

# FINAL REPORT

## LET'S GROW IN SAXONY

- Growth project of the BdP Saxony Regional Association-

**Reporting period:**  
01.05.2021-30.06.2021



**Applicant:**

Ring of German Scout Associations (RdP)

Bund der Pfadfinderinnen und Pfadfinder (BdP) (National Scout Association)

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**Project period:**

01.01.2020-30.06.2021

## INTRODUCTION

The project Let's Grow in Saxony has become the biggest systematic effort in history to establish Scouting in Eastern Germany strategically. Its overall aim was to start five new Scout groups in Saxony with the help of a professional team of two part-time employees. When two additional staff members were employed in August 2020, the number of new group projects was doubled to ten.

In general, the concept was to identify potentially promising locations, recruit and train adult leaders and then to lead and support the new group on its way to independent stability and growth.

Another important aim was to develop a blueprint for similar growth initiatives in other East German Länder without sustainable Scouting structures.

The Corona pandemic put all efforts to an unexpected and unimaginable stress test. Consequently, the project time had to be extended to summer 2021.

At the end of the project we come to these key conclusions:

- The general concept is very effective and functional. We are able to establish Scouting in Eastern Germany using this method
- Ten new groups have been founded or are at the brink of starting Scouting in their locations despite the adverse (on-going) conditions of the pandemic
- Important know-how on how to start Scouting in areas without previous Scouting structures has been won
- The concept seems replicable in other East German Länder (or even in any other part of Germany) and by other Scout associations in the German Ring.

## TIMELINE

The project can be divided into five phases. A more detailed timeline providing more insight into the activities of the project team and the development of the individual new groups can be found in the extra PDF document.

		duration
Phase 1:	Project start to the first lockdown	January – Mid March 2020
Phase 2:	First lockdown	Mid March – May 2020
Phase 3:	Between first and second lockdown	June – October 2020
Phase 4:	Second lockdown	November 2020 – April 2021
Phase 5:	After the second lockdown to the end	May – July 2021

### Phase 1: Project start to the first lockdown

The first phase of the project saw quick success with three new groups. In their locations, the project team was able to build on the results of their own efforts as heads of the volunteer growth team of BdP Saxony. Two more promising locations were developed with Halle and Lommatzsch.

### Phase 2: First lockdown

The first ten week lockdown brought most of the team's efforts to a halt. The team put an enormous amount of work into the development of an app aimed at attracting non-Scouts. Despite a lot of enthusiasm and volunteer support this did not show the desired effect.

### Phase 3: Between first and second lockdown

This phase was interrupted by the summer holidays which made it difficult to establish any regular Scouting activities. Except for one location, the time between the end of the first lockdown and the summer holidays was too short to get Scouting started. Time was used to recruit more volunteers and to build leader teams. This made it possible to start Scouting in three locations in August which was extended to four in October. During the summer holidays, the team organized a ten days hike which attracted 25 young people to join the new Scout groups. As the project team had grown to four members, the target was raised from five to ten new groups. Accordingly, the number of potential locations was raised to eight by October.

### Phase 4: Second lockdown

The second lockdown hit the project team at a very inconvenient time. Most of the new groups had recruitment activities fully scheduled and prepared. Since the Corona pandemic made strategic planning extremely volatile, a new strategy was developed. Instead of planning membership recruitment the focus was shifted to recruiting adult volunteers who would be able to start Scouting in new locations after the pandemic wave. This new strategy proved highly effective as the project team was able to raise the number of potential locations from eight to twelve despite the adverse conditions of the lockdown.

### Phase 5: After the second lockdown to the end

With dropping infection numbers and a progressing vaccination programme, active Scouting became finally possible in May 2021. The lift of the restrictions led to a rapid development in all twelve locations. Three additional new groups were able to start regular Scouting straight away, making it seven altogether. The remaining groups quickly progressed to the next steps of our progression scheme for new groups. It seems extremely plausible that there will be ten active new groups providing regular Scouting after the summer holidays of which four will be independent within the next few months.

