

Soft Skills Training Event

We can repeat the theory many times, but experiencing it at least once is the most valuable thing!

That was the starting point for us to shape a series of training events for - in total - 7 modules. Each module reflected an area that should be covered while we were working in a Social Solidarity Economy milieu. These 7 modules are appropriate no matter where you are working or with whom, but especially for the communities where the model of organization is more horizontal than vertical, where all members of the community regardless of the task performed should be seen and heard. Such conditions are demanding and competence in how to listen, receive, and give feedback is key to preventing misunderstandings, resolving difficult situations peacefully, and ultimately growing in the community instead of descending into chaos. Such a cherry on the cake was the module on taking care of yourself. We came out of observing how the activist community is fragile and prone to burnout, so taking care of yourself is the first and necessary step to taking care of the whole team. We ended the training series with this module although you might as well take it as the first.

We wish you to set up your combinations in implementing the pieces of training. We have shared our comments at the end of this collection, hope you can find there some inspiration and worthwhile reflections.

Modules are as follows:

1. Nonviolent communication model
2. Active listening & giving and receiving a feedback
3. Organizing a successful meetings: facilitation & moderation
4. Inclusive decision making
5. Distributed leadership
6. Working with conflict
7. Self-care

Module 4. Inclusive Decision Making

Duration	What	Content	Materials
45'	4.01 What is Inclusion/Exclusion	An introductory round to probe participants experiences and ideas about inclusion and exclusion in group processes, in particular with respect to decision-making. Methods: individual work, plenary discussion	writing utensils for individual work, flip-chart, markers
125'	4.02 Privileges and Distribution of Power	1. Recognizing privilege and oppression - what kinds and how the lines of privilege and oppression intersect. Methods: The Privilege Walk Game reflection on the game and a plenary discussion on various lines of privilege and oppression and their intersections (the participants will come up with the “privileges wheel”) 2. What is power? Why do we need power? Describe your experiences with situations when you have felt the most powerless and the most empowered. Why do we need to build our collective power? Methods: World Cafe, debriefing	flip chart, markers
40'	4.03 Various Forms of Decision Making	What methods can we use when taking group decisions? What are pros and cons of these methods? Which are most authoritarian and which democratic and why? Method: rain of ideas, pros and cons	Flip-chart, markers, post-in (or other) stickers
30'	4.04 SSE and Inclusive and Democratic Decision-making	Why is inclusive and democratic decision-making so important in SSE initiatives and organizations? Which decision-making methods are the most inclusive and democratic and which we can use in the SSE environment? In groups work on two questions: -What things are not working? -What mechanisms would you establish to build a space for democratic and inclusive decision making? Method: work in groups	Flip-chart, markers

30'	4.05 Hand Signals and Quick Consensus	<p>In some situations very quick decisions need to be made. Participants will learn how to use hand signals and apply it a during simplified version of consensus decision making process to make a decision in a very short time - from 3 minutes to 30 seconds.</p> <p>Method: group exercise</p>	Hand signals picture, quick consensus flowchart, papers with the description of the situation
90'	4.06 Consensus	<p>The participants will learn about the consensus decision-making method from the trainer and use it in practice.</p> <p>Method: Consensus Chairs Game, presentation, fish bowl role play game</p>	Chairs, role play game cards
20'	4.07 Consent	<p>The participants will learn about the consent decision-making method and what is the difference between consent and consensus.</p> <p>Method: round, presentation, discussion</p>	Beamer
60'	4.08 Multi-voting and List of Preferences	<p>The participants will learn about these two concrete decision-making methods from the trainer and use it practice.</p> <p>Method: role play game</p>	Flip-chart, markers, papers with prepared tables, pens/markers, chairs
60'	4.09 Inclusive Decision-Making Processes and Structures: Sociocracy, Holacracy, Deliberative Forums and Participative Processes	<p>Decision-making is sometimes a more complex process than taking a decision at one meeting. Democratic decision-making within the framework of social solidarity can take a form of longer term processes, such as participatory budgeting and planning or citizens assemblies. They are integral parts of the organisational structure, e.g. in Sociocracy.</p> <p>Method: presentation</p>	Beamer
40'	4.10 Diamond Ranking: decision-making game	<p>Exercise in groups. Each group gets a set of cards with human rights printed on them and has to rank them according to importance. Ranking the printed cards in groups is a basis to a later discussion about group dynamics and ways the decisions have been made</p>	Printed cards
15'	4.11 The Diamond of Participation - theoretical input	<p>Short presentation of the chart to accompany other activities: https://www.chriscorrigan.com/parkinglot/the-diamond-of-participation/</p>	Beamer OR flip-chart

