

Annual Report



GEN EUROPE
GLOBAL
ECOVILLAGE
NETWORK

2025



A WORD FROM THE TEAM

2025 was a year unlike any other in GEN Europe's history. As the Global Ecovillage Network turned thirty years, proving the longevity and vibrancy of the network, we found ourselves not only looking back at the seeds our predecessors planted, but feeling the weight and joy of the living movement those seeds have become. Three decades of relationships, learning, courage, and community woven together across the world turned into something quietly extraordinary.

From the lake shores of Manas Garden in Hungary, where over 700 people from 48 countries gathered to celebrate, to the quiet persistence of our EU-funded projects connecting communities across the continent, 2025 reminded us again why this work matters. Ecovillages are not just intentional communities - they are indeed living laboratories of the world we know in our hearts is possible.

This report captures the work of our small but dedicated team: nine staff members and seven council members who coordinate projects, tend partnerships, communicate with members and the broader world, and keep the administrative engine running so that communities can focus on what they do best - living regeneratively and inspiring others.

We are proud of what we have built together over the decades. And we are already leaning forward into 2026 and beyond, with new projects approved, governance refined, and a network more alive than ever.



**In community,
GEN Europe Staff & Council**

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF GEN

On 18 October 1995, at the Findhorn Community in Scotland, a group of ecovillagers and academics gathered and gave birth to the Global Ecovillage Network - GEN. Thirty years later, that founding vision of interconnected communities as living cells of a transformed civilisation has grown into a worldwide movement of thousands of communities across six continents.

The butterfly that started it all

At the founding Findhorn conference, as GEN co-founder Ross Jackson presented the concept of 'imaginal cells' — the cells that guide a caterpillar's metamorphosis — a butterfly landed on his overhead projector. That synchronicity gave GEN its enduring logo: a butterfly superimposed on the Earth. A symbol of transformation still carried by every ecovillage in our network.



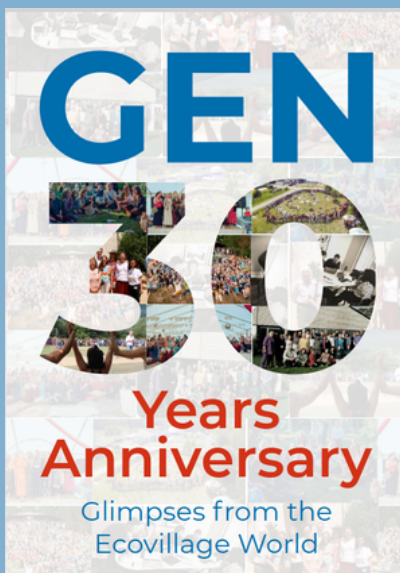
Throughout 2025, communities across the GEN network gathered to mark this milestone. The centrepiece in Europe was the 2025 European Ecovillage Gathering in Hungary - a truly global celebration that drew representatives from 26 European countries, 5 Asian countries, 5 countries of the Americas, 4 African countries, and Oceania.



At the Gathering, GEN's founding generation shared their stories alongside young people who represent the movement's future. Ross Jackson transported us back to the 1970s Danish co-housing movement, to the spiritual awakening that led him to found Gaia Trust in 1987, and finally to that magical Findhorn moment. Their voices, interwoven with the songs, dances and workshops of hundreds of participants made it clear: the ecovillage movement is thriving.

"GEN is us, all of us! This is not a festival, it is a place to get to know each other. We trust each other, we work together across borders and across continents. It is about human beings coming together and creating community."

— Steffen Emrich, European Ecovillage Gathering 2025



As part of the anniversary year, GEN Europe members created a **commemorative 30th Anniversary Book**. The first edition, a draft rich with reflections from voices across the network, was published in August 2025, with a final illustrated edition coming soon. Special gratitude goes to the Editorial Team: Steffen Emrich & Camilla Nielsen-Englyst!

GEN International, meanwhile, announced plans for a new global digital platform launching in 2026; designed to deepen the connections that have always been at the heart of this movement, and to support the next generation of communities working for a regenerative world. GEN International also received the prestigious LUSH Spring Prize 2025, recognising its contribution to grassroots ecological regeneration. A truly fitting tribute in this anniversary year!

