

Webinar: Education and Exchange along the European Green Belt





Kathleen Ehrlich & Karin Kowol, BUND Thuringia

20 March 2025







Borders Separate - Nature Unites: European Green Belt Youth Encounters

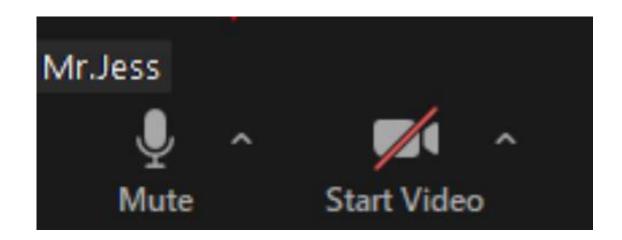


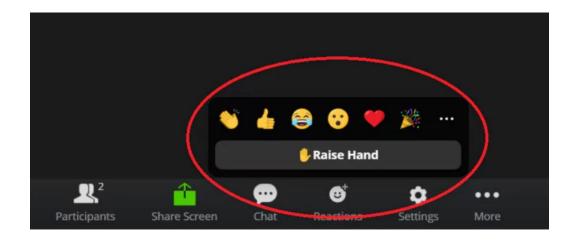
Bevor we start...



Technical Notes:

We will record this webinar.

















Agenda



Introduction: Project and Partners	Kathleen Ehrlich Tomaž Koltai
Topics and Activities at the European Green Belt	Kathleen Ehrlich
Organisation and Target Groups	Karin Kowol
Activities BUND Thuringia: Program Youth Leader Training	Karin Kowol
Activities Örség Nationalpark and Municipality Šalovci: Youth Camp Program	Tomaž Koltai
Ecological Education Institute of Upper Franconia	Dr. André Maslo
Discussion and Questions	













Let's get to know each other.



Please write in the chat:

Where are you from? (Country, city, organization?)

Are you already offering projects at the Green Belt?

What are your expectations for today's webinar?

















Borders Separate - Nature Unites: European Green Belt Youth Encounters

The project connects young people across borders exploring nature and history of the European Green Belt borders.

Strengthening cross border cooperation and awareness of the Green Belt in our project regions by:

- International work camps and youth leader training to get to know different regions of the European Green Belt
- Creative Outputs: Social media campaigns, videos, and local events











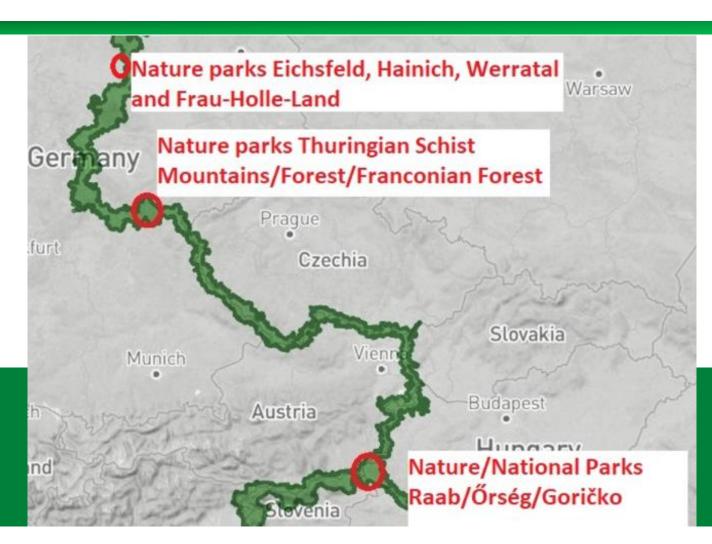








National Park Örség, Hungary





Municipality Šalovci, Slovenia















BESTbelt – More power for the European Green Belt



The EU-funded BESTbelt project, part of the European Green Belt Initiative, aims to enhance biodiversity conservation across 24 countries. Launched in 2021, it empowers civil society organizations with small grants to protect biodiversity, restore nature, raise environmental awareness, strengthen communities, and create green jobs until the project's end in 2026. With 49 projects in 21 countries involving around 80 organizations, BESTbelt promotes cross-border collaboration to turn the vision of safeguarding Europe's longest green network into reality.

















