



CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT!

A Snapshot of Youth and School Initiatives on Climate Change and Migration

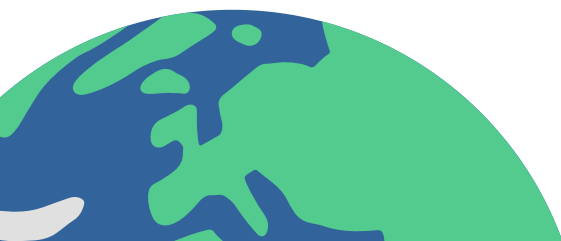


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Change Environment project

The Change Environment project, funded by the Erasmus programme, aims to engage and educate students aged 14 to 18 on the pressing issue of climate change, particularly focusing on how it disproportionately affects vulnerable populations.

By employing innovative educational tools and strategies, through a four-stage pedagogical curriculum, the project seeks to:

- Introduce students to how climate change disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable populations, those with limited adaptive capacities due to factors such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to resources, economic instability, and heightened risk of displacement and migration.
- Provide students with clear, comprehensive, and evidence-based information about climate emergencies and environmental change, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges at hand.
- Complement scientific data with real-life stories and testimonies from young activists, refugees and communities affected by climate change, ensuring a balanced perception that combines both factual knowledge and human experience.
- Facilitate interactions between students from other countries, with the aim of fostering mutual understanding and reflection on the shared global responsibility to address and mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Encourage students to become advocates for sustainability by promoting behavioural and lifestyle changes that contribute to the construction of more inclusive and environmentally conscious societies in daily practice.



Climate Change, Migration, and Education

Frequent and severe natural disasters, prolonged droughts, rising sea levels, and other climate-related phenomena are forcing millions of people to leave their homes, both within their own countries and across international borders, highlighting the increasing interconnectedness of climate change and migration. The Office of the United Nations High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) has emphasized that projections indicate a dramatic increase in climate change-induced migration in the coming decades, with estimates suggesting that by 2050, 1.2 billion people, roughly 13% of the world's population, could be displaced[1], underscoring the urgent need to act and ensure that collective efforts are mobilized to address and support the often forgotten victims of climate change

Climate change is threatening vulnerable communities, pushing them to migrate to seek safety and better opportunities. Internal migrations are increasing, especially from rural areas to cities due to resource scarcity and the impossibility of adapting agriculture. Similarly, international migrations are increasing, especially from areas where vulnerable populations live, suffering from severe famines and droughts, forced to seek refuge in neighboring countries[1]. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) emphasizes that migrations induced by climate change are not only a humanitarian issue but will also affect development, security, and global stability[2].

Understanding how climate change is reshaping migration patterns globally and in Europe is important for developing informed and proactive responses that address these multifaceted challenges.

Recent studies indicate that Europe will need to increasingly prepare to face growing migratory flows from neighboring continents, while at the same time managing the impacts of climate change on its own population. Southern European countries, such as Italy, Spain and Greece, are already affected by extreme weather events such as droughts and heat waves, which are causing desertification in rural areas, and the exodus to cities. In Northern Europe, rising sea levels threaten coastlines and infrastructure, endangering the lives of millions of people. This combination of migratory factors poses an unprecedented challenge to social cohesion and integration policies[3].

UNESCO's findings underscore the importance of incorporating climate change education into school curricula, and highlight how education[4] plays a crucial role in preparing societies to address the systemic challenges posed by climate change.

Empowering the general civil society and young people with knowledge and actionable skills can bridge the gap between awareness and practical solutions. Combining local knowledge and global perspectives and education becomes a key driver in fostering resilience and informed decision making. Climate change education must aim to not only increase knowledge but also foster skills for action, values, attitudes, and community-driving decisions that promote sustainability.

Teachers, educators, schools, civil society organizations and policymakers have a pivotal role to play in helping students understand the causes and consequences of climate-induced migration by transforming school environments into powerful spaces for fostering awareness and action.

Education programmes like the Change Environment Project are essential in equipping young people with the right tools and knowledge to address and act on climate change and migration.

By encouraging best practices and providing a platform for students to share their ideas and actions, this project fosters collaboration, innovation and action; the project believes in the importance of youth participation, as emphasized by the IOM, which highlights that young people are not only affected by climate-induced migration but are also in a unique position to drive solutions[5].

This report is designed to showcase best practices led by students, schools and teachers, where students were the protagonists, so that other teachers, educators, and schools can be inspired to replicate these initiatives with their own students. Additionally, this report offers a window into the vibrant movement driven by young people as reflected in their initiatives, and encourages stakeholders and policymakers to reflect on how to best empower youth by providing them with the necessary support and resources to become voices for change. Together, we can create pathways for young people to lead the way in building a sustainable and equitable future for all.

Best practices: learn and replicate

Addressing the twin challenges of climate change and migration requires innovative and practical solutions, and students across Europe are stepping up to the task with remarkable creativity and determination. From grassroots environmental initiatives to collaborative projects that address the human dimensions of migration, young learners and their schools are proving to be powerful agents of change.

This section highlights exemplary student-led and school-based initiatives from five European countries that tackle these pressing issues in impactful and replicable ways. These projects not only demonstrate the power of education in fostering awareness and action but also provide valuable inspiration for teachers and students worldwide. By showcasing these initiatives, we aim to offer practical, ready-to-implement ideas that can be adapted to diverse educational contexts, empowering more schools to join the collective effort; whether it's through hands-on environmental projects, cross-border exchanges, or advocacy campaigns, these initiatives illustrate that change starts in the classroom but extends far beyond, into communities and across nations.

We invite teachers and students to explore, learn, and adapt these practices.

Learn, get inspired and act!



Spain

National context



In Spain, climate change has emerged as a significant threat, particularly in coastal and island regions. Manifested through rising sea levels, increasing temperatures, and prolonged periods of water scarcity, these environmental challenges jeopardize the livelihoods of populations living in vulnerable areas. The impacts of climate change are not isolated but are intertwined with socio-economic factors, such as the progressive depopulation and impoverishment of rural areas. This rural exodus, driven by declining agricultural productivity and worsening living conditions, pushes people toward urban centers, which themselves are becoming increasingly vulnerable to climate risks. Spain has experienced an increase in the frequency and severity of climate events, such as droughts, heatwaves, forest fires, and water shortages. These climatic phenomena have far-reaching impacts on ecosystems, human health, agriculture, and water resources across both the mainland and the Balearic and Canary Islands. Spain's hydrological cycle has been severely disrupted, leading to growing concerns over water scarcity, particularly in regions that rely heavily on irrigation for agriculture, such as Andalusia and Murcia. Vulnerable social groups, including low-income families and migrants, often reside in poorly adapted urban zones, facing heightened exposure to climate risks; As these populations have limited access to resources for adaptation and preparedness, climate change exacerbates existing inequalities. The increased migration from rural areas, where livelihoods are eroding due to climate impacts, adds pressure to cities already struggling with their own environmental challenges. Spanish cities like Barcelona and Madrid, which are highly exposed to climate risks compared to other European counterparts, are witnessing an uptick in internal migration as residents of rural areas seek refuge and employment opportunities in urban settings.

Climate change is also deeply intertwined with Spain's key economic sectors, including tourism, agriculture, and energy, further intensifying patterns of human displacement. For example, the tourism sector, vital for Spain's economy, faces risks from rising temperatures and changing weather patterns that could deter visitors from coastal destinations. Similarly, agriculture, which employs a significant portion of the rural population, is heavily dependent on water resources that are diminishing due to prolonged droughts. As these sectors decline, people in affected areas are often forced to migrate, seeking more stable livelihoods in other regions of the country.