30'	4.12 Styles of decision-making	Styles of decision making are collectively organised on a chart according to participation level and time needed.	Moderation cards, masking tape, marker
45'	4.13 Preparation - Decision - Next steps	“Flying flip-charts” method: 3 flip-charts are titled according to the different stages of decision-making and participants (in 3 groups) go from one flip-chart to the other and add things that are not there yet.	Flip-charts, markers

Method Descriptions and Links to Materials

4.01 What is Inclusion/Exclusion

Goal: Participants will reflect upon their own personal experiences with participatory decision-making and/or inclusion or exclusion in group dynamics, and share their experiences with the whole group in a discussion facilitated by the trainer.

Some questions to explore: Have you ever been part of inclusive decision making? What was the occasion? Were you excluded from some decision making processes? Describe your experiences. Are there limits to inclusion?

Duration: 45 min.

Group size limit: 25

Method description: individual work followed by sharing in the plenary and a group discussion facilitated by the trainer

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: writing utensils (paper and a pen/pencil) for individual work, flip-chart and markers

4.02 Privileges and Distribution of Power

Goal:

Part 1: Participants will explore the contours of social privilege and oppression and intersectionality of various forms of privilege and oppression through the The Privilege Walk Game and subsequent plenary discussion. The participants will have a chance to reflect on often hidden and invisible forms of privilege and how these add up to unequal distribution of power in society and structural inequality.

Part 2: Building upon Part 1., the participants will more closely explore the concept of power by focusing on several questions, such as: What is power? What are the sources of power (individual, societal)? Why do we need power? Describe your experiences of situations when you have felt the most powerless and the most empowered. How can we empower ourselves as members of a movement? Why do we need to build our collective power?



Hard Times – Soft Skills

Duration:

Part 1: 20 min. for the Privilege Walk

45-60 min. debriefing and plenary discussion

Part 2: 25 min. for the Wold Cafe

20 min. debriefing

Group size limit: 25

Method description:

Part 1: The Privilege Walk followed by reflection on the game and plenary discussion on various lines of privilege and oppression and their intersection (the plenary may create a visualization of the discussed issue, e.g. the “privilege wheel” or some other form such as a grid of who is “above” and who is “below”)

One example of the Privilege Walk:

<https://peacelearner.org/2016/03/14/privilege-walk-lesson-plan/>

The game can be adapted to fit the composition of the group - esp. when there is less diversity in the group, we recommend that the trainer prepare complex descriptions of individual characters who the participants will embody during the game (such as “you are a 50 years-old Roma woman with just an elementary education”, or “you are a 25 years old white college educated single heterosexual male on a wheel chair”, “you are a 16 years of lesbian high school student from a working class family who takes care of her 2 younger siblings”, “your and 35 years old single mother of three, white, with secondary education,” “you are a young gay Roma man working as a construction worker who grew up in an orphanage”, “ you are a young college educated transwoman living in small rural town”, “you are a college educated, heterosexual war-refugee from the Middle East” - and the like, there are many possibilities}.

The trainer should also adjust the questions they will use during the game to best fit the characters they create for the game. The characters and the related questions should take into account the cultural and social context in which the exercise takes place (i.e. should not copy the realities of the US context in which this game originated)

It might be interesting to make sure each person plays the role of a person of the opposite gender.

Tell participants to think of a name for themselves once they have read their “role” card.

Some **questions** the trainer may ask to reflect upon the game (other possible questions are listed in the link above)

How did you feel in your role? Did you feel “stigmatized”? Did the activity reflect real life in your opinion? Did the activity highlight differences and inequalities in society more than you had expected? Did you make decisions in your role based on “stereotype”? Would you change any decisions if asked the question again? Did you feel sorry for yourself, in your role – did you see yourself as a “victim”?

An alternative to the Privilege Walk

Collecting Sweets/Tokens

Ask participants to sit in a circle (with or without chairs).