## Progression Scheme for the development of new Scout Groups

To fully understand the process of starting a new Scout group the project team developed a progression scheme which visualizes the six stages from first steps to an independently operation Scout group. The team found it very helpful to work with these six steps as it made it easier to understand and serve the needs of new leader teams. The scheme can be considered as a guideline to start and develop new Scout groups.

Stages	Locations
<b>Stage 1: Promising location</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of potential locations</li> <li>• Disseminating information material about the project to political, cultural and social institutions</li> <li>• Evaluating feedback</li> <li>• Finding partners and structuring how to proceed</li> </ul>	Bad Lausick
<b>Stage 2: Recruiting volunteers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness for scouting</li> <li>• Initiating a PR campaign</li> <li>• Establishing cooperation with partners and expanding network</li> <li>• Recruiting potential founding volunteers</li> </ul>	Stendal Zwenkau
<b>Stage 3: Establishing leader teams</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize meetings with potential founding volunteers</li> <li>• What are scouts?</li> <li>• Exploring roles and assignments</li> <li>• Team building</li> <li>• Initial leader training</li> </ul>	Colditz Freiberg Dresden
<b>Stage 4: Strategic planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing the team's motivation, doubts and shared vision</li> <li>• Personnel planning</li> <li>• Setting s.m.a.r.t. goals</li> <li>• Team building</li> <li>• Planning membership recruitment activities</li> <li>• Program planning</li> </ul>	
<b>Stage 5: Getting scouting started</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued leader training</li> <li>• Building functional group organs and jobs</li> <li>• New group to officially join the regional association</li> <li>• Helping to find a meeting place for regular scouting activities</li> <li>• Taking part in events and activities of regional association</li> </ul>	„Roter Fuchs“ Lommatzsch Halle Riesa
<b>Stage 6: Approaching independence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued leader training</li> <li>• Supporting regular evaluation and strengthening of group's structures</li> <li>• Establishing a follow-up strategy and further support</li> <li>• Official transition from part of project to regular scout group as part of regional association</li> </ul>	„Feuerland“ Leipzig-Ost „Bankiva“ Leipzig-Nord „Saalepiraten“ Bernburg „Wanderer“ Chemnitz



## CURRENT STATUS OF THE NEW SCOUT GROUPS

### Stage 1 - Promising Location

#### Bad Lausick

Local partners: Youth politics  
Educational institutions



Already assisting ten new scout groups the project team is currently unable to work with any additional new potential scouting locations. However, there is a strong interest by town officials to establish scouting in the town of Bad Lausick. We promised them to get in touch as soon as our time allows it.

This should be possible in a few months as we expect the first new groups to have become independent by then. We have already presented scouting to local parents and were met with enthusiasm there.

### Stage 2 - Recruiting volunteers

#### Location Stendal (Sachsen-Anhalt)

Team size: 2

Local partners: University  
SOS children's village

Goals: Second meeting  
Recruiting volunteers  
strategic meeting



At an initial meeting with our project team, two founding members with a lot of scouting experience agreed to start a BdP group in Stendal. They will use the summer holidays to recruit more potential leaders.

A second meeting is scheduled after the summer holidays which will try to establish a growing leader team.

## Location Zwenkau (Western Saxony)

Local partners:	city administration Social workers protestant youth pastor
Goals:	Leadership recruitment activities



The project team will present scouting at several local events and hope to attract both adults and young people that way.

We have met a lot of enthusiastic officials in Zwenkau who are highly motivated to assist us in bringing scouting to the young people of their town. They are happy to use their personal networks to approach potential adult leaders during the summer months.

## Status 3 - Establishing Leaderteams

### Location Colditz (Mittelsachsen)

Teamsize:	7
Local partners:	„Go Colditz e.V.“ Social Workers City administration Mayor Community educator Private persons
Goals:	Establishing Team Increase attention



This makes leader training the natural focus of our work. All involved are determined to start regular scouting activities after the summer holidays.

In Colditz, the team's perseverance has paid off. While it took a few more activities and PR activities than in other places, we are now happy to have established a leader team. The special challenge here is that the team solely consists of parents with no scouting background at all.