BUND Thuringia and BUNDjugend Thuringia

- Land management of own areas along the Green Belt Thuringia and habitat maintenance through landscape conservation efforts
- Public relations and networking with cooperation partners to raise awareness of the Green Belt
- Educational projects and camps
- Cross-border activities at the Green Belt
- Planned: Large-scale nature conservation project at the tri-border region of Bavaria, Saxony, and Thuringia

Project examples:

"Cross-Linking the Green Belt" (2019-2025)

Projects together with BUNDjugend (Youth organisation) – examples:

- Vanished Places and Vanished Species Tracing the Green Belt" (2021-2023)
- "Borders Separate Nature Unites: European Green Belt Youth Encounters" (2024-2026)







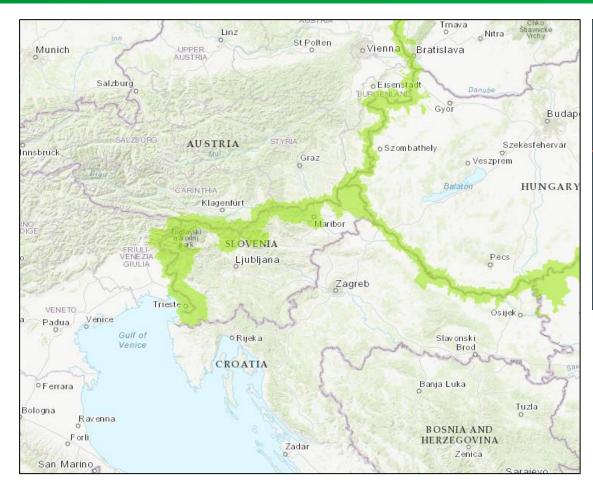








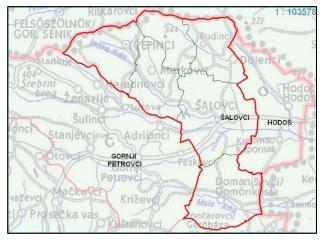






MUNICIPALITIES IN PREKMURJE REGION

Where are we?



MUNICIPALITY OF ŠALOVCI

EUROPEAN GREEN BELT

Webinar Education and Exchange along the European Green Belt 20 March 2025



















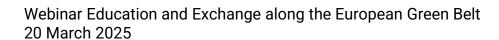


Who are we?

DAPHNE CNEORUM F. ARBUSCULOIDES – ENDEMIC SPECIES



MOSAIC LIKE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

















Kuzma Gornji Petrovci Grad Moravske Toplice Kabillo

Border with Hungary





ONCE BORDER GUARD STATION, TODAY MUSEUM















Kuzma Gornji Petrovci Grad Moravske Toplice Kabillo

Border with Hungary





DOMANJŠEVCI FARMSTEAD MUSEUM

















Loss of home and personal history

Fates, personal experiences (Eyewitness accounts)

How do we shape a livable, social and just future?

Human influence on nature

GREEN BELT

Tracing history

Democracy and participation: influence of borders and the longing for a better life

Processing our German and European history

Biodiversity



















- History of the Iron Curtain from the Second World War until 1989, encompassing the two military power blocs and social and economic systems
- Personal Stories (experiences of escape, forced resettlement, life in the restricted zone, or as border guard)
- The development of the Green Belt as posivitve example of transformation (National Natural Monument, Natura 2000)
- The importance of the Green Belt for biodiversity, species protection and habitat connectivity
- Landscape History: explaing geology, cultural landscape, influence on biodiversity and habitats at the Green Belt
- Dependence of species spectrum on Site Conditions
- Succession versus landscape management
- Borders (personal, visible, invisible borders)