Each participant is then given a *role card* – this card describes a person who the participant has to play during the activity. The facilitator should make sure all participants understand the information given on their role card.

At the beginning of the game, each participant is given 5 sweets or tokens.

The rules are explained: participants are told that they will be asked a series of questions – if they can answer “yes” to a question they can collect a sweet or token (from a box/tin/pile at the centre of the room), if they must answer “no”, they should return one sweet to the central pool. The trainer should read each question twice and make sure everyone understands. If

Resources:

Privilege, Oppression, Power:

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2012/12/how-to-talk-to-someone-about-privilege/>

<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/examining-privilege-and-oppression/>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p7gGaLYSg8Q85nsxzScP8qFh2PaVcKcn/view> (Power and Social Change)

<https://www.thehum.org/post/11-practical-steps-towards-healthy-power-dynamics-at-work>

<https://www.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/G01985.pdf> (Power and Empowerment)

Intersectionality:

<http://intersectionality.pbworks.com/w/page/106566681/Intersectionality%20-%20A%20Resource%20for%20Students%20and%20Scholars>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/dec/23/in-defence-of-intersectionality>

<https://thinkingraceblog.wordpress.com/2017/04/24/were-all-just-different-how-intersectionality-is-being-colonized-by-white-people/>

4.03 Various Forms of Decision-making

Goal: The participants will receive basic overview of what methods are used when people are taking decisions in groups, be they smaller or larger. The methods will be sorted by their inclusiveness, democratic character and effectiveness in different situations. Everyone should clearly understand the difference between autocratic and democratic forms of decision-making.

Duration: 40 min.

Group size limit: 20-25 people

Method description: 1. phase - rain of ideas. The trainer will ask the participants to start the rain of ideas on which decision-making methods they know. He/she collect all the ideas on the flip-chart paper and after 10 minutes makes a summary.

2. phase - pros and cons. The participants will have another 10 minutes to write on the post-it sticker the pros and cons of each of the methods and add their classification of the method on the autocratic-democratic spectrum. Then the participants place the stickers on the flip-chart paper.

3. debriefing. The trainer summarises the answers and add missing methods and characteristics and corrects eventual errors/misunderstandings. Basic typology of decision making on the axis democratic-autocratic:

- autocratic - usually taken by one person or small group of persons at the top of some hierarchy. The needs or opinions the people which are affected by the decision are considered only if the autocrat decides.
- decision taken by representatives - usually also taken by people at the top of some hierarchy. Even if the people are voting for some representatives, the vote is biased by

powerful actors and the representatives have a bianco check for various decisions for some time.

- decision taken by delegates - delegates are also representatives, but with a weak mandate - usually short and precisely defined. Can be useful in large scale decision making processes such as participatory budgeting.
- decision taken by majority or supermajority - sometimes it can be useful to use voting in the environment where everyone has the same power and information. But still this method may exclude some people or proposals.
- consensus decision-making - everyone is involved, the discussion on alternatives is possible and the final agreement can be adopted only if it is not blocked by anyone.

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: Flip-chart, markers, post-in (or other) stickers

Meta comment: This part is a prequel to part 4.4 and it is recommended to include both these two parts into the programme of a training. This part also builds up on issues and discussion points identified in 4.1 and 4.2

Resources:

Starhawk: decision-making processes from p.13 https://commonslibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/Empowerment_Five-Fold-Path-1.pdf

Comparison of different decision making methods by Sociocracy for All:
<https://enc7bbk2fpx.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/decision-making-methods-comparison.jpg?strip=all&lossy=1&sharp=1&w=2560&ssl=1>

4.04 SSE and Inclusive and Democratic Decision Making

Goal: The participants will understand when decision-making methods are inclusive and democratic and find out which methods are usually used in the SSE organisations or initiatives and in which situation. They will be also encouraged to imagine how to create an environment where the usual privileges or mechanisms of exclusion will be eliminated.

Duration: 30 min.

Group size limit: 20-25 people

Method description: 1. phase - group work. The participants will be divided into groups of 5-6 people. Each group will be encouraged to answer the questions:

- Why are people usually excluded from decision making processes?
- What would you do to change it?
- Which decision making method would you prefer in you SSE organisation or initiative?

