

MedTOWN

Co-producing social policies with SSE actors to
fight poverty, inequality and social exclusion

FACILITATION GUIDE v1.1
TIPS & TOOLS TO ORGANIZE NATIONAL WORKSHOPS

Co-production, a model for fair and sustainable societies





MedTOWN

Co-producing social policies with Social Solidarity Economy actors to fight poverty, inequality and social exclusion

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Developed by [Red de Transición](#)

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Version 1.1 - February 2021

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of its authors and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Programme management structures.





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Co-producing social policies with Social Solidarity Economy actors to fight poverty, inequality and social exclusion

About the Project

MedTOWN is a social innovation project that aims to support the role and the capacities of the Social Solidarity Economy actors in fighting poverty, inequality, social exclusion and environmental unsustainability through the research and experimentation of a co-production model with the use of public complementary e-currencies for the provision of social services and financial aid to the most vulnerable groups in order to increase the socioeconomic impact and effectiveness of public policies and the transparency of expenditures at local level.

MedTOWN project is a cooperation project financed by the European Union through the European Neighbourhood Instrument for cross-border cooperation in the framework of the Mediterranean Basin Programme 2014-2020 (ENI CBC Med). It involves 9 partner entities from 6 countries (Spain, Greece, Palestine, Jordan, Tunisia and Portugal) with a total budget of EUR 3.4 million (86.5% of the programme's contribution) and an estimated duration of 36 months, until September 2022.



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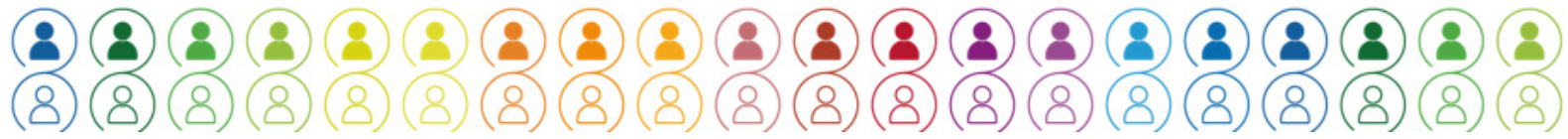


1. What is this guide for?

This guide has been designed within the framework of the **MedTOWN Project**. Its main aim is to support the development of the **National Workshops** that the project proposes as a dissemination strategy for training materials and learning in relation to the practice of co-production, to generate public policies and strengthen social services in the Mediterranean.

The guide offers a number of tips and tools to help local trainers plan, design and facilitate successful National Workshops in their countries. It also constitutes a working document that reinforces the conversation generated in the Trainers Community of Practice, in which the lessons learned and shared experiences are integrated.

“Facilitation is the art of stimulating deeper understanding, fresh thinking and behavioural transformation.”



2. Co-creating a MedTOWN National Workshop

The **National Workshops (NW)** are one of the key actions of the MedTOWN Project, to be developed in all the countries that participate in the project partnership (Palestine, Jordan, Tunisia, Greece, Portugal and Spain). Through the NW, it is intended to generate a cascade effect to **disseminate and expand** the theoretical-practical information generated in the context of the project that is aimed at **reinforcing and initiating co-production processes** to improve public policies and social services from a social and solidarity economy approach.

NW development begins from an on-line training in the shape of **Training of Trainers**; programme with content specifically designed to meet the objectives of the MedTOWN project. This training, called **The Phoenix Journey: Transformative Pathways for Ecosocial Co-production**, is proposed as a journey through different steps that correspond to theoretical content and practical applications. NW will be based in that contents, bringing the knowledge to the local scale. These are the 5 steps of the journey:



Step 1- Observing the ashes

Human Needs and Sustainable Human Development

Step 2- Watching the horizon

Co-production of Social Policies and Services

Step 3- Realizing our essence

Economic Systems and Social Solidarity Economy

Step 4- Spreading the wings

Organizational Development and Social Technology

Step 5- Taking Flight

Co-production in Action

Following the first part of theoretical-practical content, three sessions were specifically proposed for local trainers as leaders in the design and development of NWs in each participating country.

In these sessions, facilitation skills and group dynamics design and realization were put into practice to work on the theoretical materials.



Planning a MedTOWN National Workshop

Planning a training like this is a task that takes months of preparation and it is necessary to **anticipate and schedule** the different stages and tasks that must be carried out in order to arrive on time with a **quality programme and materials**.