01 · BELONGING

Welcoming New Voices into the Network

In 2025, GEN Europe expanded its circle – welcoming new members, deepening youth integration, building capacity, and creating pathways for people to enter and grow within the movement.

New Members of 2025

We are delighted to welcome the following projects and networks into our growing community:

- Ecoprojects: Catfarm (France), Zeleno Doba (Serbia)
- Aspiring Ecovillages: Löwenherz Community (Germany), LUMEN (Italy), Earthbound (Sweden)
- Aspiring Ecovillage Networks: Pentref-Eco Cymru and Ecovillage Network UK (Wales)
- Full Members (approved at GA): GEN Slovenia, HUB Feenix (Finland)

NextGEN Europe: Youth as a Structural Force



A major milestone of the year was the deepened collaboration with NextGEN Europe. Following discussions from the 2024 General Assembly, we supported a proposal to officially integrate NextGEN into our statutes as the formal youth branch of GEN Europe. This ensures that youth voices are not merely consulted, but structurally embedded at the heart of our governance with a long-term commitment to building the support structures needed for their growing autonomy.

GENESIS: Learning Journeys into Ecovillage Life

We supported and promoted the GENESIS programme (Global Ecovillage Network Europe Sustainable Initiatives Support) – an immersive learning pathway combining hands-on experience in European ecovillages with expert facilitation training. GENESIS is designed to support the creation of more just, sustainable, and equitable communities, serving people exploring community life for the first time as well as those seeking to develop facilitation skills or become trainers themselves.

Building Skills: Sociocracy and Group Facilitation

Within the framework of the Communities for Local Green Deals project, we organised a Group Facilitation and Sociocracy training at Sunny Hill Ecovillage in Slovenia – giving community practitioners hands-on tools to make decision-making more inclusive, clear, and effective.

Ecoprise: Building Sustainable Livelihoods

We worked on and promoted the Ecoprise Course – a free, comprehensive programme developed by the Ecoprise Consortium to help people learn how to build thriving, sustainable businesses. By supporting access to this resource, we contributed to building the economic resilience of ecovillage communities and their members.



Growing the Team

At the close of 2025, GEN Europe's team comprised 10 staff members and 7 council members, supported by 4 ESC volunteers contributing to communications, membership, the Gathering, and projects. Anna Książek joined the projects area in October 2025 to strengthen project development capacity, and a Junior Project Developer Volunteer role was added to support Horizon Europe work. A dedicated ESC landing page was launched on gen-europe.org to improve discoverability for prospective volunteers.

02 · OPENNESS

Communicating a Movement

The ways in which we communicated our work in 2025 was rooted in this ambition, spanning digital channels, storytelling, policy positioning, and how we show up in the world.

30th Anniversary Campaign

The 30th anniversary of the Global Ecovillage Network served as a natural communications anchor throughout the year, elevating our storytelling across every channel. The campaign included:

- Celebratory social media content across Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn
- A commemorative 30th Anniversary Book compiled to a large part during the Gathering in Hungary, with the illustrated final edition to be released
- Expanded Full Member Interviews, deepening the visibility of diverse ecovillages in our network
- Refreshed annual Membership Certificates and stickers

Direct Member Communication

We launched a Telegram Broadcast Channel in 2025 – a fast, direct channel for announcements, opportunities, and network news. The newsletter continued its regular cadence, and we redesigned our National Network online meetings into a more engaging, participatory format to keep hubs connected year-round.

COM4LGD: Interactive Documentary and Website

One of the year's most tangible communications outputs was the launch of the COM4LGD interactive documentary and project website – produced as part of the Communities for Local Green Deal project (COM4LGD), a consortium including GEN Europe, ECOLISE, ICLEI Europe, and others. The documentary and accompanying website represent a substantial storytelling achievement, bringing to life the work of communities across Europe working toward a local Green Deal.