Rural areas in Spain, particularly those with poor infrastructure and declining economic prospects, are among the hardest hit by climate change, creating a new wave of internal migration. These movements are expected to increase in the coming years as climate impacts worsen, intensifying the need for comprehensive strategies to manage both migration and climate adaptation.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) 2021 report revealed that 7,800 people in Spain were internally displaced due to natural disasters in 2020, with forest fires being a primary cause. As the frequency and intensity of wildfires increase, particularly in Mediterranean regions like Catalonia and Valencia, more people are expected to be displaced in the future[1]. This situation underscores the urgency of developing robust adaptation and resilience strategies and Spanish authorities have recognized the need for integrated climate and socio-economic policies that not only mitigate climate risks but also address the long-term recovery and revitalization of rural areas affected by depopulation. To address these challenges, the Spanish government has launched various initiatives aimed at enhancing climate resilience and supporting rural revitalization. For instance, the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC) outlines strategies to reduce the vulnerability of key sectors and promote sustainable resource management[2]. In the field of education, climate change has become a growing focus. Through programmes such as "Escuelas hacia la Sostenibilidad" ("Schools Towards Sustainability"), the Spanish educational authorities are integrating climate literacy into curricula, to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to address environmental challenges. Students are encouraged to engage with sustainable practices and learn about the relationship between environmental issues and social justice. Such educational initiatives aim to create a more informed and resilient population that is prepared to navigate the challenges of a changing climate and its socio-economic impacts, including [1] [2]. With climate change projected to intensify in the coming decades, Spain's approach to climate resilience, migration, and education will be crucial in ensuring that both urban and rural populations can adapt to the changing environmental landscape.



Initiative title: Día del Migrante (Migrant Day)

Organization / School name and contact

Entreculturas and Apóstol Santiago de Vigo School
Estefanía Franco e.franco@entreculturas.org

Target audience of the initiative

High school students

Keywords

Art – workshop - skill building

Initiative impact

Young people participate in an artistic workshop on climate migration.
Creation of a mural on climate migration, reflecting on its causes and consequences through art (artistic expression and music) and later exhibited in the school.

Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Apóstol Santiago de Vigo School

Future plans or goals

Replicating the activities with other students.



IMPACT





Initiative title: Día Internacional de las Personas Migrantes



Organization / School name and contact

Entreculturas and SAFA Rafaela María de Pedro Abad School
Chabeli Macías ch.macias@entreculturas.org



Target audience of the initiative

Youth Solidarity Network and students from 3rd to 6th grade of primary school



Keywords

Workshop – Exhibition – skill building



Initiative impact

100 students learn about migration on International Migrants Day.
The Youth Solidarity Network will continue working and reflecting on migrations and carrying out awareness-raising activities like this in their schools and in their local environments.

Initiative title: Imágenes que migran (Images that migrate)



Organization / School name and contact

Entreculturas and Vicent Andrés Estellés School
Encarna Duran e.duran@entreculturas.org



Target audience of the initiative

Students, school



Keywords

Workshop – Artistic exhibition –
Interactive Participation – Awareness Raising



Initiative impact

Students from the Art High School Club created an exhibition of photographic murals to raise awareness about migration.



Initiative title: Migration map



Organization / School name and contact

Berrio-Otxoa ikastetxea
Ainara Madariaga (Teacher) ainaramg@berrio-otxoaikastetxea.com



Target audience of the initiative

Secondary school students (age 12-16)



Keywords

Workshop – Exhibition – Peer-to-Peer Learning – Interactive Participation – Awareness Raising



Initiative impact

Students created a large world map highlighting areas most affected by climate change-induced migration, marked in red. The map was displayed in a corridor, where student ambassadors explained the link between climate change and forced migration to their peers through a peer-to-peer learning approach. Additionally, other students were invited to contribute to the map, adding their own drawings and comments to further enrich the project. More than 150 students learnt about the impact of climate change in migration and where and how people are forcedly displaced due to the consequences of climate change.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Alboan Fundazioa



Initiative title:

**Alboan Gazte Sarea “Jóvenes por la diversidad.”/
Alboan Gazte Sarearen XI.
Topaketa “Gazteak aniztasunaren alde.”**



Organization / School name and contact

Alboan Gazte Sarea/Alboan Youth Network
Mikel Aguirre mi.aguirre@alboan.org



Target audience of the initiative

Young people (in particular, young people with a migration background)



Keywords

Youth network empowerment – training – awareness-raising event

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The Alboan Gazte Sarea youth network event brought together around 50 young people, mostly from migration backgrounds, to reflect on their experiences and discuss the causes of migration. Organized by the Alboan Youth Network, a group of trained young volunteers, the event focused on the impact of climate change on forced displacement in the Global South. Participants reported gaining a deeper understanding of the realities faced by migrants, the connection between inequality and migration, and expressed increased motivation to engage in initiatives like the Alboan Youth Network. The Alboan Youth Network will continue organizing encounters for young people from migration backgrounds. Volunteers will receive ongoing training on migration and climate change, and these topics will be integrated into their activities.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Alboan Fundazioa



Learn more about the initiative here

<https://www.edukalboan.org/es/actualidad/la-gazte-sarea-se-puso-en-movimiento-un-ano-mas>



Initiative title: Colillatón 2024



Organization / School name and contact

Surfrider Foundation
Maria Ballesteros <https://www.surfrider.es/contacto/>



Target audience of the initiative

Students, migrants



Keywords

Beach clean-up – waste collection

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Groups of students and young people from migrant backgrounds came together in Donostia to collect cigarette waste from the beaches, and combat pollution caused by this residue. Participants successfully collected approximately 10,000 cigarette butts over two days. This effort was part of a larger initiative across Spain, which resulted in the collection of a total of 37,875 cigarette butts nationwide. This initiative was organized on World No Tobacco Day, and following good feedback it is planned to be organized next year again.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Alboan Fundazioa, Loiolaetxea



Learn more about the initiative here

<https://www.surfrider.es/gran-exito-en-espana-de-la-campana-internacional-de-surfrider-contra-las-colillas-de-cigarros/>



Initiative title: Tu Ropa En Marcha



Organization / School name and contact

Deusto Business School
Mikel Aguirre mi.aguirre@alboan.org
Adela Balderas adela.balderas@deusto.es



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Clothes donation campaign

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Students from the Deusto Business School organized the "Tu Ropa en Marcha" campaign, which focused on collecting clothes through donations. The donated clothes are sold by Micolet, a second-hand online store, with all proceeds directed toward projects supporting migrant communities. This initiative not only raises funds for these projects but also incorporates a sustainability element by promoting clothing recycling. To encourage donations, the students launched a dissemination campaign within their university and organized a raffle, giving donors the chance to win prizes. More than 200 pieces of clothing were donated through this campaign and are currently being sold by Micolet.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Micolet second-hand online store

Initiative title: Change Environment Webquest



Organization / School name and contact

Alboan Fundazioa and Entreculturas ONG
Libe Narvarte l.narvarte@alboan.org
Elina Mugni e.mugni@entreculturas.org



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Student manifesto – school contest



Initiative impact

More than 500 students took part in the Change Environment Webquest in which they not only got to learn about the consequences of climate change but took the initiative to write a student manifesto to raise awareness about these issues directed at other students from their school and community 43 student manifestos were created in which students raised awareness about the consequences of climate change and the impact this has on force displacement. These manifestos were showed and presented in their schools and communities and other students learnt about these topics.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

CIP Virgen del Camino, Colegio San Ignacio, Colegio Sagrado, Corazón (Iruña/Pamplona), Colegio Amor Misericordioso, CPES Cruz, Roja BHIP, IES Txurdinaga Behekoa (Bilbo/Bilbao), Irungo La Salle (Irun), Zubi Zaharra ikastola (Balmaseda), Colegio Kostka (Santander), SAFA Nuestra Señora de los Reyes (Sevilla), EE.PP Sagrada Familia de Osuna (Osuna), SAFA Bujalance (Bujalance)



Future plans or goals

Replicating the activities with other students.
<https://www.surfrider.es/gran-exito-en-espana-de-la-campana-internacional-de-surfrider-contra-las-colillas-de-cigarros/>

Initiative title: Tecnología libre de conflicto - Campaign

Organization / School name and contact

Deusto Business School
Mikel Aguirre mi.aguirre@alboan.org
Adela Balderas adela.balderas@deusto.es

Target audience of the initiative

Students

Keywords

Awareness-raising campaign – Phone collection

Initiative impact

Students from Deusto Business School organized the "Tecnología Libre de Conflicto" campaign. They delivered several presentations to raise awareness about the challenges faced by people in Congo, particularly those related to conflict and resource exploitation. Following this, they coordinated a phone collection in collaboration with Alboan, aligning with the organization's ongoing campaign. Through these efforts, over 100 students gained insights into the situation in Congo, and the student group successfully collected more than 30 phones. The funds generated from these phones were used to support projects in Congo implemented by Alboan Fundazioa. The Deusto Business School and Alboan Fundazioa plan on replicating the initiative with a different group of students

Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Alboan Fundazioa

To learn more about the initiatives

<https://www.tecnologialibredeconflicto.org/en/>



IMPACT



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Initiative title:

Virtual school exchange



Organization / School name and contact

Crested Secondary school (Kampala,Uganda) and Berrio-Otxoa ikastetxea (Bilbao, Spain)
Ainara Madariaga (Teacher Berrio-Otxoa ikastetxea)
ainaramg@berrio-otxoaikastetxea.com
Mikel Aguirre Alboan mi.aguirre@alboan.org



Target audience of the initiative

Secondary school students from Bilbao (Spain) and Kampala (Uganda)



Keywords

International School virtual exchange – letter exchange



Initiative impact

Students from these two schools exchanged letters to learn about environmental issues in each other's contexts. Additionally, they shared explanations and photos of projects they had developed addressing climate change and migration. Over 100 students in Bilbao and more than 30 students in Kampala participated in the exchange, gaining valuable insights into the situation in the other country. The letter exchange initiative proved to be highly engaging for students. Both organizations continue to work together and plan to replicate this initiative in the future, fostering further exchanges between students.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Alboan Fundazioa and JRS Uganda

Ireland

National context



Ireland's average temperature has already risen by 0.8°C since the early 20th century, with projections suggesting further warming. This trend is expected to intensify storms, bring wetter winters, and exacerbate other severe weather events, presenting significant challenges to Ireland's economy, public health, and environment[1]. Bord Gáis Energy highlights how rising sea levels and prolonged droughts are straining the country's water resources and agriculture, challenges that are projected to worsen in the years ahead. These shifts pose significant risks to coastal and urban areas, endangering critical infrastructure, homes, and ecosystems[2].

The evolving climate landscape not only threatens Ireland domestically but also calls for greater international collaboration to address the shared challenges of international climate displacement and environmental degradation. Recent discussions on the recognition of "environmental refugees" underscore the country's growing awareness of the complex links between climate change and migration. In 2023, Irish Minister for Integration Roderic O'Gorman emphasized the need to expand the asylum system and international refugee law to include individuals displaced by the effects of climate change[1]. This proposal, while sparking a mix of political support and criticism, underscored a consensus that Ireland is likely to see a rising number of people seeking refuge due to climate-driven crises. Ireland has a long-standing and diverse environmental movement, with activism gaining significant momentum in recent years. A recent country profile by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the University of Galway[2] marked a significant step in mapping the links between migration, environment, and climate change in Ireland.

In this context, national educational programmes such as the Green Schools programme[3] stands out as a shining example of Ireland's commitment to fostering environmental awareness at the grassroots level. The programme, active in thousands of primary and secondary schools nationwide, engages students in initiatives such as energy conservation, waste reduction, and biodiversity preservation, while empowering them to become sustainability advocates within their schools and broader communities. This hands-on, student-led approach aligns closely with the goals of the Change Environment programme, which also emphasizes youth empowerment and environmental responsibility.

Ireland's youth have become a powerful force in the fight against climate change, inspired by global movements such as Fridays for Future. Students across the country have organized climate strikes, demanding stronger government action on environmental issues. These protests, along with initiatives like the Green Schools programme, have galvanized young people to take ownership of climate advocacy in Ireland. The Change Environment programme builds on this momentum, offering students a platform to connect their environmental work with broader social justice issues, such as migration.

Through programmes like Change Environment, students are encouraged to explore how climate degradation disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, driving forced migration. This educational focus fosters a deeper understanding of the systemic inequities underlying climate change and highlights the urgent need for climate justice. For Irish students, this connection between environmental sustainability and human rights is a powerful motivator to act, both locally and globally[4].



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Initiative title: Winter Clothing Drive



Organization / School name and contact

St Raphaela's Secondary School
secretary@straphaelas.ie



Target audience of the initiative

International Protection applicants living in
Dublin and students



Keywords

Second-hand clothes – Donation

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Students collected second-hand clothes and organized them for distribution. This initiative aims to provide warm clothing to individuals arriving in Ireland seeking international protection, a compassionate and practical effort! Students will continue to organize regular second-hand collections, with the hope of inspiring other schools to do the same.

Testimony

"I'm happy I gave clothes that I'm not using to people that really needed it. With this act I helped not only people that are in need but also made a positive step for reusing, because caring is reusing. I encouraged my friends to do the same." – Luisne





Initiative title: Fundraising campaign - Sleep-Out

Organization / School name and contact

Belvedere College SJ - JRS Ireland - Focus Ireland
hmsec@belvederecollege.ie

Target audience of the initiative

General public

Keywords

Street fundraising campaign – Awareness raising

Initiative impact

More than 300 students spent 48 hours sleeping on the streets of Dublin as part of a fundraising campaign that included both bucket collections on the street and traditional social media campaigns. The initiative raised €370,000 for organizations working on the frontlines to support people experiencing homelessness in Ireland, including people with migratory background, raising both funds and awareness for the cause.

Learn more about the initiative:

<https://belvederecollege.ie/pastoral-care/sleep-out/>

Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

JRS Ireland, Focus Ireland

Testimony from participant

"The sleep-out is a good thing to do. It's great as a student to be able to get out in the streets and do something different with your school."

"You have to put yourself in the shoes of homeless people and see what they go through on a yearly basis. It has to be done."

"Everyone's been very supportive so far, it's going well and we're very grateful for all the help we can get." – Harry Walsh



IMPACT





Initiative title:

Fun Day: fostering empathy through sport and meaningful encounters!



Organization / School name and contact

Clongowes Wood College SJ
reception@clongowes.net



Target audience of the initiative

Students –
Families with International Protection status



Keywords

Sport for integration - raising awareness

Initiative impact

A day out in the Irish countryside was organized by students for families with International Protection status. This event provided an opportunity for students to take an active role in organizing the day, encouraging them to think critically about the needs of international protection families and how to support them. It also allowed students to engage with international protection applicants in a more informal and equal setting. The students were able to connect on a personal level, moving beyond seeing them as mere "case studies," and engage in meaningful conversations about the reasons families fled their home countries, whether due to persecution, conflict, or climate change. They were also able to inquire about their experiences with the international protection process in Ireland. Throughout the event, students were encouraged to initiate conversations and interact with the families, promoting mutual understanding and empathy.

IMPACT

Initiative title: Climate Action Week



Organization / School name and contact

Green Schools
info@greenschoolsireland.org



Target audience of the initiative

Schools and universities



Keywords

Environmental Awareness - Sustainability Activities -
Local Climate Action



Initiative impact

The 2023 Climate Action Week expanded to include a wide range of activities aimed at engaging students in environmental responsibility. These included film screenings, talks on climate psychology, community garden clean-ups, litter pickups, bike repair workshops, winter soil preparation, clothes repair and mending, clothes swaps, a volunteer fair, a Climate Fresk workshop, a book club, a webinar on food waste, climate change storytelling, a theatre performance, a flag-raising ceremony, a public consultation round table, and stand-up comedy. This comprehensive approach provided a platform for both learning and action on climate issues.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Clongowes Wood College, Trinity College Dublin, Technological University Dublin, Poetry Ireland, Climate Fresk, Stillorgan College of Further Education, Dublin Local Authorities, University College Cork and more

Learn more about the initiative:

<https://greenschoolsireland.org/climate-action-week-2023/>





Initiative title:

ECO-UNESCO's Youth for Sustainable Development

Organization / School name and contact

ECO-UNESCO
info@ecounesco.ie

Target audience of the initiative

Student

Keywords

Global Citizenship – Environmental Awareness

Initiative impact

The primary goal of the project is to empower young people to become active citizens, raise awareness of environmental and social issues locally and globally, and improve their community and environment. Local actions will be undertaken in a way that fosters critical thinking, enabling participants to understand the interconnectedness of the issues we face and the long-term consequences both positive and negative, of our actions on a global scale. Disseminate the programme to more cohorts across the country and create more networks of young people taking on positive leadership roles for their local community.