In the planning process, it is important to define the following issues:

GOALS

What is the **purpose** of carrying out the NW.

FORMAT

Decide if it is done **in person or online**, especially considering the current context of a pandemic that requires maintaining social distance. Also consider the possibility of doing it blended, with a face-to-face part and an online part. If it is done in person, decide in which place and facilities it will take place.

PARTICIPANTS

Who we consider important to attend the training, who we need to invite. **Consider the different agents that participate in processes of public-social collaboration** and co-production of social services; people from the public administration, academic institutions, social organizations, private sector, citizens as service users, etc.

DURATION

It is recommended that the NW have a **minimum duration of 4 full days**, but this can be adjusted depending on the format that you choose to adopt. If it is done online, it is recommended not to plan full days as the virtual format makes the follow up more tiring, and in that case it would be advisable to do it in shorter sessions over more days. Following the example of the Training of Trainers, it could be arranged in 4-hour sessions, 4 days a week, over 2 weeks.

RESOURCES

Everything we need to make the NW successful. Institutional support, for example, in the lending of venues, in support of the diffusion and communication of the programme, with the participation of people from public administrations, etc.; necessary **materials and tools that are required for the delivery of the workshops**, they can be both online applications and fungible materials if they are carried out in person, informational flyers, etc.; and any other resources that are necessary for the success of the programme, such as web page and graphic design, communication in social networks, support of specific technical personnel, etc.

TEAM

It is important that the team is defined **from a very initial phase** and that the roles and responsibilities of each person are clear from the first moment to ensure dynamic and fluid work in the team throughout everything in the process. Everyone on the team must be clear about their roles, responsibilities and what is expected of them.

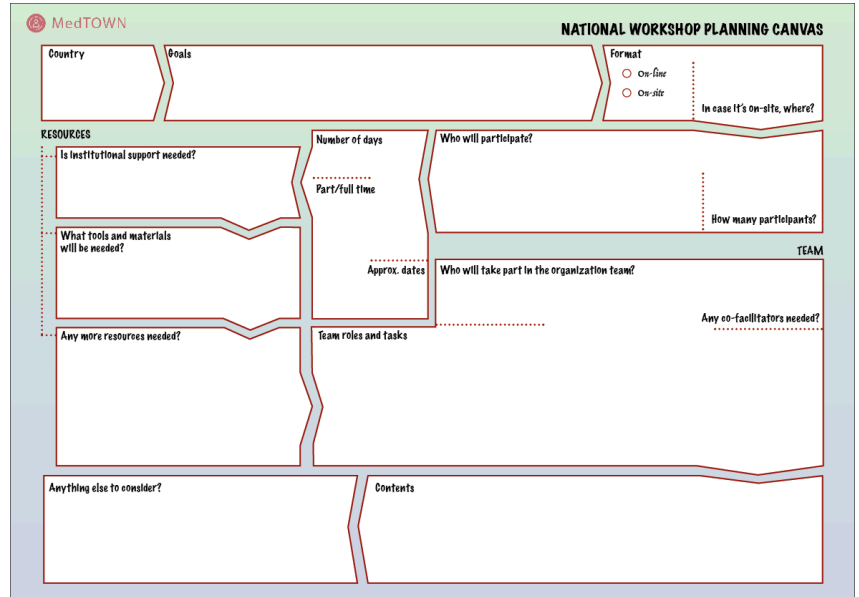
CONTENT

MedTOWN's Training Programme The Phoenix Journey offers a wide range of materials related to the project's objectives that provide support and inspiration for NW design, including many references to deepen on different topics. You can find them on the [MedTOWN CoP Platform](#). When designing the NW content, it is very important to take into account that you should **cover the 5 steps** of the Training of trainers, identifying which are the most interesting content (examples, cases, etc.) for the local context where it is going to be developed, as it may vary according to the different territories.



It is advisable that the information generated in this planning process is available and accessible throughout the development of the NW, since it will be the guide and reference that marks the way forward and the guidelines, needs and tasks that we need to perform.

To facilitate the consultation and handling of this information, the **National Workshop Planning Canvas** has been designed -you can find it in the annex to this document-where you can put all the information generated in the planning process can be schematically reflected.