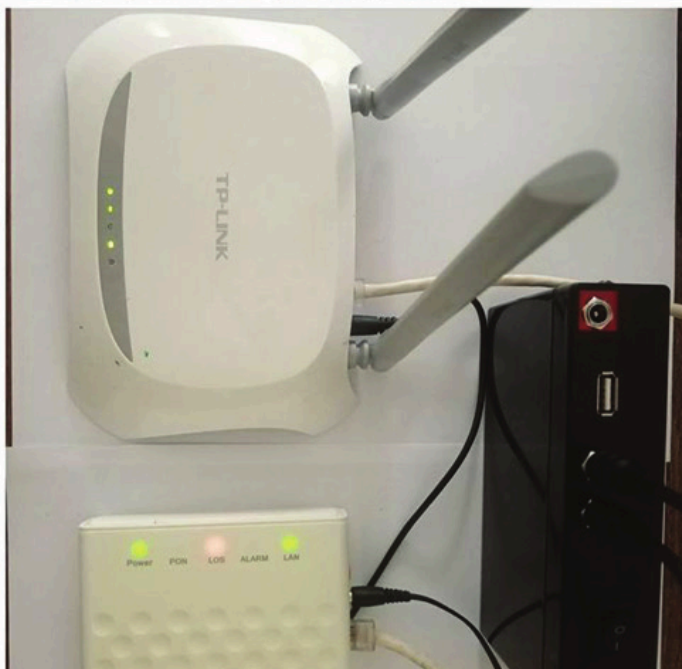


Digital Sovereignty: Leaving X, Embracing Ethical Platforms

In April 2025, we published a public statement on digital sovereignty and our approach to social media, announcing our decision to discontinue engagement on X (formerly Twitter). Rooted in our values of open, ethical, and transparent communication, this move was accompanied by exploration of Mastodon and other federation-friendly tools as alternatives more aligned with the network's principles.

Amplifying Member Stories: Ukraine and Beyond

We published a feature interview on green tech innovations powering resilience in Ukrainian ecovillages, in conversation with Maksym Zalevski from GEN Ukraine – shining a light on the inspiring ways that ecovillage communities have maintained ecological and social resilience under extraordinarily difficult conditions.



03 · SOLIDARITY

Standing With Communities in Crisis

In 2025, GEN Europe worked on showing up for communities facing conflict, displacement, and injustice: through storytelling, through fundraising, and through the quiet work of network-building across borders.

What We Stand For

In 2025, GEN Europe clarified and published its values position publicly. We stand firmly against all systems of oppression, including environmental destruction, colonialism, systemic racism, patriarchy, economic injustice, and all forms of discrimination and exclusion. We reject the forces of war, militarisation, and authoritarianism that divide societies, erode democratic freedoms, and perpetuate cycles of violence.

We affirm the power of dialogue, solidarity, and deep listening as pathways to healing and transformation. We are committed to nonviolence not only in human relationships but also in our relationship with the Earth.

The Great Peace March to Gaza

We amplified and communicated the story of three members of Sieben Linden Ecovillage who joined the Great Peace March to Gaza – a three-day, 48 km walk to the Rafah border crossing to call for the opening of humanitarian corridors. By sharing their story, GEN Europe affirmed that ecovillage communities are not withdrawn from the world, but deeply engaged with it.

Network-Building Mission to Ukraine

We ran a fundraising campaign to support a vital network-building mission to Ukraine – mobilising our community around the importance of maintaining connection with GEN Ukraine's member communities during the ongoing conflict. The campaign raised €2,000, a meaningful expression of network solidarity.



Solidarity, Resilience and Support: A Dedicated Resource Page

To make our solidarity concrete and actionable, we created and maintain a dedicated [Solidarity, Resilience and Support page on our website](#) – a central hub for communities and individuals who wish to take action in support of those facing crisis. The page brings together concrete ways to support ecovillage communities in Ukraine and Palestinians in Gaza, with vetted donation channels and partner organisations. The page reflects our belief that solidarity must be both principled and practical: clearly communicated, easy to act on, and rooted in trust.



04 · INTEGRITY

Governing and Advocating with Care

Integrity, for us, means building structures that reflect our values – not just in what we say, but in how we make decisions, allocate power, and engage with the wider world. In 2025, governance reform, policy advocacy, and public commitments on gender equality all embodied this principle.

Gender Equality Plan

We published a Public Gender Equality Plan for GEN Europe – a formal commitment to promoting gender equality and creating an inclusive environment where all individuals have equal opportunities to participate and thrive. The plan outlines strategies across leadership and governance, organisational culture, communications, and project work.

Contribution to the European Affordable Housing Plan

GEN Europe made a formal contribution to the European Affordable Housing Plan, positioning community land models, cooperative housing, and ecovillage approaches as legitimate and scalable responses to Europe's housing crisis. This advocacy work reflects our commitment to connecting community-led practice with policy processes at the European level.