## Location Freiberg (Western Saxony)

Team size:	12
Local partners:	University Local social workers Youth politics
Goals:	<b>Teambuilding</b> Strategic planning meeting

While it took several months for potential group founders to react to our calls to action in the university town of Freiberg, it paid to remain patient. Things have developed really fast from then. We have been able to establish a leader team of experienced scouts from other parts of Germany and built links to local partners.



The next step will be a strategic planning session right after the summer holidays, which will pave the road to regular scouting activities in Freiberg.

## Location Dresden 2 (Western Saxony)

Team size:	8
Local partners:	Other Scout Groups A School Volunteer agency
Goals:	Strategic planning meeting Conducting a membership recruiting activity with the school

The second lockdown forced us to postpone the long awaited meeting of all people potentially interested in starting a second group in Saxony's capital Dresden. After the lockdown, things happened really fast, though. We've established a leader team, which will have its strategic planning session after the summer holidays.



But we will start our member recruiting activities sooner than that. Through cooperation with a local school we will be able to present scouting to more than 200 students in the first week after the holidays. We get a lot of support from the well-established Dresden BdP group Goldener Reiter.

## Stage 5 - Getting Scouting Started

### New Scout Group „Roter Fuchs“ (Mittelsachsen)

•Cub Scouts:	15
•Teamsize:	5
•Local partners:	Youth politics Mayor City administration Townhouse
•Goals:	Growth



This makes new leaders necessary, so volunteer recruitment is another challenge. They hope to attract both potential members and their parents with an open camp that is scheduled for the end of the summer holidays.

Three successful recruitment days and on-going local PR has made it possible for this rural group to double the number of cub scouts after the second lockdown. The new group has a lot of support by the local community, so funds or meeting places are not a problem here. The leader team aim at doubling the number of cub scouts again during the summer months.

### New Scout Group Halle (Sachsen-Anhalt)

•Cub Scouts:	10
•Scouts and Guides:	5
•Teamsize:	6
•Local partners:	District management „Freimfelde e.V.“ Other Scouts „Gegenseitig Helfen e.V.“
•Goals:	Recruiting members Strengthen the team



time. The group now has a cub scout and scout section and plans to increase its membership with open holiday activities for the local kids.

There has been a rapid move from a loose group of potentially interested volunteers to a real leader team in Halle. This process was accelerated through the opportunity of real meetings after the second lockdown. Highly efficient strategic planning sessions enabled the team to move on to regular scouting activities in record



## New Scout Group Riesa (Mittelsachsen)

Scouts and Guides:	6
Teamsize:	5
Local partners:	Youth politics Local newspaper City administration Scout Group „Roter Fuchs“
Goals:	Etsablishing regular scou ting activities

Like in all other locations, our original strategy was to recruit potential adult leaders first. However, in Riesa some motivated young people arrived at the first meeting along with their parents so we already started a scout section. Both adults and new scouts are highly motivated to start regular scouting after the summer holidays.



The project team will focus on leader training, which will allow us to start a Cub Scout section soon, too.

## Stage 6 - Almost Independent

### New Scout Group „Feuerland“ (Leipzig-Ost)

Cub-Scouts :	22
Scouts and Guides:	14
Teamsize:	15
Local partners:	Youth politics Other Scout groups „Ostwache e.V.“ District management
Goals:	Independence

In the last 3 months the leader team managed to count new members. Witihin 3 public events the number of Cub Scouts increased. In the same time some older Cub Scouts moved up to Guides and Scouts. The group arranged their first general meeting and voted their new leaders. Finally they organised to get financial support from the municipal administration.



In the summer vacations the group will implement a summer trip on their own. The project team supports by trainings for leaders and answers upcoming questions. The aim is to retreat more and more.

### New Scout Group „Bankiva“ (Leipzig-Nord)

•Cub Scouts:	15
•Scouts and Guides:	10
•Teamsize:	12
•Local partners:	Youth politics Other scout groups Intercultural youth institution
•Goals:	Ensure ressources Independence

Networking and online recruitment have paid for this group. Membership has quickly risen after the second lockdown in this part of Leipzig. In the spring months, the starting members were able to experience their first real life scouting adventures. Ten members took part in a hike organized by the project team and became full members afterwards.