The form is titled "NATIONAL WORKSHOP PLANNING CANVAS" and includes the following sections:

- Country** and **Goals** (with a sub-section for **Format** including options for **On-line** and **On-site**, and a note: "In case it's on-site, where?")
- RESOURCES** section with sub-sections:
 - Is institutional support needed?**
 - What tools and materials will be needed?**
 - Any more resources needed?**
- Number of days** (with sub-sections for **Part/full time** and **Approx. dates**)
- Who will participate?** (with sub-section for **How many participants?**)
- Who will take part in the organization team?** (with sub-section for **Any co-facilitators needed?**)
- TEAM** label
- Team roles and tasks**
- Anything else to consider?**
- Contents**

Designing a MedTOWN National Workshop

An important part of the NW development process is the design of the training sessions; how the course is going to be structured, what is the common thread, what content is going to be taught at all times and what learning dynamics are going to be used.

The training approach is based on **participatory learning**, in which the theoretical content is as important as the experience and knowledge

of the people participating in the training. From the approach of collaborative group dynamics, **collective intelligence** can be promoted and learning processes are generated in which theory is connected with practice in real applications, and where keys emerge for the success of the development of initiatives, difficulties or barriers and opportunities to find solutions to territorial challenges.

Toolkits for workshop design

There is a wide variety of group dynamics to generate participatory learning processes. Here are several references where you can find inspiration to design sessions that allow you to work on the theoretical-practical content in a fluid, entertaining and transformative way:

- > [Mindtools](#)
- > [DIY Toolkit. Development, Impact and You](#)
- > [Hyper Island Toolbox](#)
- > [Gamestorming](#)
- > [IDEO Design Kit Methods](#)
- > [Workshop Bank](#)
- > [World Café, Quick Reference Guide](#)
- > [Library of Facilitation Techniques. Sessionlab](#)
- > [Field guide to human-centered design. IDEO](#)
- > [Wayfinder A resilience guide for navigating towards sustainable futures. Stockholm Resilience Center](#)
- > [Collective Action Toolkit. Frog Design](#)
- > [Citizen Sensing Tool. Making Sense](#)



3. Adapting the training materials to local contexts

The training programme **The Phoenix Journey** includes a series of materials that seek to generate a basis for the development of co-production processes for the generation of public policies and improvement of social services that respond to the needs of people in their territorial context, from a social and solidarity economy approach.

Co-production of social services is interpreted as a strategy to reinforce and increase the capacity of public institutions to offer quality social services, through collaboration and partnership with entities of the social and solidarity economy beyond prioritizing economic benefit—as would other private sector entities—its objective is to **put life at the center**, both through the care of people and the natural environment in which they live; generate an economic

activity in a sustainable, fair and equitable way.

Given that the training is designed for a broad territorial spectrum along the Mediterranean Region, made up of countries with very different socio-economic and environmental contexts, it is important that when designing the National Workshops it is identified **which content is most suitable for each territorial context**, on which you have to put more focus on learning. However, the materials offer a broad theoretical-practical content that allows them to range from an understanding of eco-social challenges on a global scale to interventions and experiences at the local level.

The topics included in the teaching material are the following:



1. Human Needs and Sustainable Human Development

- The situation of Planet Earth
- Human Needs and Sustainable Human Development
- Social-ecological Resilience



2. Co-production of social policies and services

- Social services and public policy
- Agents and roles
- Co-production: levels, types and models
- Co-production: opportunities and challenges



3. Economic Systems and Social Solidarity Economy

- Impacts of the current economic system and alternatives
- Social Solidarity Economy
- Entrepreneurship in Social Solidarity Economy
- Putting life in the center: Care Economy



4. Organizational Development and Social Technology

- Organizational governance for co-production
- Public participation for social policies
- Collaborative processes and facilitation
- Social technologies for collaborative processes



5. Co-production in Action

- Eco-social innovation
- Starting a co-production process
- Complementary currencies
- Municipalities in Transition (MiT)
- Co-production case studies

The topics included in the training materials are very broad and the content was carefully selected to show the keys to each topic. When delivering the training, it is important to be aware that it is difficult to transfer all the theoretical content through live sessions and, to improve understanding and deepen the analysis of the content, it is recommended to **combine live sessions with personal work** from the trainees, through reading the contents and personal reflection, as a personal journaling process.

When preparing materials for the National Workshop, it is important that everyone involved in the training understand the language in which they are offered. The content displayed on the platform is offered in English, and will probably need to be translated into local languages so that it can be accessible by all participants. Other materials such as videos or texts in local languages that are related to the topics discussed may also be incorporated.



