ran smoothly, without major problems.

The EXPO location was central.

Outreach remains difficult: start earlier, build a contact list of interested people from previous years, tap into relevant networks or organisations, and ask the host directly for local contacts.

Ensure an actual EXPO contact person is available on site, communicate this clearly to the host, and confirm it in good time.

Better workshop room preparation: ensure Dream Team members know each room's layout and technology well enough to set it up properly.

Host Team (Nature Community)

The registration system was complicated, which caused fewer people to come to the Gathering and chaos regarding registrations onsite.

Felt connected with individuals instead of GEN EU as a movement, which felt difficult to access.

Would prefer an error friendly space where people can show themselves fully, with a stronger focus on repair culture and a practice, experimentation as well as investigation space that is created together instead of by GEN EU. Built the culture in the programme more, instead of collective agreement signs that many not be read.

Have networking spaces other than Open Space Technology.



Open Space Technology (OST) Facilitators (Angel & Jake)

What went well

Building the team early felt like OST was a shared effort rather than one person's project.

Preparation materials saved a lot of last-minute improvisation.

Two facilitators with different styles per day, using the main stage to attract people, and a longer wrap-up were successful.

Having a council member available each day for anything sensitive was a good safety net, even if it was rarely needed.

The "fishbowl" format, where people join and leave as they come, remained the best way to share what the group learned.

The more days the OST ran, the better it got.

Open Space Technology (OST) Facilitators (Angel & Jake)

What could be improved

Writing guiding questions each morning from the keynote was stressful and only loosely matched what people wanted to talk about: idea for next year to let one question run through the whole day, with keynotes, workshops, and the OST all exploring the same theme together.

Due to lack of capacity, organisation, or communication, volunteers did not reliably show up for their scheduled shifts after the first day.

Include more of OST in photo collection and display the artwork from the sessions at the closing ceremony.

The wrap-up timing clashed with groups' own discussion time, causing some to arrive late or miss it: need to work out how to give each part enough space without taking over too much of the festival.

Event coordinators, GEN staff and council

What went well

High-quality keynote speeches.

Organisation went more smoothy than previous years.

Nature Community implemented feedback and made improvements from hosting the Gathering in the past.

Appreciation for the new streams: Youth Hub, Red Tent, Econvillage Advanced.

I cannot express enough my appreciation and respect for Gathering coordinators to make it happen and being able to stay on the top of so many things, circumstances, processed happening, from difficult background discussions, through emotionally triggering workshop till stormy weather (and everything else I have no idea about), you were just there to make sure that people feel safe and have good experience. Thank you.

Event coordinators, GEN staff and council

What could be improved

Clearer rules for the on-site check-in and plan the on-site procedure earlier.

Clearly mark and separate the steps in the check-in and use a single entry point where bracelets are checked diligently.

Ask the host to arrange bus shuttles, as many people arrive at the same time.

Review the vegan menu to include people with autoimmune conditions who are affected by a high-carb menu.

Agree in advance with different teams on which moments need photography.

For Meet the Ecovillages: clear signup form to clarify and confirm attendance, maintain a waiting list, consider organising the market by national network: ecovillages within the same network share tables, can swap if someone can't attend all days, and smaller ecovillages gain visibility through their network's table.

Explore an open-day option for people who can't commit to the full festival (several attendees requested this).

Section 4: Key Learnings and Future Improvements

4.1 Key Learnings

Key Learnings

The majority of participants expressed that they came for connection, networking, and learning. This continues to demonstrate the Gathering's value as a networking and educational event that sparks inspiration and hope.

The balance between people who are experienced and those who are new to the movement shows that it is important to continue to offer a programme that is relevant and enriching for newcomers and those who are well connected.

The new programme streams were well received, and with the feedback from this year, they can be developed to integrate the programme of next year.

Holding the Gathering in a space that had hosted it before was very supportive and helped with smooth organisation of the event. Strong cohesion in the teams was key for smooth running of operations, navigating challenges, and the motivation to continue working together in the future.

4.2 Future Improvements

Program improvements:	**Logistical improvements:**
Increasing practical workshops. Labeling the format and potential emotional impact of the workshops more clearly in the programme. More networking spaces. Keynotes, workshops, and the OST exploring the same daily theme together. Workshops and talks focused on parenthood, community life, and connecting ecovillages with other movements. Stronger presence of marginalised identities in the programme.	Improve and simplify the online booking system and the on-site check-in. Better workshop room preparation and guidelines. Onsite communication via Telegram channels for the teams to remain connected and communicate. More presence of GEN EU staff and approachability of contact people. Stronger organisation and planning of shuttles and transport. Improve organisation of Meet the Ecovillages.

Nature Community

13-18 July 2026

Thank you!

ecovillagegathering.org