Learn more about the initiative

<https://ecounesco.ie/10-18-youth-programmes/youth-for-sustainable-development/>

Testimony from participant

"YSD is a great organization dedicated to inform the youth about global issues and help them make a difference. I learnt a bunch of things about climate change, volunteering, global issues and much more and feel more educated and knowledgeable"



IMPACT

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Initiative title: Green Steps Youth Employability Programme

Organization / School name and contact

ECO-UNESCO
info@ecounesco.ie



Keywords

Mentoring – Young people empowerment – Green economy



Initiative impact

The programme is aimed at young people aged 18-25, residing in Dublin, who are not currently in education, training, or employment, including International Protection Applicants. Classroom sessions cover topics such as integration, environmental issues, sustainability and green jobs. The goal of the programme is to enhance the career prospects of young people aged 18-25 through workshops, training, work placements, and field trips tailored to their needs.



To learn more

ECO-UNESCO - Ireland's Environmental Education and Youth Organization (ecounesco.ie)



Testimony from participant:

"I enjoyed everything about the program like activities, speakers, mock interview practice, our visit to the farm, and cooking because the kitchen is my happy place. I got to know a lot about Irish culture."





Initiative title: Beach Clean campaign



Organization / School name and contact

Flossie and the beach cleaners
flossieandthebeachcleaners@gmail.com



Target audience of the initiative

Schools, private companies, charities,
communities



Keywords

Beach clean – Rockpool foraging – Environmental scientific
experiment – Local marine life – Plastic pollution



Initiative impact

The goal is to empower the next generation to engage in meaningful, practical actions that can create a real impact on our planet, both locally and globally. This includes an activity that demonstrates what can be made and recycled from the waste collected, followed by a discussion on impact of plastic-filled rivers.



To learn more

<https://flossieandthebeachcleaners.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/School-Workshops-2023-2024.pdf>



Initiative title: Education for Sustainability: peer to peer education



Organization / School name and contact

Education For Sustainability
info@educationforsustainability.ie



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Climate talk – Plastic action – Sustainability action – Fast fashion – Sustainable transport, Biodiversity loss – Circular economy – Ecology – Food and soil



Initiative impact

The initiative empowers students to become confident and effective Peer Educators by exploring local and global issues while building new skills. Through workshops, students are trained to educate their peers, empowering them to raise awareness across the school through peer-led initiatives.



Learn more about the initiative

<https://educationforsustainability.ie/school-workshops/>



Initiative title: Youth Manifesto on Climate Justice



Organization / School name and contact

National Youth Council of Ireland
info@nyci.ie



Target audience of the initiative

Students – General public



Keywords

Youth Summit – Manifesto – Awareness Raising

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative brought together 400 young people for a Youth Summit at the RDS to discuss Ireland's response to climate change. They collaboratively developed a Climate Justice Manifesto, focusing on raising awareness and advocating for a response rooted in human rights and equity.

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To learn more

<https://www.youth.ie/climatejusticepledge/YouthManifestoonClimateJustice>

Initiative title: Climate Justice Charter



Organization / School name and contact

National Youth Council of Ireland
info@nyci.ie



Target audience of the initiative

Youth organizations



Keywords

Climate action – Youth organizations – Youth empowerment



Initiative impact

Youth organizations have an important role to play in supporting better understanding of climate justice and promoting climate actions based on justice and equity. The Climate Justice Charter supports youth organizations to contribute to the systemic change our world needs. By signing the Climate Justice Charter, an organization commits to collaborating with others in the climate justice community to uphold key principles. This includes raising awareness of the impacts of climate change, promoting climate action rooted in justice and equity, and encouraging youth organizations to adopt best practices that support climate justice.

To learn more about the initiatives

<https://www.youth.ie/climatejusticecharter/>





Initiative title: Youth Climate Justice Project



Organization / School name and contact

Youth Work Ireland - Kerry Diocesan Youth Service, (KDYS),
Youth Work Ireland Tipperary, Youth Work Ireland Galway
Ann Marie Spillane, Project Coordinator
at anmariespillane@kdys.ie



Target audience of the initiative

Young people



Keywords

Youth empowerment – Change makers – Climate justice



Initiative impact

The primary goal of the project is to create climate justice programmes, conduct research, and develop resources aimed at empowering climate justice activists from underrepresented backgrounds. The "Our Fair Planet: Youth Actions for Climate Justice" programme is helping young people become change makers and advocates for a fairer, more just world.



To learn more about the initiatives

<https://www.youthworkireland.ie/youth-supports/climate-justice/>



Initiative title: Autumn/Winter Climate and Community Service Project



Organization / School name and contact

Scouting Ireland
sustainable@scouts.ie



Target audience of the initiative

Young people involved in different scouts groups



Keywords

Young scouts – Nature exploration



Initiative impact

The Climate and Community Service project is open to all young people and groups interested in setting a leadership challenge for their scout group within their own community or in our campsites, to get outside and get active in protecting and promoting nature. Ongoing programme resources will be coming out in the next few weeks.



To learn more about the initiatives

<https://www.scouts.ie/post/scout-group-2022-autumn-winter-climate-and-community-service-project>



Initiative title: Youth Climate Advocate Programme



Organization / School name and contact

ECO-UNESCO
info@ecounesco.ie



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Skill development – Young leaders

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The Youth Climate Advocate Programme offers an exciting opportunity for young people aged 14 to 21 to become inspirational leaders and advocates in Climate Justice and Climate Action. Participants have the chance to develop valuable skills, grow as young climate leaders, and work in a safe, supportive environment. The programme supports the development of impactful initiatives such as The Oak Tree Project, Fossil Fuels, Build a Healthier Wardrobe, Keep Our Blueway Beautiful, and Fast Fashion.

To learn more about the initiatives

<https://ecounesco.ie/youth-climate-justice/youth-climate-justice/participants-youth-climate-justice/>

LEARN MORE

Initiative title: Future-Proof Programme



Organization / School name and contact

Foróige
info@foroige.ie



Target audience of the initiative

Young people



Keywords

Young people empowerment – Sustainable

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The programme seeks to empower young people by encouraging reflection on the significance of building a sustainable future for the planet. It facilitates exploration of environmental solutions, inspires action, and fosters a sense of empowerment while promoting values of social justice and fairness. Highlights:

- o Young people conducted an interview with Minister Roderic O’Gorman T.D.
- o Featured a keynote address by Dr. Niamh Shaw, a prominent science communicator in Ireland.
- o Included an engaging interactive workshop led by sustainable living experts from The Useless Project.

LEARN MORE

To learn more about the initiatives

<https://www.foroige.ie/our-work/foroige-future-proof-programme>
<https://www.foroige.ie/blog/foroige-future-proof-conference-2021>

Italy

National context



In Italy, the intersection of climate change and migration has emerged as a critical issue, reflecting broader global trends. Environmental changes such as rising sea levels, frequent extreme weather events, and temperature fluctuations are worsening living conditions, particularly in southern Italy. The Southern part of Italy, heavily dependent on agriculture, is particularly vulnerable to climate variability; Prolonged droughts and unpredictable rainfall patterns have severely affected crop yields, leading to economic instability and forcing rural populations to migrate to urban centers or other regions with better opportunities, challenging resource allocation and efforts toward social integration[16].

At the same time, Italy's position as a Mediterranean gateway makes it a primary entry point for migrants and refugees from regions severely impacted by climate change, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. These migrants arrive in a country already grappling with its own socio-economic and environmental challenges. The combination of these factors presents a dual challenge for Italy: managing its internal migration while also addressing the needs of incoming climate migrants. The increasing influx of climate migrants highlights the urgency of adopting comprehensive policies that address both climate adaptation and social integration. Italy's migration and climate policies have historically been disconnected, but there is a growing recognition of the need to align these strategies to ensure sustainable development and social cohesion.

For example, many migrants entering through Italy's Mediterranean borders settle in the country, facing economic challenges and the impacts of environmental degradation such as limited resources and poor living conditions. The lack of sufficient integration measures risks creating social fragmentation, emphasizing the need for policies that foster economic resilience and community cohesion.