4. Tips and tools for a good facilitation

Facilitation is a practice dedicated to working with groups in order to **help them accomplish the goals or purpose that brings participants together**. It can be applied to many different contexts such as education, improving group cohesion, conflict resolution, strategic or operational planning, inquiry and creativity, co-design and collaborative work, etc.

The MedTOWN Project training programme takes the figure of the facilitator as a key element to guide the learning process; it is about going beyond conventional education in which a teacher explains a subject and the students receive it, and generate instead a space for collective intelligence and participatory learning. Thus, a space for **reflection and debate** is generated around the exposed topics, sometimes from a theoretical content but paying special attention to the conversations and reflections that are generated in the group. It is a way

of recognizing that each person is important and contributes to the learning process, contributing their experience, previous knowledge and vision.

The labour of facilitation requires practice and becoming a good facilitator can take years of experience but, without a doubt, it is a very rewarding job to serve groups of people and provide help to improve the relationship that unites them and the results that can be achieved together. To get started, you can begin exploring in detail what the facilitation practice consists of, what methodologies exist and, above all and most importantly, what skills a person must have to be a good facilitator. These skills can be worked on in many ways and they will be useful not only to develop the role of facilitator, but to improve your relationships in your professional and personal lives since, deep down, it is about fully understanding the communication process, both in its visible and invisible parts.

Toolkits about the practice of facilitation

To delve into these aspects and better understand the role of facilitation, we invite you to visit guides and documents where you can find recommendations, description of practices, aspects to take into account when you are facilitating a space. Here are some examples:

- > [Facilitation tools for meetings and workshops. Seeds for Change](#)
- > [Facilitating meetings. Seeds for Change](#)
- > [Free Resources for facilitation. IIFAC \(International Institute of Facilitation and Change\)](#)
- > [Community Facilitation for Nonviolent Ecosocial Transitions: F-NET. NOVACT \(International Institute for Nonviolent Action\)](#)
- > [Tips for successful online meetings. Altekio](#)
- > [On-line Energizers. 350.org](#)
- > [A Comprehensive List of Tips, Tools, and Examples for Event Organizers During the Coronavirus Outbreak. CMX](#)



Tips to facilitate workshops

Before the sessions

- **Design the process** and prepare group dynamics that will bring you to the **desired goals**.
 - ~ It is essential to establish the objectives of the session clearly, this will facilitate the process of selecting the most appropriate group dynamics.

During the sessions

- **Start with interaction** with the participants, asking for some information from them.
 - ~ You can ask for something personal like how they arrive to the session; is good to start with something different from the contents of the session, even you can use an icebreak game.
- Communicate **clear guidelines** and instructions.
 - ~ It may be useful to have the instructions to exercises written down ahead of the sessions, so you can just show them / stick them on the wall.
- Create an **inclusive environment**, try to equilibrate participation and listen to all voices.
 - ~ Make sure to open spaces for questions and for people to share their **own knowledge and experience**.
 - ~ Decide **how much time** you want to devote to debate, since it can easily get out of control if people are passionate!
 - ~ Pay special **attention to minority voices** as their message is important and may go unnoticed by the voice of the majority. Embrace and welcome diversity.
 - ~ **Combine different communication techniques** to ensure that everyone can participate, as some people find it difficult to speak in public. To do this, for example, you can ask them to write somewhere anonymously, or to have conversations in pairs or small groups.
- **Empathy, active listening and group management practices**, such as hand/chat signals.
 - ~ Active listening requires **full attention**, and at that moment not be thinking about other things and **suspend your judgments** about what you are listening to.
 - ~ Deep listening allows you to see beyond the words, and **understand the needs of the person** who is communicating. Understanding this need will ensure successful communication.
- **Verbal skills** to facilitate conversations. Some verbal techniques that help communication are: repeating what the person has expressed to ensure that it has been well understood, systematizing the information we receive from a person and asking in-depth questions to better understand the message.