General Assemblies

Two key governance moments shaped 2025. An Extraordinary GA in February (online) addressed pressing organisational updates and statute resilience. The Annual GA and Gathering in August at Manas Garden, Hungary, brought strategic decision-making together with celebration. Council election cycles were reformed: elections now take place every two years, with a four-year council term. Newly elected council members Neus, Anne, and Ronja joined the network's governance.



Membership Policies: Fairness by Design

We introduced a new Membership 'Borders' Policy to clearly define regional participation while consciously avoiding the replication of colonial patterns. A new pricing category structure was also implemented, making membership tiers fairer and more consistent across different economic regions.

National Network Engagement

Two in-person National Network meetings took place: one in January at Hof van Moeder Aarde (Netherlands), focused on strategic alignment, and one in November at Sunny Hill (Slovenia), focused on advocacy and political impact. These meetings deepened the connection between GEN Europe's governance structures and the national hubs that anchor the network.

Coordination Rhythms

Internal coordination in 2025 was structured to balance clarity with connection:

- Monthly coordination meetings with all staff (9 per quarter)
- Monthly council meetings, plus three in-person council and staff meetings
- Monthly connection with GEN International and the NSC circle
- New connection with the IERI Institute for Ecovillage Research, in formation

Administrative Resilience

We successfully navigated the administrative transition of our Spanish association, securing our operational foundation for the years ahead.



05 · ROOTEDNESS

Building Infrastructure That Lasts

In 2025, we invested in the digital, technical, and knowledge infrastructure that allows everything else to function – the quiet but essential work that makes connection possible.

Website and Digital Presence

Our website continued to serve as the primary hub for the network. Key developments in 2025 included:

- A dedicated ESC landing page to improve discoverability for prospective volunteers
- Ongoing improvements to responsiveness and mobile performance across europe.org
- Improvements to the Members' Area, including membership-based content display and synchronisation with Gathering registration systems

Technical Infrastructure

Behind every communication sits a layer of technical infrastructure. In 2025, the IT team played a key supporting role:

- Improved CiviCRM setup for member registration flows and recurring payments
- A new IT Toolbox page launched and an IT article series planned to share knowledge across the network

Ethical Technology

We began active research into ethical AI for article writing and communications, and we explored Mastodon and other federation-friendly platforms as alternatives to corporate social media. These explorations reflect our commitment to being rooted in principles, not just pragmatics.



06 · COMING TOGETHER

European Ecovillage Gathering at Manas Garden

2025 was a landmark year for GEN Europe – a year of heightened visibility, deepened governance, expanded membership, and significant organisational growth. Rather than report on our work by department or workstream, this review is organised around the values that guide everything we do: the principles that make GEN Europe not just an organisation, but a living movement.



700+

Participants

48

Countries

~80

Workshops

Tending Our Roots

With a theme of Tending Our Roots, the Gathering honoured the deep foundations of the ecovillage movement: its pioneers, core values, and foundational knowledge, while nurturing growth for future generations. The movement's elders guided us through the history of the network, representatives from regional chapters took stock of where the movement stands today, and young people invited us to look toward the future. All sessions are available on the GEN Europe PeerTube and YouTube channel!

Workshops and Programme

The Gathering received nearly 200 workshop applications – selecting the 80 or so that could fit into the programme was no easy task. Workshops were organised across six streams based on the four dimensions of regeneration that ecovillages seek to address: social, ecological, economic, and cultural/spiritual.

A Truly Global Gathering

The diversity of the 2025 Gathering created powerful cultural exchanges – traditional Haka was performed by indigenous voices from Aotearoa (New Zealand)! Participants came not just from across Europe but from Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Oceania, embodying the truly global character of this anniversary year.



General Assembly at Manas Garden

The General Assembly, held during the Gathering at Manas Garden, was a key governance moment: it served as both a reporting platform and a strategic forum where GEN Europe opened conversations about its political engagement and direction. The Gathering also enacted a change of statutes, with council elections now held every two years on a four-year term cycle. Three new council members were welcomed: Neus Valls Izard, Anne Bretschneider, and Ronja Tammenpää.

"I love to be among people who seriously believe that a new world is possible. At the Gatherings, I meet the passion of young people and the thoughtfulness of elders who have thought deeply about how it is possible and why it is difficult."