2. phase - debriefing. The participants will present output from their discussion and the trainer will sum it up and comment on it.

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: Flip-chart, markers

Meta comment: This part should follow after the part 4.3 and it is recommended to include both these two parts into the programme of a training.

Resources:

Usual forms of decision-making in SSE environment (can be elaborate into a presentation):

1. Delegate the decision to a person or group: the people who have the most experience, knowledge, responsibility and commitment to the issue or are directly affected by the decision are the ones who decide because we trust them. It is appropriate for operational decisions, the whole group does not need to meet to decide everything.

There would be two cases:

1a: A prior consultation is made and then the group or person makes the decision autonomously.

2a: The person or group has a mandate from the group to make the decision without prior consultations. It is appropriate in situations where a quick decision is needed.

2. By majority: people vote on a proposal and decide according to the number of votes. It can be especially useful when it is an operative decision and we want maximum participation, for example to choose the date of an activity. It can also be useful for some organizational decisions, e.g. by qualified majority, with two-thirds of the group in favour.

3. By consensus: the final decision takes into account all the different points of view and where all the people feel that they are in agreement.

Some options of stances that may be applied within the process:

- Support: you agree with the decision and will participate in getting it done.
- Consent: you don't see the decision clearly, maybe you lack information, but you trust the group and the decision. You are willing to support the decision and implement it.
- Withdraw: you cannot support the proposal for personal reasons, but you think it is a good idea to go ahead. That implies that you will not participate in its implementation. If there are several people who withdraw, it is necessary to review the process and the proposal.
- Block: means that you do not accept the proposal because it jeopardizes the security of the group and its and its principles and general objectives. In no case can it be for a personal reason and the reason must be explained. If this happens, the proposal cannot be carried out and must be revised.

4.05 Hand Signals and Quick Consensus

Goal: Hand signals are useful tool which can help facilitators and moderators to structure the discussion better and have a better picture of group needs and attitudes. They can be helpful also if the decision is taken under the time pressure. People from social solidarity environment/movements are often facing situations in which decisions should be made very quickly. Typical examples are direct action or some protest. There is always an option to let

some authority decide, but quick consensus is worth trying out because it's a way of making the best decision in the short time. If done well, it ensures that everyone actively agrees to the decisions taken and bears equal responsibility for the consequences.

It is also good start to present various forms of decision making in practice. But the trainer should notice that consensus decision making in everyday life of SSE organisations and movements usually takes a lot of time and more complex issues are decided in complex processes and not during a single meeting.

Duration: 30 min.

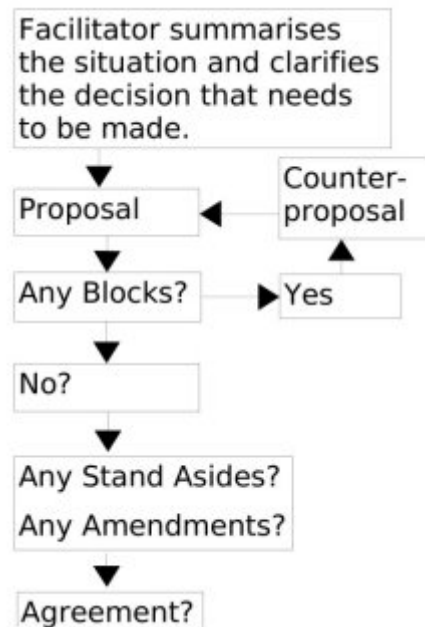
Group size limit: 25 people

Method description: 1. phase - group exercise. People will be divided in groups of 5-6. In each group, facilitator will be chosen who will receive papers with the quick consensus flowchart and description of the concrete situation the group should quickly react to. The facilitator will read the description and the group will have a short time to decide what to do. The participants will be encouraged to use hand signals.

2. phase - debriefing. The trainer will ask the participants to reflect on the exercise and comment on the reactions.

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: hand signals picture, quick consensus flowchart, papers with the description of the situation



(Note: above is an example of hand signals, the trainer may explore some others or use whichever they are familiar with)

Resources: Quick consensus: <https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/handbookweb.pdf> (p. 87)

Hand signals with descriptions: <https://neighborhoodanarchists.org/facilitation>

4.06 Consensus

Goal: The participants will learn about the consensus decision making method and try it in practice. They will know when it can be useful to use it and what are its pros and cons.