- Excursions, including identification of local animals and plants, and visits to historical remnants of the former border.
- School projects with field trips (e.g., assessing site conditions and habitats, identifying plants and animals, conducting water quality and hydromorphicval structure).
- Green Belt Rallys, featuring environmental games and nature discoveries, e.g. with kindergardens.
- Work camps/ Youth camps with locals and internationals/ Landscape management with volunteers (e.g., scything, clearing bushes, creating animal shelters, land art)
- Youth leader/multiplyer training: multi-day hikes exploring, the Green Belt with expert inputs and contemporary witnesses
- Readings and conversations with contemporary witnesses around the campfire
- Supervision of seminar papers
- Virtual 360 degree tours (e.g. www.360-grad.bund.net/gruenes-band/rhoen) top explore the Green Belt regions digitally

















Youth Leader Training (2023)



School Workshops/Workcamps (on Demand)



International Youth Workcamp (2019), Probstzella



Workcamp (Annually), Titschendorf



- Contemporary witnesses' dialogues
- Landscape maintenance operations: mowing meadows, removing invasive plants

- Construction of huts and hiking lodges
- Topical hikes (search for historical traces, butterflies, herbs, rare plants































































Organisation and Target Groups



Questions for organising a project:

- Which projects are conducted currently?
- Which activities?
- Transborder or international?
- Target groups?
- Organisational support? E.g. by organisations facilitating volunteers to organisations
- Which funds do you use?
- Is the exchange long term?

Our implementation:

- Independent organisation, partly in cooperation with existing partners and regional stakeholders
- Funding through existing project funds (european, federal and state funding)
- Participation is free for all participants
- Implementation carried out independently by project staff and existing partners















Organisation and Target Groups



Different target groups need different approaches – some examples:

School classes:	 Learned knowledge in real life, positive for class climate, getting an idea for ecology – school project days
Student groups:	 Specific knowledge and skills, sometimes also interdisciplinary workshops – project for one semester or one week during semester break
Students (term paper or thesis)	 One specific question/aspect of the big topic – one scientific key question, worked on for a semester, a year
Youth leaders:	 Knowledge of history of the Iron Curtain and nature along the EGB and skills of knowledge transfer webinar, (multi-day) youth leader training in the field, mixture of indoor/online and outdoor training, skillsharing
Locals:	 Knowledge and stories about nature and history of their region embedded in the big story
Mixed groups (age, origin, knowledge):	Diverse program with lots of opportunities of interaction













BUND(jugend) Activities: Program Youth Leader Training



Day 1

The Green Belt, its history and significance for the present and future: Excursion along the Green Belt and visit of borderland museum, talk with contemporary witnesses at the camp fire

• Day 2

Skillsharing: methods of knowledge transfer for young people, hike to one of the ground places, exploring nature and relicts of the fromer border, workshop with forest pedagogue, overnight stay in the forest

• Day 3

Long excursion along the Green Belt, geology, geobotanics, landscape history, looking for plants with orchid specialist, relax and group time in the evening

Day 4

Evaluation and ideas for future projects, hike along and across the Green Belt to bus stop

















BUND(jugend) Activities: Program Work Camp



Day 1

Arrival of the participants. Joint cooking and dinner. Small hike to the Green Belt and visit of the Echo tree.

Day 2

Excursion along the Green Belt, plants and butterflies and relicts of the border.

Day 3 to 7

Mowing mountain meadows, raking together and loading on a trailer, small excursions and activities in the afternoon, cooking and eating together.

Day 4

Campfire with contemporary witnesses.

Day 6

Barbecue with locals and cooperation partners, products of landscape management.

Day 8

20 March 2025

Joint breakfast, wrap-up and departure.