One notable example is Italy's leadership in integrating climate education into its school system. In 2020, Italy became the first country to make climate change education a mandatory part of the national curriculum, ensuring that students are informed about environmental challenges from an early age[17]. This education reform positions Italy as a pioneer in foster awareness among its youth, who are among the best-informed about climate change within the European Union, according to a recent European Investment Bank survey.

Italy's younger generation is actively contributing to tackling climate change and its societal impacts; as highlighted by the EIB survey, young Italians rank among the best-informed Europeans on climate issues, with a high level of engagement in sustainability initiatives and public discourse[18]. This awareness has translated into grassroots advocacy, as youth movements like Fridays for Future gain momentum in cities across the country. These initiatives not only call for stronger climate action but also highlight the links between environmental degradation and migration pressures.



Initiative title: Drawing routes: a journey through the causes of migration



Organization / School name and contact

Istituto Istruzione Superiore J.F. Kennedy Monselice
PDIS00700L@istruzione.it



Target audience of the initiative

Students, migrants, refugees, host communities,
youth



Keywords

Hands-on workshop – Artistic storytelling

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative featured a hands-on workshop with a comic book artist, where students created comics based on migration stories, with a particular focus on climate migration narratives. The initiative enhanced understanding of the causes of migration through creative expression, increased awareness of climate migration, and encouraged engagement in artistic storytelling.

To learn more about the initiatives

<https://ilproblemadegli altri.it/?p=729>





Initiative title: Swap-party



Organization / School name and contact

Popoli Insieme - Circolo Blow up
info@popolinsieme.eu



Target audience of the initiative

Asylum seekers, young volunteers, students



Keywords

Clothing exchange event – Informational sessions on fast fashion –Documentary screenings

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Brought together approximately 40 participants, including Italian volunteers and migrants. Highlighted the importance of sustainability and raised awareness about the impact of fast fashion.

LEARN MORE 

Learn more about the initiative

https://www.instagram.com/tips_eu/reel/C2KRblmtKLt/

Initiative title: Agenda 2030 next:

human mobility, global rights and voices of peace



Organization / School name and contact

Istituto Istruzione Superiore J.F. Kennedy Monselice
PDIS00700L@istruzione.it



Target audience of the initiative

Students, migrants, refugees, host communities,
youth



Keywords

Podcast creation –Awareness raising



Initiative impact

The initiative involved students creating a podcast featuring the story of someone who has experienced migration, submitting it to a public competition, and uploading it on Spotify. The project aimed to educate participants about the intersection of migration and climate change. The initiative increased awareness of migration and climate change issues while providing a platform for sharing personal migration experiences.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Fondazione Fontana

Learn more about the initiative

[https://open.spotify.com/show/4tP9KtmkDg5NYRYe9ln2t7?
si=495b63759e9a4fa2](https://open.spotify.com/show/4tP9KtmkDg5NYRYe9ln2t7?si=495b63759e9a4fa2)





Initiative title: Clean-up



Organization / School name and contact

Popoli Insieme - Plastic Free Odv Onlus
info@popolinsieme.eu



Target audience of the initiative

Asylum seekers, young volunteers and students



Keywords

Environmental sustainability – Cleaning local streets –
Plastic pollution

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative activities included cleaning local streets, workshop on plastic and environmental issues. The initiative increased awareness of plastic pollution while promoting environmental sustainability and climate consciousness among participants.



Initiative title: "Routes of Change" Event - Climate Change and Forced Migrations



Organization/School name and contact

Istituto Istruzione Superiore J.F. Kennedy Monselice
PDIS00700L@istruzione.it



Target audience of the initiative

Students, migrants, refugees, host communities, youth



Keywords

Awareness raising

Initiative impact

The initiative involved participation in an event focused on the connection between migration and climate change, where experts discussed these critical topics. Students shared their experiences from the Change Environment project, presented their viewpoints, and recounted actions taken. This initiative increased knowledge of the link between climate change and forced migration, encouraged engagement in expert discussions, and fostered a deeper understanding through shared student perspectives and actions.

IMPACT



Initiative title: Ciclo - officina



Organization / School name and contact

Popoli Insieme
info@popolinsieme.eu



Target audience of the initiative

Asylum seekers, young volunteers and students



Keywords

Cycle workshop – Social bonds

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Conducted a cycle workshop focused on teaching participants how to repair and maintain bicycles. Fostered the development of practical skills, encouraged interaction and mutual understanding between volunteers and residents, and strengthened social connections.



Initiative title: Waste Separation Workshop

Organization / School name and contact

Popoli Insieme
info@popolinsieme.eu



Target audience of the initiative

Asylum seekers, young volunteers and students



Keywords

Future waste disposal practices – Environmental awareness

Initiative impact

The initiative activities included an educational video on waste separation, a team-based interactive waste disposal game, and hands-on skills training in waste management. The initiative enhanced participants's environmental awareness and provided practical training in waste separation skills and fostering a positive impact on future waste disposal practices.

IMPACT



Initiative title: Cine-forum on the Consequences of Fast Fashion

Organization / School name and contact

Popoli Insieme
info@popolinsieme.eu

Target audience of the initiative

Asylum seekers, young volunteers and students

Keywords

Documentary screening –
Sustainable fashion practices

Initiative impact

The initiative featured a screening of the documentary "Junk - Armadi Pieni" by Will Italy, followed by an engaging discussion on the environmental and social impacts of fast fashion. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the challenges posed by fast fashion production, identify the parties responsible, explore sustainable fashion solutions, and reflect on the connection between fast fashion and migration. Participants explored this connection, realizing how the fashion industry's exploitation of resources and communities directly impacts migration patterns. This activity prompted participants to consider individual and collective actions to mitigate the negative impacts of fast fashion.

IMPACT

Initiative title: Rescue-dinner



Organization / School name and contact

Popoli Insieme
info@popolinsieme.eu



Target audience of the initiative

Asylum seekers, young volunteers and students



Keywords

Food waste reduction – Sustainable practices

Initiative impact

The initiative involved a visit to a local agri-food market to rescue surplus fruits and vegetables, followed by cooking sessions where participants prepared dishes using the rescued produce. A communal dinner was then held to share the meals, accompanied by a discussion on food waste reduction and sustainable practices. This initiative raised awareness about food waste reduction, promoted sustainable practices, and fostered a sense of community and shared responsibility towards sustainability.

IMPACT



Initiative title: Social Garden



Organization / School name and contact

Popoli Insieme
info@popolinsieme.eu



Target audience of the initiative

Asylum seekers, young volunteers and students



Keywords

Gardening – Community engagement

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative involved cultivating vegetables and fruits in shared garden spaces and organizing events like "AperiGarden" to showcase the harvested produce. It focused on fostering community bonding and knowledge exchange. Through this initiative, participants shared cultivation knowledge and experiences, expanded social networks, raised awareness about the benefits of self-grown produce, and fostered a sense of community and shared responsibility towards sustainability.

Initiative title: Climate of Change



Organization / School name and contact

WeWorld - University of Bologna, finep, Ekumenická akademie
info@weworld.it



Target audience of the initiative

Students, migrants, refugees



Keywords

Participatory workshops – Environmental awareness

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative involved educational programmes on sustainability and participatory workshops on sustainable development and climate change, engaging both students and migrants. The initiative increased environmental awareness, promoted social integration, and led to the creation of local sustainability projects.

LEARN MORE

To learn more

<https://www.weworld.it/en/what-we-do/global-projects/climateofchange>

Belgium National context



Climate change is becoming increasingly urgent in Belgium. The country is already experiencing the impact of climate change, with events such as catastrophic floods that have left deep psychological scars on the affected populations. The devastating floods of July 2021 stand as a grim reminder of the climate crisis' immediate impacts. Labelled as the first "climate refugees" in Belgium, the affected communities were displaced from their homes and still struggle with the psychological aftermath of the disaster[19].

These floods underline the urgent need for infrastructure and policy measures that bolster resilience against extreme weather events. Belgium faces multifaceted challenges in the context of climate change, including the emergence of climate refugees, the need for educational initiatives to raise environmental awareness, and the active participation of youth in shaping climate policies. These dimensions highlight Belgium's vulnerability to climate impacts and its ongoing societal responses to the crisis.