Duration: 90 min.

Group size limit: 20-25 people

Method description: 1. phase - Consensus Chairs Game (15 minutes):

- Place a stack of chairs in the centre of the room. 5 or 6 chairs is usually enough.
- Divide the group into 4 or 5 smaller groups. Hand each group an instruction card, ensure they know it relates to the stack of chairs as opposed to any other chairs in the room, and tell them they can start when you say so. Each group has a card with different instructions. The goal of the game is for the groups to communicate with each other to achieve consensus - and complete the assigned task together with all other groups. They are not supposed to compete with each other.
- *NB: ensure that you use cards that are compatible with the layout of the room you're using e.g. it is indeed possible to put the chairs next to the window and also next to the door – remember you want it to be possible for everyone to succeed.*
- Tell them to begin
- Let the action run for 3 or 4 minutes, until the instructions are complete, or until the discussion is still constructive and can lead to consensus – whichever comes first
- Sit everyone down and debrief. Suggested debrief questions are below – choose according to the outcome – whether there was co-operation or conflict:
- What happened? Talk us through events as they unfolded...
- Who succeeded in fulfilling their instructions? What did you have to do to succeed? How did that feel?
- Who didn't? What stopped you succeeding?
- What else could you have done?
- At what moment did things change? What caused the change? How did it feel from then on
- Can we list the skills and attitudes needed for us all to succeed?

Instructions (examples):

1. Put the chairs in a circle
2. Put the chairs near a door
3. Put the chairs near a window
4. Put the chairs near a noticeboard
5. Put the chairs near a table
6. Sit in the chairs

2. phase - presentation. The trainer will present the basic theory of consensus decision making and explain the main terms. After the presentation there will be a space for questions and clarification.

3. phase - fish bowl role play game:

Consensus 'Fishbowl' roleplay

Aim: to put into practice some of the values and attitudes already discussed, to encourage deep listening and empathy, to give a sense of how a diverse group can reach consensus

- Set up a circle of chairs facing inwards, one for each role. Cluster other chairs behind each of the inner circle of chairs .
- Introduction: explain the aim of the exercise – to run a meeting with a variety of different perspectives present and see how easy it is to move towards consensus (the group may not reach consensus in the time available).
- Introduce the idea of a fishbowl roleplay: *“there's an inner circle of chairs with each chair representing one perspective in the discussion. We'll split you into small groups, one group per perspective. In your small groups you'll have time to chat about your perspective. Then one person from each group will sit in their chair and we'll have a discussion. If the spokesperson from the group has had enough, or run out of steam, they simply get up and rejoin their group. Someone else from the group must occupy the chair. Similarly if someone from their group wants a turn they simply tap them on the shoulder and take over the chair. All chairs must be occupied. The scenario we're discussing is as follows. The blockade has been put in place successfully. Some people are locked on, others are sitting in groups, and there are a few folk standing and chatting, playing musical instruments and so on. You've been there about an hour. A senior police officer has made an announcement saying that unless the group disperse in the next 15 minutes anyone remaining will be arrested. You've come together in to have a discussion and decide on a response”.*
- Perspectives represented could include the following (but feel free to add some or replace others). Use as many as work with your size of group, but a minimum of 3 roles is advisable:
- Group 1: want to blockade until the bitter end with or without others – they are locked-on to a concrete filled wheelie bin and mean business
- Group 2: feel it's important to make a statement, but think that's already been achieved and would advocate moving before there's a serious risk of arrest
- Group 3: want to support the blockade, but really don't want to risk arrest. Their policy is to move as soon as asked by the police. So they have already moved away from the gates
- Group 4: want to remain as long as possible but feel that there's a need for a critical mass. Rather than too few people remaining, they'd prefer to call a dignified end to the blockade and all leave together
- Group 5: are legal observers. They will stay in place as long as there are people at risk of arrest. They're at the meeting to stay informed so they can make the necessary preparation
- Group 6: are musicians and street actors who have come to add some creativity and colour to the blockade. They have a public address system and lots of papier maché props that they do not want to be damaged. Some of the group are happy to rejoin the blockade once their equipment is moved to safety
- Group 7: have no firm feelings. They're not experienced blockaders but came committed to take part for the duration. They are open to hearing from more experienced activists about what's best