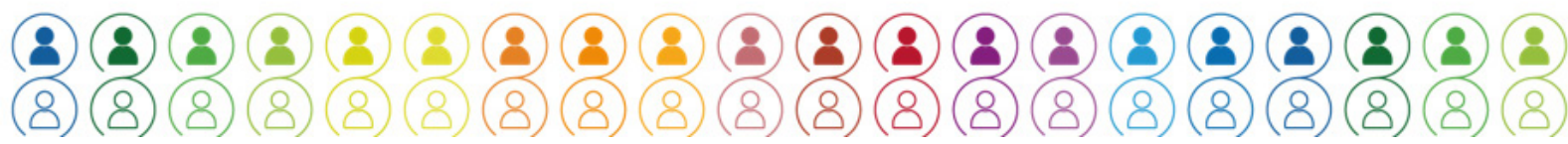
Tips to facilitate workshops

During the session

- Be prepared for disagreement and **conflict management**, get practice on negotiation. Conflict is generated when a person is not meeting their needs; try to make sure that all people have the means to express them.
- Learn about the different **decision-making processes**. When making a decision, check that everyone agrees with the chosen decision method.
- Be aware and **manage timing**. Less is more.
 - ~ Appoint or ask for a volunteer to act as “Guardian of Time” at each session who can help keep you on track.
- **Gauge the energy level** of a group.
 - ~ Be aware that after-lunch sessions are always a bit more difficult.
 - ~ Use a simple way to ask people to show their **level of energy**, for example using their thumb.
 - ~ Combine different types of techniques to **avoid monotony**: group conversations, small group conversations, personal reflections, movement activities ...
- **Be flexible and adapt** to the group needs.
 - ~ It's always good to have a “plan B” activity in case you find that you cannot do what you expected.
 - ~ Be open to changing the order of the sessions or even the agenda if necessary. Sometimes you may have to **change the agenda** significantly to respond to the **group needs**.
- **Stay neutral**, if you don't you might lose your legitimacy. This means not taking a position in favor of one of the parties when there are polarized opinions or a conflictive situation.

Closing the session

- Before closing is good to make a **conclusion or summary** of the session, and **get feedback from the participants**. It can be both opening a round to express how do they feel with the session or can be expressed in other ways, like writing on the chat or using an online application like Mentimeter.
- **Systematize the information** and results generated.
 - ~ Make sure all relevant information is captured in minutes or graphically on paper charts or a board.
 - ~ Appoint or ask for a volunteer to act as “Guardian of History” at each session to take notes when relevant.



5. Communities of Practice (CoP)

This guide is intended to be a **“living document”** that is enriched with the learning generated in the course of the Communities of Practice. Through the on-line meetings that will take place and the conversations through the forums on the MedTOWN Project web platform, lessons will emerge that will be very useful for the design and development of the National Workshops. These learnings will be

integrated into this document to enrich it. At times, new documents may be created on specific topics that [will be available on the web platform](#).

At the time of writing this document, the lessons learned from the reflections of both the Training of Trainers and the first webinar of the CoP of local trainers are as follows.

CoP Communications

There are two main channels for communication between local trainers, the training lead team (Red de Transición) and the MedTOWN Project coordination team: **CoP forums** and **Telegram channel**.

The MedTOWN Project platform offers a series of forums for each CoP. In each of these forums you can open conversation threads on specific topics. One of the CoPs that are integrated into the MedTOWN Project is specific to the organization of National Workshops, called CoP Local Trainers. You can access the forum through the web platform -> community -> groups and [through this link](#) (you need to be registered as a local trainer to access the forum).

The Telegram channel is proposed as a quick communication tool for more urgent matters and to report news such as webinar dates or access links to webinars. In order to enter the Telegram channel, you can write to the leading team of the training.



On-line tools for facilitation

Video Calls:

- ~ [Zoom](#)
- ~ [Google Meet](#)
- ~ [Jitsi](#)

Participative tools:

- ~ [Mentimeter](#)
- ~ [Jamboard](#)

Harvesting information and collaborative work:

- ~ Use applications on google docs and share the screen.
- ~ [Mural](#)
- ~ [Miro](#)

If you want to share a screenshot without sending files (e.g. in the Zoom chat where you cannot send a picture), you can use this program <https://snipboard.io/> (e.g. if you want to show your screen to one person without sharing your screen to the whole group).

Look the session 4-3 for more on-line tools: <https://cop.acpp.com/lesson/4-3-collaborative-processes-and-facilitation/>



5. Communities of Practice (CoP)

Tips for group sessions

Opening and closing

- Asking people to identify with animals, colors, the weather, etc. is a nice and neutral way to break the ice and say how they are feeling without getting too personal
- Music is a good way to create a warmer atmosphere

Holding space for the group

- As a trainer and facilitator, you will be in a position of power and respect. Be aware of this at all times, because your role is not to direct the group, but support them in their learning
- The detailed plan should be private only for the facilitators
- You can share a general agenda.
- But not showing the times allows you to adapt as you go without giving unnecessary explanations
- It's important for the group to always know who is facilitating what part, so they know who the referent is for questions
- Key concepts need to be "always visible":
 - ~ In a physical room, make posters
 - ~ Online, make screenshots and upload them in advance to a platform from which you can then share a link