Alongside this, a movement of young activists has been pushing for a more substantial role in decision-making processes concerning climate action. The Belgian government, meanwhile, is committed to raising awareness and integrating climate change education in its policies to foster greater public engagement.

Belgium's National Energy and Climate Plan emphasizes the critical role of education in fostering environmental awareness. The plan includes targeted campaigns and educational programmes aimed at informing citizens about sustainable energy practices and climate adaptation measures[20].

This focus on education not only supports individual behavioural change but also builds a foundation for collective societal transformation in addressing climate challenges.

Belgium's youth have emerged as vocal and organized advocates for climate action. Grassroots movements, such as the youth climate marches, have called for greater trust and involvement in policy-making processes[1]. These young activists highlight the disconnect between decision makers and the lived realities of future generations, urging for inclusive and forward-thinking climate governance.

Belgium's experience illustrates the interconnected challenges of climate change, from immediate disasters to long-term education and inclusive policy making. Addressing these challenges requires cohesive strategies that integrate resilience building, awareness campaigns, and the empowerment of all societal actors, particularly youth.



Co-funded by
the European Union





Initiative title: Let Lake Victoria Breathe Again



Organization / School name and contact

Climate Academy/European School of Brussels II
info@theclimateacademy.org



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Climate advocacy – Climate and gender

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative aimed to raise awareness of the climate refugee crisis and its gender injustices by sharing the inspiring story of a young woman who turned immense challenges into hopeful, regenerative narratives. Rahmina, who became a climate refugee at age 6, spoke about her journey from an island in Lake Victoria to Kisumu, her efforts to clean up Lake Victoria, and her leadership as a young woman driving change. Approximately 200 students participated, with 20 actively involved. Two students showed exceptional leadership and autonomy in the project. The initiative had a profound emotional impact, shifting students' perspectives on climate and social justice. Some students continue to support Rahmina through fundraising and awareness campaigns, and many now follow her on Instagram to stay connected to her work.

To learn more about Rahmina work

<https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2022/11/08/lake-victoria-kenya-conservation-rahmina-paullete-spc-intl.cnn>
Rahmina with Chrysoula

LEARN MORE



Initiative title: Bringing Reality to the Surface



Organization / School name and contact

The Climate Academy/Liceo Frattini Art School
info@theclimateacademy.org



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Feminism – Female portrait – Tipping points –
Migration

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Climate Academy students from EEB2 took two 'Deep Green' trips to Italy, where they met students from Liceo Frattini school. During the collaborative initiative, students worked with artist Constantin Migliorini to teach art classes focused on natural tipping points and case studies of women's suffering due to climate migration. The project culminated in an art competition where students created female portraits inspired by these themes.

LEARN MORE 

Learn more

www.theclimateacademy.org

Initiative title: Youth for Climate - Belgium



Contact

infoyouthforclimate.be



Target audience of the initiative

Students, activists



Keywords

Climate activism – Youth-led movement –
Climate change awareness

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Youth for Climate is a climate youth movement that seeks to limit the consequences of the climate and biodiversity crisis by uniting as a movement and exert political pressure while raising awareness in society.

LEARN MORE 

Learn more

<https://www.youthforclimate.be/contact>

#StandUpForClimate 2022.
Athénée Royal René Magritte de Châtelet.

Initiative title: #StandUpForClimate



Organization / School name and contact

CNCD 11.11.11



Target audience of the initiative

Young people



Keywords

Climate justice – Youth mobilization – Environmental awareness – Youth engagement

Initiative impact

More than 45,000 young people across the country, from over 400 schools and youth organizations, mobilized for climate justice. The youth and schools took the lead in spreading their actions, with many actively sharing photos and videos of the initiative on their social media platforms.

IMPACT

LEARN MORE

Learn more

[https://www.cncd.be/StandUpForClimate-Plus-de-45-000?
lang=fr](https://www.cncd.be/StandUpForClimate-Plus-de-45-000?lang=fr)



Initiative title: RZO



Contacts

Lynn Molderez: lynn@empreintes.be
Julien Bauwens: julien@empreintes.be



Target audience of the initiative

Young people, students



Keywords

Youth activism – Environmental awareness

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The RZO brings together students involved in environmental or sustainable development projects to create a fairer, greener, and more supportive campus. It currently includes around 30 projects across various universities and higher education institutions in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. Its goals are to strengthen existing actions, encourage the emergence of new projects, facilitate the exchange of best practices, foster personal connections among engaged students, and help some students feel less isolated in their commitment.



Learn more

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RZO.etudiants>

Initiative title: Forum des Jeunes



Organization / School name and contact

forum.jeunes@cfwb.be



Target audience of the initiative

Young people, policymakers



Keywords

Youth leadership – Youth engagement

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative serves as the voice of young people aged 16 to 30 in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. Its organization revolves around concrete projects that young individuals from diverse backgrounds decide to undertake collectively. These projects are defined during participatory sessions that highlight the main concerns of French-speaking Belgian youth. These discussions allow participants to reflect on priorities related to current events, as well as local, national, and international issues impacting young people. The Youth Forum listens to young people's voices and amplifies them through official statements that reflect a collective and representative perspective of their diversity. It also represents youth at national and international conferences and facilitates the implementation of youth-led initiatives.

LEARN MORE 

Learn more

<https://forumdesjeunes.be/>

Initiative title: ICT equipment collection!



Organization / School name and contact

Odisee University College
Sylvie De Muynck: sylvie.demuynck@odisee.be



Target audience of the initiative

Students, youth, community



Keywords

Tree planting – Recycling and reuse –
Environmental campaign

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Odisee University College launched a large-scale collection campaign for old ICT equipment. As part of the initiative, trees are planted in collaboration with Natuurpunt during the annual planting day. In the previous campaign, 179 mobile phones, 262 PCs, 98 laptops, and one server were collected in just one month, resulting in 283m² of additional greenery in Dilbeek. The campaign will run for an entire year, with various actions aimed at planting even more forest.

LEARN MORE

Learn more

<https://www.odisee.be/>

Initiative title: Vegan Lunch for the environment



Organization / School name and contact

Jerome Somers
jerome.somers@hotmail.com



Target audience of the initiative

Youth, community



Keywords

Tree planting – Environmental campaign –
Sustainable food

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Students from Artevelde University College took part in a project for their Business Ethics course, focusing on Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13). As part of the project, they organized a vegan lunch for the employees of Bigtrees company. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of plant-based eating by demonstrating that delicious and easy meals can be made without meat or similar products. The students highlighted the negative environmental impact of the meat industry and advocated for small changes in dietary habits, believing such adjustments could have a significant positive impact on the planet. The proceeds from the lunch were donated to the #TeamTrees campaign (teamtrees.org), a global initiative to plant 20 million trees. Through this campaign, every euro donated corresponds to one tree planted.

Initiative title: Jong Lokaal Kabaal



Contact

globelink@globelink.be



Target audience of the initiative

Youth, policy makers



Keywords

Environmental campaign – Youth leadership – Advocacy

IMPACT

Initiative impact

In cooperation with Globelink, three cities/municipalities (Hamont Achel, Zoersel and Beersel) organized the project Jong Lokaal Kabaal. Young people (between the ages of 16 and 26) from these cities/municipalities discovered the theme and sub-themes of climate through the kick-off (climate tables combined with an SDG escape room). In the follow-up process, a core group of 15 young people per city/municipality set to work on the question: "How can we shape our city/municipality of the future in terms of climate?" The three paths led to inspiring actions on local sustainability. These self-devised actions and experiences were actively shared by the young people from the different cities and municipalities during and at the end of the track. Youth consultants and sustainability officials strengthened the local anchoring so that the voice of young people echoed the municipal sustainability policy. In this way, local administrations were encouraged to continue working with young people. This anchoring resulted in the development of a sustainable tool (ref. poster), with all the climate actions that each young person can apply daily.