Webinar Education and Exchange along the European Green Belt

















BUND(jugend) Activities: Program School Project



Day 1 in school

Presentation Werra river: river ecology including threats

Presentation Green Belt: History of the Iron Curtain and Nature of the European Green Belt



Day 2 in the field

• 9	0:00 - 10:00	Rhäden info point: input wetland	l ecology, breeding	g and resting habitat for birds
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- 10:00 10:30 Ride to Pferdsdorf-Spichra split into two groups
- 10:30 12:00 Group A Exploration of dry site of the Green Belt, looking for site condition, plants and insects
 - Group B Evaluation of water quality and water structure of Werra river in 4 subgroups
- 12:00 13:00 Picnic at the Green Belt (protective bench), exchange of groups
- 13:00 14:30 Group B Exploration of dry site of the Green Belt, looking for site condition, plants and insects
 - Group B Evaluation of water quality and water structure of Werra river in 4 subgroups
- 15:00 End of the event at 15:00 at the latest, return journey

Following week in school/resp homework

Evaluation. Preparation of report or press article















Activities Örseg National Park and Municipality Šalovci: Youth Camp Program



14.7. – 17.7.2025

Day 1

- Arrival of participants in Slovenia
- Location: Tourist and acommodation center Peterloug, Markovci

Lunch

- Visit to the Border Guards Museum with the Border Guards collection in Čepinci on the border with Hungary with brief introduction to the life of border guards and life in general along the border.
- Walk along the astronomical theme trail (4 km).

Dinner

Observing the night sky and learning about the concept of the 'dark sky'.



TOURIST AND ACOMMODATION CENTER PETERLOUG, MARKOVCI













Activities Örseg National Park and Municipality Šalovci: Youth Camp Program



14.7. – 17.7.2025

Day 2

Breakfast

- Tour on the Korenika Social Farm in Šalovci and familiarization with the model of social entrepreneurship in connection with the preservation of natural resources. Presentation of the circular economy concept.

Lunch

- Bird watching in the biodiversity hotspot of the Goričko Nature Park.
- Cooking workshop in nature on an open fire place.

Dinner



KORENIKA SOCIAL FARM















BESTbelt





Activities Örseg National Park and Municipality Šalovci: Youth Camp Program



14.7. – 17.7.2025

Day 3 & 4

Breakfast

 A guided hike along the Path of Flowering Meadows with a presentation of the natural features of the area and the plants that thrive in the area. A visit to the northernmost point of Slovenia in Budinci and a visit to the solar eclipse monument.

Lunch

The last point is a visit to the Domanjševci farmstead in Domanjševci.
 An insight into past life in the area and a handicraft workshop.

Dinner

Breakfast and Departure of the participants to Hungary.



















Activities Örseg National Park and Municipality Šalovci: Youth Camp Program



14.7. – 17.7.2025 (Hungary)

Day 4	Arrival day Presentation of a new watermanagement project along the border (AQUANATURE SI-HU Interreg project)
Day 5	 Nature ressources and the history of the border area Trip to Hampó-Valley exploring the unique wildlife Rafting tour (Raab river with tour guide)
Day 6	 E-Bike Tour to the peat bog of Szőce and hike to the Vadása-lake Visit of the Village museum Night observation of butterflies
Day 7	Departure day













Ecological Education Institute of Upper Franconia





Naturschutzzentrum Wasserschloß Mitwitz e.V.

André Maslo

















Questions and Discussion

















Save the Date



1 More Webinar:

April 29, 2:30 - 4:00 PM

Skill-sharing on personal projects at the European Green Belt – Exchange between experienced and future group leaders. No prior knowledge required!

Camps

- June 12-15, 2025: Youth Leader Training at the Green Belt Thuringia
- July 13-20, 2025: Youth Camp at the Green Belt in the Tri-Border Region of Austria, Hungary, and Slovenia
- August 3-9, 2026: Work Camp at the Green Belt in Thuringia















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BESTbelt

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360-Degree-Tours at the Green Belt Thuringia



Tour at Werrabergland



Click at the picture.

Tour at Rhön Click at the picture.





Tour at the Thuringian Schist Mountains
Click at the picture.















Join our project and explore the European Green Belt with us.