After the summer holidays, the project team will have to focus on resources for successful scouting like funds, an suitable meeting place and camping gear. Once those are provided, the group is all set for independence.

### New Scout Group „Saalepiraten“ (Bernburg)

•Cub Scouts:	10
•Guides and Scouts:	2
•Teamsize:	5
•Local partners:	Monastery association Intercultural institution
•Goals:	Recruiting Strengthening team

Although the number of cub scouts has been doubled and regular scout meetings have been established, the group is constantly faced with changes in the leader team. Most leaders are students from the local university which makes it more challenging to follow through our long term growth strategy.



We will now try to find locally based volunteers who are able to provide the necessary consistency.

## New Scout Group „Wanderer“ (Chemnitz)

•Cub Scouts:	12
•Scouts and Guides:	5
•Teamsize:	12
•Local partners:	Youth politics Educational institutions Youth Welfare Office Intercultural garden
•Goals:	Close membership gaps Independence

Beacause of the growth of the founding team the group needed some time to get to know each other and organize the team. During a stratetic planning weekend they established a new personnel plan and set new smart goals for the summer time.

Until the end of the year the group wants to double the number of Cub Scouts and recruit



more Guides and Scouts to strenghten this age group. The project team supports by preparing membership recruitment activities and trainings for leaders. During strategic meetings the team guides the processes.



## THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC AND DURATION OF A GROUP FOUNDING PROCESS

The Corona pandemic had a massive impact on the project in various ways. Although the project team made good use of their time even under lockdown conditions, they were only able to operate unrestrictedly for nine of the eighteen months. If the summer holidays are deducted from that, this drops to only eight months of unobstructed work.

It is therefore difficult to discern how long the average process of sustainably founding a new Scout group takes. Of course, it would be a very useful information to be able to define how long this usually takes for similar future projects.

On the one hand it was possible to bring some of our new groups from stage one – a promising location – to five – the beginning of active Scouting – within six months only. On the other hand, new groups still need a lot of support once the active Scouting starts. It simply takes time for procedures to become established practices and to be internalized by a team of new leaders.

There are also huge differences between new Scout groups. While some new leader teams consist of experienced Scout leaders who need rather little support, a group of parents with no Scouting background at all will usually require more and longer assistance.

Taking our own experience into consideration, we would deem it possible to bring a new group from start to self-supporting within a period of twelve months. However, eighteen months would definitely raise the chance of laying a long-term foundation for successful Scouting in a new place. This estimation is under the provision of a reliable and effective support system by the regional level of the Scout association.

### KEY INSIGHTS

A lot of valuable insight on how to set up new groups in East Germany has been won, detailed evaluation notwithstanding. It seems safe to say that starting new Scout groups in Eastern Germany has not been rocket science. The project has proven that it is absolutely possible to find volunteer leaders from many backgrounds who can be motivated to start new Scout groups in East Germany. Therefore, growth is no witchcraft but much rather the very likely outcome of determined, consistent and purposeful effort.

During a lot of our work, we were surprised how little effort it often took to identify people willing to volunteer to start a Scout group in a new location.

What seems the key to success to us is:

- to actually go there with a mindset for growth, a clear strategy and to get started
- to make a good analysis of promising locations for Scouting
- to remain flexible and to use multiple ways of approaching potential volunteer leaders

Some of our key findings include the following:

### **Let people know about your plans and spread the word**

Sometimes it was extremely easy to establish a new leader team. All we had to do was to publicly announce that we wanted to establish Scouting in a new place. Within days, the word would spread. Soon enough former Scouts from all parts of Germany would get in touch and declare their willingness to help or join the team. Many would also bring along like-minded friends.

### **There's more than one way to catch a rabbit**

There are many methods to find volunteer leaders. We tried a huge variety of measures to attract people to join Scouting. We tried newspaper articles, open days in the park, family activities, social media and many others. Sometimes one idea would work, sometimes another. But one method would always work.

### **Semper aliquid haeret – no effort goes in vain**

No matter which method we tried, at every simple event we organized we would never leave without a new member, a new potential leader or a new helpful contact. Raising visibility by simply getting out there and presenting ourselves in public, was one of the keys to success. And something or someone useful would literally always stick.