LEARN MORE

Learn more

www.globelink.be



Initiative title: YOUCA Action Day



Contact

helpdesk@youca.be



Target audience of the initiative

Active citizenship, Skill building



Keywords

Environmental campaign – Youth leadership – Advocacy

IMPACT

Initiative impact

YOUCA Action Day allows students to actively engage with the labor market, connect with peers globally, and bring a meaningful sense of solidarity to their schools, all while contributing to impactful social and environmental projects. More than 15,000 young people from Flanders and Brussels, ranging from the fourth to the seventh year of secondary school, participate in the annual YOUCA Action Day by working for a day at a company, organization, government office, or with a private individual. The wages they earn during this day are donated to support projects led by committed young people worldwide.

LEARN MORE

Learn more

<https://www.youca.be/action-day-leerkrachten>

Initiative title:

#HackTheFuture |

Climate communication for and by young people



Organization / School name and contact

FRDO

chris.schuurmans@frdo-cfdd.be



Target audience of the initiative

Youth, policy makers



Keywords

Youth engagement – Sustainability

IMPACT

Initiative impact

Youth organizations within the Federal Council for Sustainable Development (FRDO) convened for a day-long conference to present their recommendations on climate communication designed for and by young people. The presentation was followed by a dialogue with experts and FRDO stakeholders. Minister Khattabi also attended the event. The conference underscored the critical need to amplify the voices of young people and called for broad societal support to reinforce their dedication to creating a sustainable future.

LEARN MORE 

Learn more

<https://frdo-cfdd.be/events/20211125-hackthefuture-klimaatcommunicatie-voor-en-door-jongeren/>

Initiative title: CSE Transition



Contact

accueil.cse@csteh.be



Target audience of the initiative

Students, schools, teachers



Keywords

Transition initiatives – Environmental education

IMPACT

Initiative impact

At Collège Saint-Etienne, the "Transition" initiatives focus on fostering sustainable practices within the school.

The objectives include:

- Minimizing waste as much as possible.
- Promoting mindful and local consumption through the school's local shop.
- Maintaining a vegetable garden and consuming its produce within the school.
- Creating classroom projects centered around sustainable development. Efforts such as striving for zero waste, cultivating the garden, making soups, composting, reducing energy usage, and operating the local shop are spearheaded by the dedicated "CSE in Transition" team, which consists of both teachers and students.

LEARN MORE



Learn more

<https://cste.be/cse/nos-projets/#transition>

Hungary

National context



Hungary faces significant challenges due to climate change, including extreme weather events, rising temperatures, and shifting precipitation patterns. These changes have far-reaching implications for agriculture, water resources, and public health. According to the "Report on the scientific assessment of the possible effects of climate change on the Carpathian Basin," key vulnerabilities include water regime changes in major rivers, increased exposure of agriculture to climate variability, and heightened risks to human health[22].

Internal migration patterns in Hungary have also been influenced by climate change. As certain regions experience heightened exposure to extreme weather, such as flooding and droughts, populations may be compelled to relocate. While comprehensive data on climate-induced migration within Hungary remains limited, these movements underline the need for targeted adaptation strategies and resource allocation to vulnerable areas.

Hungary's climate policy framework places a strong emphasis on awareness raising and education as tools to combat climate change. The Climate Change Awareness Raising Action Plan, part of the Second National Climate Change Strategy (NCCS-2), outlines measures to foster public understanding and engagement. These include promoting sustainability through education, organizing public campaigns, and developing educational materials to reach diverse audiences[23].

Reforms in Hungary's education system have further integrated climate change topics into school curricula. Modernized teaching methods aim to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to address environmental challenges to foster experiential learning and deepen students' engagement with sustainability issues[24].

Young Hungarians are emerging as key stakeholders in the country's climate efforts. A 2023 survey by the EIB revealed that 72% of Hungarians aged 20-35 consider the climate impact of prospective employers an important factor when seeking jobs. This reflects the growing significance of environmental consciousness among younger generations[25].

Furthermore, young people's awareness of climate issues is influenced by the broader educational and policy environment. Surveys indicate that many young Hungarians are concerned about the economic implications of the green transition, but they also emphasize the urgency of climate action. These attitudes suggest that targeted educational initiatives can empower youth to take leading roles in climate adaptation and innovation[26].



Initiative title: SAVE NOT WASTE



Organization / School name and contact

Fényi Gyula Jezsuita Gimnázium
Rivasz-Tóth Kinga: rkinga@jezsu.hu
+3646560458



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Waste collection – Environmental awareness



Initiative impact

The initiative deepened participants' understanding of the causes of climate change while fostering a sense of responsibility for environmental stewardship. Through a combination of educational and practical activities, it provided valuable insights into the reasons behind climate change and its impacts on the planet. Participants were actively engaged in waste collection efforts, offering them a hands-on opportunity to contribute to environmental cleanup and see the tangible results of their actions. To further enhance their understanding, visits to waste management plants were organized, where they learned about sustainable waste handling processes and the importance of reducing waste at the source.

To learn more: www.jezsu.hu

<https://jezsu.hu/gimnazium/projektek/55-a-litv%C3%A1n-erd%C5%91k-m%C3%A9ly%C3%A9n-savenotwaste-projekt.html?highlight=WyJlcmFzbXVzllO=>

Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

- Kaunas Jesuit High School, Kaunas Lithuania,
- Kostka Jesuit High School, Krakow, Poland
- Xavier Jesuit High School, Tudela, Spain
- Marco de Canaveses High School, Portugal
- Fényi Gyula Jezsuita Gimnázium, Kollégium és Óvoda, Miskolc, Hungary



Testimony from participant

"During the meetings, we not only explore new knowledge about environmental protection and climate change through interdisciplinary learning methods, creative activities, and personal experiences but also engage in a cultural exchange where we reflect on each other's environmental habits and the impacts of climate change. Through these events, we gain a new perspective on our own environmental and climate change reality at home. Upon returning, we share the acquired knowledge and experiences with our peers, shedding light on the challenges of climate change and our role in environmental protection. Many students actively participate in the fight against climate change, joining other environmental projects, thereby strengthening our commitment to a sustainable future." –Students from Fényi Gyula Jezsuita Gimnázium





Initiative title: #CLIMATE OF CHANGE



Organization / School name and contact

Baptista Szeretetszolgálat Alapítvány (Baptist Charity Foundation)
info@climateofchange.info



Target audience of the initiative

Youth, vulnerable communities, host communities

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative strives to build a brighter future for climate change migrants, putting a human face on the crisis and emphasizing its profound impact on young people, who will face its harshest consequences. By engaging young Europeans, the programme seeks to foster an understanding of the deep connections between local and global inequalities, inspiring participants to take meaningful action. It encourages youth to integrate sustainable practices into their daily routines and to become passionate advocates for global justice. Spanning 13 countries and brought to life through the collaboration of 16 dedicated project partners, the initiative has made a significant impact. It has reached and influenced 14,000 students and 600 teachers through its educational programmes and awareness-raising activities, cultivating a generation of informed and empowered changemakers.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Baptista Szeretetszolgálat Alapítvány



To learn more

<https://climateofchange.info/hungary/>



Testimony from participant

<https://www.szeretlekmagyarorszag.hu/jovo/testkozelbol-tapasztalhattam-meg-hogy-a-klimavaltozas-mar-most-elet-halal-kerdese-dobrosi-laura-akenyai-utjarol-meselt/>



Initiative title: Environmental social responsibility in class!

Organization / School name and contact

Szent Benedek Gimnázium és Technikum, Budapest
Nagyné Molnár Ildikó, Religion teacher, nmildo@gmail.com
School: titkarsag.budapest@szbi.hu



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Environmental awareness – Sustainability Week

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The initiative featured a creative component where students designed posters to visually complement their presentations. These posters were displayed in the school corridors during Sustainability Week, inspiring discussions and promoting environmental awareness among the wider school community. Approximately 100 students from three classes were actively involved in the project, and an additional 300 students were impacted through the poster displays and related activities during Sustainability Week. The initiative aimed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and awareness needed to tackle environmental and social challenges as they grow into adulthood. It sought to cultivate responsible decision-making and encourage sustainable living practices.