- Each small groups takes 7 or 8 minutes to discuss their perspective and decide on what's important to them and what their ideal outcome would be
- A spokesperson from each group sits in each chair – the discussion runs for 15 – 20 minutes
- You may decide on a number of interventions to help the group towards consensus if it's not happening naturally
- At an appropriate point remind the group that they are looking for consensus and ask them to pause and then start deeply listening, showing empathy and value for each other's perspective and looking for a way forward that meets everyone's needs
- Ask small groups to swap roles, especially if 2 groups have become entrenched and/or polarised. Get them to physically move places and pick up the conversation from the other perspective
- Ask for a volunteer to summarise the common ground between the groups
- Debrief. Suggested questions are below. Choose ones that work for your outcome:

What happened?

Who felt you were moving towards an outcome they would be happy with? Who didn't? Why the difference?

What worked well and what worked less well?

How well do you think you were displaying the attitudes and values we talked about earlier? What were the obstacles? How could you overcome them?

How did you know that you were being listened to and respected? What signs were there from the group?

Does it have to be an either or decision? Can anyone see a way forward that would have allowed everyone to feel heard and respected?

- For a summary, ask everyone to share with a partner one thing they will try and do differently at the blockade

Source: rhizome.coop

Phase 4. - debriefing: The trainer opens the final round, answers questions and wrap up this part.

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: Chairs, role play game cards

Resources:

Seeds for Change: A Consensus Handbook

<https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/handbookweb.pdf>

Rhizome: <http://rhizome.coop/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/consensus-intro.pdf>

Consensus flowchart:

https://rhizomenetwork.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/consensus_flowchart.pdf

<https://neighborhoodanarchists.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/consensusprocess.png>

4.07 Consent

Goal: The participants will learn about the consent decision making method and what is the difference between consent and consensus. They will know what are the pros and cons of these methods and learn that consent is the crucial decision-making method in Sociocracy.

Duration: 20 min.

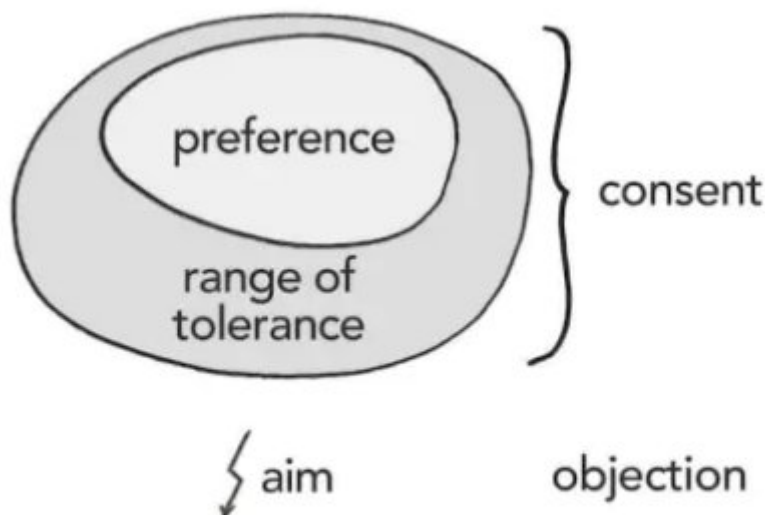
Group size limit: 20-25 people

Method description: 1. phase - round. Each participant will be asked to define the difference between consensus and consent.

2. phase - presentation and discussion. The trainer will summarise the round and explain the differences and basic terms such as the range of tolerance. Presentation of the consent method will follow with the discussion on pros and cons at the end.

The difference in the form of a slogan:

In consensus, we ask everyone “do you agree?”. In consent, we ask “do you object?”



Range of tolerance is necessary to understand the large impact of the
consent decision making

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: Beamer

Meta comment: This part should be always trained with and after the part 4.7.

Resources: Difference between the consensus and consent: <https://circleforward.us/consent-vs-consensus-whats-the-difference/>

Sociocracy for all consent method description: <https://www.sociocracyforall.org/consent-decision-making/>

Clips consent decision making method: https://clips.gen-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CONSENT-DECISION-MAKING-METHOD_compressed.pdf

4.08 Multi-voting and List of Preferences

Goal: The participants will learn about these two methods and try both in practice. They will know when it can be useful to use it and what their pros and cons are.