Facilitating a process vs. "dumping information"

- Instead of providing "definitions", it may be in your interest to ask first to the group what they understand, and write down (or make a metimeter digitally) with their answers, and after this provide your definition (eg. check step 2)
- Try not over-rely on PPT presentations, unless you are delivering essential content for the exercises or group work that will come later.
- For PPT presentations:
 - ~ Use lists, not paragraphs
 - ~ Use color, important words in bold
 - ~ Separate concepts (eg. one question only per line)
 - ~ Use more pictures
 - ~ Use diagrams

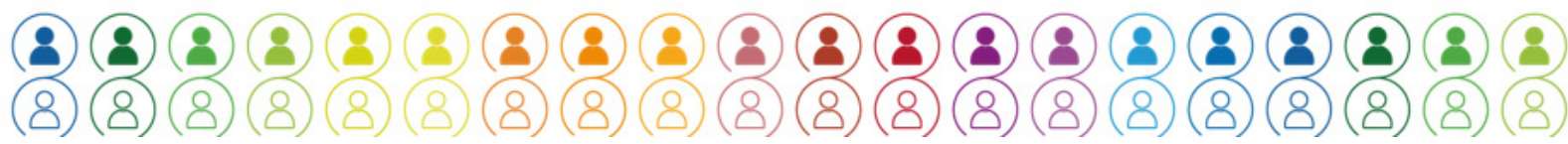
- Do not "read out loud" long texts people can read faster than you and you are not adding value. Instead use bullet points and explain each one. If there is too much to read on the slide, people won't listen to you.
- After a "dump" of information, open a space for questions, or at least ask how much people have understood. You can use the "thumb" or the "thermometer" so people can signal if they feel they have understood or not

Introducing "weird" associations or concepts

- When we make a reference to something that could be "uncomfortable" (eg. The cockroach), one way to diffuse possible negative responses or associations is to acknowledge that people may feel rejection (again giving permission to feel whatever is being felt), and link it straight away to something positive (eg. Something the most "resilient" is not the most "comfortable" or "pretty").

Working as a team

- When you are facilitating in a team, each individual doesn't have to have "all the answers" - you can ask among yourselves, eg. If Mohammad is struggling, he can pass the word to Catia. And if nobody from the team knows, you can ask the participants. Let's access into our collective knowledge!
- One person facilitates and the other takes care of technical aspects (for online sessions), or one person facilitates and the other can take notes on paper, or start preparing the activity you will do next
- Establish an internal communication channel among the team (in person make sure to reconvene after every exercise briefly)





2
Open
knowledge

1
~~Health~~
Community

ANNEX

MedTOWN National Workshop Planning Canvas
MedTOWN National Workshop Design Template



Country	Goals	Format <input type="radio"/> <i>On-line</i> <input type="radio"/> <i>On-site</i> in case it's on-site, where?
RESOURCES		
..... Is institutional support needed?	Number of days Part/full time	Who will participate? How many participants?
..... What tools and materials will be needed? Approx. dates	Who will take part in the organization team? Any co-facilitators needed?
..... Any more resources needed?	Team roles and tasks	TEAM
Anything else to consider?	Contents	

National Workshop

GENERAL AGENDA

	DATE	XX/XX/XX	XX/XX/XX	XX/XX/XX	XX/XX/XX	XX/XX/XX
		SESSION 1	SESSION 2	SESSION 3	SESSION 4	SESSION 5
TIME						
10.00 - 12.00		Check-in	Check-in	Check-in	Check-in	Check-in
12.00 - 12.30		Live Webinar I	Live Webinar I	Live Webinar I	Live Webinar I	Live Webinar I
12.30 - 14.00		Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
12.30 - 12:45		Live Webinar II	Live Webinar II	Live Webinar II	Live Webinar II	Live Webinar II
12:45 - 14:00		Check-out	Check-out	Check-out	Check-out	Check-out
Afternoon		Personal study	Personal study	Personal study	Personal study	Personal study

LEAD FACILITATOR

SUPPORT FACILITATOR

TOPICS OF THE DAY

[Link to the on-line template](#)

NOTE: We kindly ask you to make a copy to the linked document in order to be available to other groups.



Project funded by the
EUROPEAN UNION



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