### **Good things come to those who can wait**

Although time is always an important factor in a project with limited resources, it has often proven wise to stick to a potentially promising location. Sometimes successful recruitment of those decisive first volunteer leaders took a few weeks or events more than originally planned. However, perseverance paid. Once we had zoomed in on one promising place we were eventually able to identify future leaders wherever we tried.

### **Local partners are happy to help – and make life a lot easier**

Almost everywhere our initial information letters and requests for support were met favourably if not enthusiastically.

When we actually met local officials, citizens' action clubs we were welcomed with open arms. To have local partnerships have been extremely beneficial to our cause and extremely helpful in our recruitment efforts.

### **Once you start you won't stay alone for long**

The crucial step is to find the one or two initial leaders. Once someone has declared their willingness to start Scouting in a new place, it's much easier to recruit people who will join the leader team or at least support the founding process of a group.

### **Everybody can be a Scout leader**

Although it might seem easiest to start with former Scouts as the leaders of a new group, that is definitely not the only feasible scenario. People from all walks of life have volunteered to become new leaders. When we remain open to people with no previous Scouting experience and find attractive ways of addressing them, we multiply our chances to successfully spread Scouting across Eastern Germany.

## SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

After 18 months the project “Let’s Grow in Saxony” has almost reached all its main goals.

Despite the pandemic, the team have been able to establish 6 new Scout groups, thus more than doubling the number of BdP groups in Saxony. They have also identified and trained new volunteer leader teams in 6 additional new locations in Saxony and neighbouring Saxony-Anhalt who are ready to get Scouting started after the summer holidays in September 2021. That means that they will more than likely be able to triple and potentially quadruple the number of groups in Saxony until mid- 2022.

This is the foundation on which we can continue to work towards our goal of tripling our membership of 250 Scouts to 750 till mid- 2022. We remain convinced to reach our goal of 2000 Scouts in East Germany by 2025.

When trying to start a new Scout group, the main challenge is to recruit, train and establish a leader team in a new location. As soon as that decisive step has been taken, Scouting can get easily started in a new location. The support that the project team have been able to provide allowed for the implementation of our strategy for rapid growth in all of the new groups. Anyway, getting Scouting started in a new location is just the first step

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

While the prospects for the growth of Scouting in East Germany have never been more promising after the project, the achievements are still fragile.

To make that growth effective and lasting, we need to introduce and integrate the new groups into the existing volunteer structures of the BdP Saxony region. The BdP Saxony region is going to need a lot of support in that process. Any organization that multiplies its membership in such short time will need time to adjust and to establish new procedures. Scouting in Saxony is going to have to rise to the occasion, which provides so many opportunities for self-sustaining Scouting structures in Eastern Germany.

If we don’t want to put all the progress made in the last years at risk we need to keep supporting the promising yet feeble developments.

It is only thereby that we can guarantee the new groups to continue to thrive after the project’s end.

So in order to secure the project’s accomplishments and to fully exploit the potential of the blossoming new groups, we need to keep employing professional staff support for our volunteer-driven project for another and final year.



## Is the project replicable in other parts of (Eastern) Germany?

The NSA regards it as the central aim of this project to develop a template for successful recruitment and growth for the whole of German Scouting. Therefore, it has been one important aim for us to find a method that can be replicated in other regions, especially in other East German states.

Our standardised progression scheme for the development of new Scout groups is one big, ground-breaking step into that direction. All results of the evaluation and on-going improvement are being freely shared with the other German Scout associations, the German-speaking NSOs and beyond. We also plan to have a number of growth training sessions in which we will share our strategy and to which all German-speaking NSOs will be invited.

We expect the BdP Saxony region to consist of 15+ Scout groups by mid- 2022 of which three are likely to be based in Saxony-Anhalt. These groups might serve as a nucleus around which a new Scout region of BdP Saxony-Anhalt might be built in a follow-up project. This seems advisable since it was extremely helpful to have some established Scout groups and Scouting structures in Saxony before we started our project.