Duration: 60 min.

Group size limit: 20 people

Method description: 1. phase - role play game. The participants propose their own ideas for a public project financed from public money in their neighbourhood. They shortly present it to others and explain why it is important. Then the short discussion with the trainer as a facilitator follows to answer any questions regarding the projects and clarify what is not clear. The trainer explains that only half of the projects can be supported and the role of the participants is to select them. The decision-making process will have 2 steps..

The first round will simply prioritise the projects. Each participants can vote for 4 different projects. They will put their preferences written down on pieces of paper in a hat (or some vessel) - the trainer collects the votes and assigns them to each project. However, the results of this round of voting will be hidden and announced only after the second step is finished.

In the second round, the participants will evaluate the proposed projects using a set of criteria. The criteria can be either prepared beforehand or agreed upon in a common discussion before voting. Each participants will fill in a prepared table and give each project points from 1-5 (1 is the worst score, 5 the best) regarding each criterion.

After the decision is made, the trainer/facilitator will announce the results.

2. phase - debriefing. The trainer will encourage the participants to compare the results and methods and discuss which result is more acceptable and what are the reasons and pros and cons of the methods.

Table for multi-voting:

	Criterion 1 (e.g. is it a new public service?)	Criterion 2 (e.g. is the project environmentally friendly?)	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5	Sum
Project 1						

Project 2						
Project 3						
Project 4						
Project 5						
Project 6						
.....						

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: Flip-chart, markers, papers with prepared tables, pens/markers, chairs

Resources: Clips Preference, Not Vote: <https://clips.gen-europe.org/preference-not-vote/>

**4.09 Inclusive Decision Making Processes and Structures:
Sociocracy, Holacracy, Deliberative Fora and Participative Processes**

Goal: The participants will get basic information about several tools used for taking democratic decisions in various environments, such as urban public spaces or larger organisation. The discussion on complex decision-making processes and decisions which should involve a large group of stakeholders will be opened. It is important to clarify that decisions are not made only at one or two meetings, but can be a result of months-long processes or can become part of the structure of an organisation or initiative. Complex decisions also require some prerequisites, such as learning, for more qualified decision.

Duration: 60 min.

Group size limit: 20-25 people

Method description: presentation and discussion. The trainer will present various decision-making processes and after each presentation opens a discussion for answering questions and clarifications.

1. part – Sociocracy

Source: Sociocracy for all: <https://www.sociocracyforall.org/content/>

2. part – Holacracy

Source: <https://www.holacracy.org/explore>

<https://energized.org/en/what-is-holacracy/>

3. part – Participatory budgeting and planning

PB: <https://participedia.net/method/146>

<https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/what-is-pb/>

PP: <https://participatoryplanning.ca/participatory-planning>

<https://civicplan.ca/what-is-participatory-planning/>

4. part – Citizens assemblies as a tool of deliberative democracy

<https://participedia.net/method/4258>

<https://citizensassemblies.org/standards/>

5 part – Final discussion, clarifications, wrap up.

Indoor and outdoor

Materials needed: Beamer

4.10 Diamond Ranking - decision making game

Goal: The participants will experience a process of decision making and will get a chance to reflect on it.

Duration: 40 min.

Group size limit: about 20 people

Method description: Exercise in groups (about 3-4 people each). Each group gets a set of cards with human rights printed on them and has to rank them according to importance in the shape of a diamond (see resources). After finishing the task ask each group to tell how they ranked the cards and why. But ranking the printed cards in groups is a pretext to later talk about group dynamics and ways the decisions have been made in each of the groups, so the next questions should not be about human rights but about what actually happened in the group when the decisions were taken: who had most influence on the outcome, how were disputes solved, for whom was the group effort a priority and for whom their personal opinion. If the group decides to create a different shape than instructed, talk about that as well and ask the other groups why they did not follow the instructions.