– Gathering participant, 2025

07 · GROWING OUR IMPACT

Projects & Partnerships

GEN Europe's project portfolio grew significantly in 2025, with several new EU-funded projects approved and entering their early phases. Our project strategy is anchored in three pillars: Member Support & Development, Building Cross-Network Partnerships & Collaboration, and GEN Europe Sustainable Income & Organisational Development.

Ongoing Projects in 2025

- ECOPRISE (Erasmus+ KA2): Bridges between ecovillages and social enterprise models
- ESC 2025 (European Solidarity Corps): Volunteer placements across the network
- CIGFYS (Erasmus+ KA153 Youth): Graphic facilitation training in Spain
- COM4LGD (CERV): Community engagement and cross-sector collaboration
- Sustain-Ability (Erasmus+ KA220 Youth): Sustainability education for young people
- SUSTech (Erasmus+ KA210 Adults): Technology and sustainability learning
- CBEE (Erasmus+ KA122 Adults): Deepening educational capacity in ecovillages
- ESC Dreamteam 2025 & L&T Seminar (Erasmus+ KA153 Youth, Denmark)

Newly Approved Projects (entering 2025–2026)

- ESC 2026: Approved and in preparation
- CHOICE (CERV): Community Land Housing models across Europe
- NEB.CONNECT (Creative Europe): Cultural regeneration – GEN Europe is Communication Lead
- RUDI (Horizon Europe): GEN Europe leads WP3 on dissemination and storytelling



Project Survey 2025

Two surveys were carried out in 2025 to align future GEN Europe projects with the interests and needs of our members, and to guide collective strategy.

Social Tools & Community Building

Members prioritised:

- Ecovillage Tools – governance, facilitation, conflict management
- Social Equity & Justice
- Youth Empowerment
- Social Enterprises & Cooperative Models

Climate Resilience & Mitigation

Members prioritised:

- Biodiversity & Ecosystem Resilience
- Community-led Rural Development
- Economic Resilience & Alternative Economic Systems
- Food Resilience & Sovereignty



08 · RENEWAL

Growing to Meet What Comes Next

As 2025 drew to a close, GEN Europe looked forward with a stronger foundation, a more complex project portfolio, and a team ready for the work ahead.

Organisational Maturation

2025 was a year of significant organisational maturation for GEN Europe. As our project portfolio and partnerships grew, we recognised that our existing structure needed to evolve to meet the scale of our ambitions. A broader portfolio of major projects, deeper transnational partnerships, and a more engaged network call for structures that support both agility and accountability.

Team Structure at Year-End

At the close of 2025, GEN Europe's team was organised as follows:

- Communications: 1 person, 60 hours/month (+ additional project hours)
- IT: 1 person, 60 hours/month
- Gathering: 2 persons, 120 hours/month combined
- Finance: 1 person, 60 hours/month (also contributing to projects)
- Membership: 1 person, 60 hours/month (also supporting Gathering registrations)
- Projects: 3 persons, approximately 120 hours/month combined
- Coordination: 1 person, 60 hours/month
- ESC Volunteers: 4 volunteers supporting communications, membership, the Gathering, and projects

Looking Ahead to 2026

As we enter 2026, GEN Europe's coordination infrastructure is adapting to the reality of a larger, more complex organisation. The European Ecovillage Gathering, a deepening EU project portfolio, expanded national network engagement, and a growing membership base all represent opportunities to demonstrate that ecovillage values can be practised at scale – with care, with creativity, and with each other.



THANK YOU

Annual reports are, by their nature, incomplete. They capture activities, numbers, and milestones, but they cannot fully hold the texture of a year: the challenges we tackle together, the creative breakthroughs, the partnership conversations that begin tentatively and become lasting friendships. What this report can tell you is that GEN Europe entered 2025 as a 30-year-old network in the fullness of its maturity and leaves it with renewed roots growing in many new directions.

We are grateful to every member, partner, volunteer, council member, and staff person who made 2025 what it was. To the communities who hosted, to the participants who travelled, to the funders who believed, and to the wider ecovillage movement whose existence remains, thirty years on, the most compelling argument that another world is not only possible – it is already here, in thousands of places, being lived every day.

GEN Europe Staff & Council

Global Ecovillage Network Europe · gen-europe.org · 2025