Meta comment: good exercise to go before or after theory

Indoor/outdoor: indoor

Materials needed: printed cards

Resources: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2017-06/Activity%20-%20Seeking%20safety.pdf>
(p. 23 - printable cards and description)

4.11 The Diamond of Participation - theoretical input

Goal: Participants get acquainted with the dynamics of a group process

Duration: 15 min.

Group size limit: any

Method description: At a chosen moment of the workshop, introduce the chart or draw a simplified version of yourself on a flip-chart and explain to participants about the dynamics of the decision-making process and especially about the “groan zone” and the difficulty to facilitate a transfer to the “convergence zone” and closure. You don’t have to go into detail, the general idea may be enough in most cases.

Meta comment: Try introducing this before or after an exercise

Indoor/outdoor: indoor

Materials needed: chart projected through beamer or drawn on flip-chart (see resources)

Resources: <https://www.chriscorrigan.com/parkinglot/the-diamond-of-participation/>

4.12 Styles of Decision Making

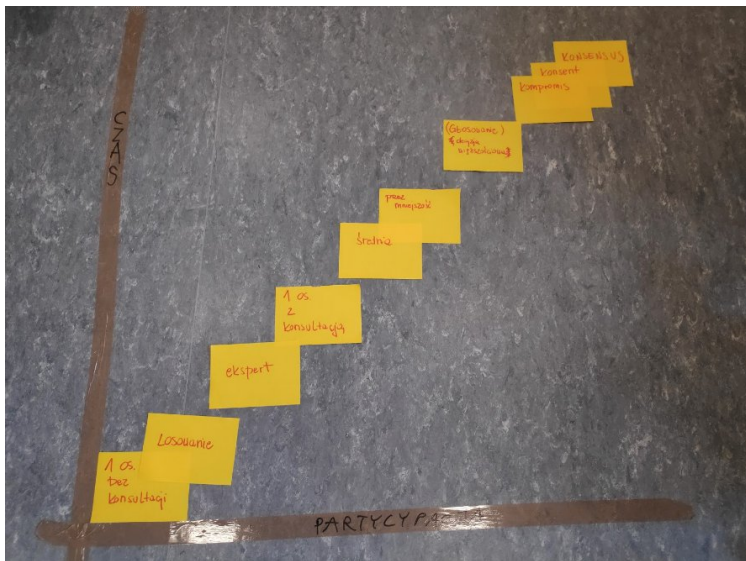
Goal: Participants get to know different styles of decision making and their utility in different situations.

Duration: 30 min.

Group size limit: 20

Method description: Make two lines with masking tape on the floor to create a chart (one horizontal and the other vertical). One line will symbolize the **level of participation** and the other **the time needed to take a decision**. Write different styles of decision making on the cards and try to decide together where to place them within the axes. The ones that take more time give better participation and vice versa. Discuss why different styles are needed and in what situations (e.g. in different types of decisions: organizational, operational, strategic).

Here is a list of decision making styles to start with (but you can add more if participants give their own examples): Consensus, By majority, By minority, By authority with discussion, By average, By expert, By authority without discussion



Meta comment: This is a similar activity to “4.3 Various Forms of Decision Making”

Indoor/outdoor: indoor

Materials needed: masking tape, moderation cards, marker

Resources:

<https://extension.umn.edu/leadership-development/best-methods-making-group-decisions>

<https://uncw.edu/studentorgs/documents/decision%20making.pdf>

5.1 Preparation - Decision - Next steps

Goal: Participants brainstorm the different stages of a decision-making process

Duration: 45 min.

Group size limit: 18

Method description: This is based on the method “flying flip-charts”. Take 3 flip-charts and write a title on each. The titles should be something like: “1. Preparation for taking the decision”, “2. What is a good decision”, “3. Next steps after taking decision”. Participants form 3 groups and each group spends some time with each flip-chart to brainstorm things that should be included at a given stage of the process. They add new things to what the previous group has written. 3 groups and 3 flip-charts should give 3 rounds - give more time for the first rounds when the flip-charts are empty.

After filling-up the flip-charts look at them together and discuss the different stages. Fill in gaps in the process if you see any.

Indoor/outdoor: indoor

Materials needed: flip-charts, markers

This module is part of the Soft Skills Training for the social solidarity economy initiatives and organisations developed within the project Hard Times – Soft Skills. All other related materials can be found at the address: <https://www.socioeco.org/hati-SOS>

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