LEARN MORE 

To learn more

<https://szbi.hu/budapest/>

Initiative title:

Mi Budapestünk Program a fiatalközpontú és fenntartható fővárosért



Organization / School name and contact

ADOM Diákmozgalom - (Student' Council of Budapest)
diakmozgalom@gmail.com



Target audience of the initiative

Students, locals, policy makers



Keywords

Youth inclusion – Youth participation – Sustainability



Initiative impact

The “Mi Budapestünk Program” (Our Budapest Program) is a youth leadership programme that aims to include young people in the decision-making process. The programme supported by the Budapest City Council approved the proposal to establish the Budapest Student Government, to which all high school students in Budapest are invited to apply. Each school will be able to delegate two representatives to the district representative election, where two representatives will also be elected, who can represent the given district in the Budapest student government.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

General Assembly of Budapest
Egységes Diákfront (EDF), Fridays For Future Magyarország

Testimony from participant

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1822172464982469>
<https://szoljonrolunk.hu/files/program.pdf>
<https://index.hu/belfold/2024/10/31/mi-budapestunk-diakszervezetek-fovaros-budapest-karacsony-gergely-vitezy-david-tisza-part-budapesti-diakonkormanyzat/?token=55eefd172e17d0749c02bb2b7d081320>





Initiative title: Collecting cooking oil waste



Organization / School name and contact

Budapesti Műszaki és Gazdaságtudományi
Egyetem Vásárhelyi Pál Kollégium Zöld Kör
vpkzoldkor@gmail.com



Target audience of the initiative

Students



Keywords

Waste – Recycling

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The members of the Vásárhelyi Pál Kollégium Zöld Kör (VPK Zöld Kör) student club, collected the waste cooking oil from the newly installed collectors in the dormitory's kitchen. The members of the student club collected 180 litres of oil in total in two semesters and transported the oil to their designated collecting points, where these can be recycled

LEARN MORE 

To learn more

- Follow: VPK ZÖLD KÖR Community
- https://www.instagram.com/zoldkor_vpk/
- <https://www.instagram.com/p/C7sH2a4tUeD/?igsh=NHR4a2Y2ZDK3>



Initiative title: Sulizsák (Schoolbag)



Organization / School name and contact

Szent Lőrinc Katolikus Általános Iskola
+36-1/290-6369



Target audience of the initiative

Students, teachers, community



Keywords

Recycling – Clothing collection

IMPACT

Initiative impact

The students and teachers of Szent Lőrinc Katolikus Általános Iskola organized a clothing collection initiative, gathering unused clothes, textiles (such as sheets and curtains), shoes, (hand)bags, and hats. These items were transported to a collection point, where they were either resold or repurposed based on their quality, examples include creating rugs or cleaning rags. In total, the school collected an impressive 2,677.6 kilograms of wearable items. The initiative aimed to extend the lifecycle of these items while raising awareness about the environmental impact of the fashion industry.

LEARN MORE 

To learn more

<https://www.sztlorinc.hu/nagy-siker-volt-a-sulizsak-program/>



Initiative title: Youth for the Next Generations: Ten Points Proposal for COP29

Organization / School name and contact

UNICEF Hungary
unicef@unicef.hu +36-1/225-8818

Target audience of the initiative

Students, youth associations, green communities

Keywords

Young leaders – Green policy

Initiative impact

With the lead of UNICEF Hungary and with the consultation of hundreds of Hungarian schools, youth and green organizations, the Young Ambassadors of UNICEF had the opportunity to discuss their proposal containing 10 points about the direction of climate politics in Hungary in the upper house of the Hungarian Parliament with the representatives of the Hungarian Government. The proposal strongly focuses on the rights of children, the role of education in preparing for climate change, social equality, equal distribution of resources, biodiversity and agriculture and the role of financial support, etc., both locally and internationally.

To learn more

- <https://unicef.hu/igy-segitunk/hireink/elkeszult-a-magyar-ifjusagi-javaslatcsomag-a-cop29-re-a-fiatalok-a-parlamentben-vitatkoztak-es-szavaztak#tab-21351>
- <https://unicef.hu/igy-segitunk/hireink/elkeszult-a-magyar-ifjusagi-javaslatcsomag-a-cop29-re-a-fiatalok-a-parlamentben-vitatkoztak-es-szavaztak#tab-21351>



IMPACT

LEARN MORE 



Initiative title: Mentsük meg a Kiserdőt! (Save the Kiserdő!)



Organization / School name and contact

József Attila Katolikus Nyelvvoktató Német Nemzetiségi Általános Iskola
jozsef20@t-online.hu +36-1/283-0760



Target audience of the initiative

Students, communities, NGOs



Keywords

Students – Community engagement

IMPACT

Initiative impact

As part of the "Mentsük meg a Kiserdőt!" (Save the Kiserdő/Smallwoods!) initiative, students joined forces with the local community to collect trash and clean up the area.

LEARN MORE 

To learn more

<https://ekif-bp.hu/2024/04/24/6173/>

Initiative title: Kertszépítés (Gardening)



Organization / School name and contact

Pál Apostol Katolikus Óvoda, Általános Iskola és Gimnázium
titkarsag@palapostol.hu



Target audience of the initiative

Students, parents, teachers



Keywords

Planting trees – Awareness raising – Gardening –
Community engagement



Initiative impact

Students, parents, and teachers worked together to cultivate the school's backyard garden, not merely for its visual appeal but to contribute to the school's environmental well-being. Their efforts extended to beautifying the front yard and establishing a rest area for younger children; this included planting copper pebbles near the soccer field and creating a small garden encircled by benches, offering a serene and inviting space for outdoor activities and relaxation.



Institutions or organizations involved in the implementation of the initiative

Esztergom-Budapesti Főegyházmegye Katolikus Iskolai Főhatósága
(EKIF)



To learn more

<https://ekif-bp.hu/2024/10/07/7182/>



Testimony

'By beautifying our garden, we not only want to provide a place for the communities, but also to provide them with a pleasant aesthetic experience. Of course, this is just a small step, but since we all have a responsibility for the future of our planet and all of humanity, we, as an educational institution and as members of the community, try to find the opportunities and tasks with which we can contribute to the common goal. And with which we can also draw the attention of the members of our environment to this.' – Teacher

Recommendations

Youth-Led Initiatives for Change

The initiatives presented in the report show that there is a buzz and a desire among young people to take part in creating change. Through various initiatives, students have learned, engaged in dialogue with teachers and peers, and rolled up their sleeves to create a more sustainable and fairer world, starting from their schools and communities. Teachers have played a pivotal role in motivating students to take action, guiding them first to understand the phenomena of climate change and migration, and then to comprehend the importance of collective and individual responsibility as citizens in mitigating the effects of climate change through small actions.

Teachers' Role as Change Agents

We encourage teachers to be agents of change, embracing their role as comprehensive educators in the classroom. Regardless of the subject taught, it can be linked to the themes of climate change, sustainability, social justice, and social activism. Teachers should fully leverage their transformative power and integrate these global issues into their lessons.

Student Development and Engagement

Guiding students throughout their school years is an important and decisive role, and it is in the classroom that the young leaders of the future are formed. Integrating creative workshops, presentations, documentaries, bringing in guest speakers, and creating virtual and in-person exchange opportunities among students has a positive impact, as it empowers students to use their creativity and initiative and improves their critical thinking. Incorporating a balanced learning experience between data and human stories is important as it allows students to see beyond the data, to understand the stories of people affected by climate change, and to cultivate empathy.

Teachers as Facilitators of Concrete Projects

Teachers must also assume the role of facilitators, guiding students to apply what they have learned and transform it into concrete projects, whether they be artistic, awareness campaigns, or collective moments dedicated to sustainability. It is important that these projects are expressions of the students' desire to take initiative and be part of the change, while developing leadership, communication, and activism skills.

Recommendations

Role of Schools in Facilitating Initiatives

Not only teachers, but other actors must facilitate this learning process towards awareness and social action for climate change.

In the initiatives presented in the report, the importance of involving not only teachers but also schools emerge. School administrators must collaborate with teachers, and facilitate and welcome these initiatives in classrooms. Alongside teachers, the school must be an institution, an incubator of transformation for young people, leading them to achieve full social awareness and to commit to more active social and community environments that promote sustainable actions.

Civil Society Organizations as Allies

Schools and teachers can find strong support from civil society organizations and the private sector. In the initiatives presented, civil society organizations have shared practices and supported schools in opening up to these issues, sharing resources and materials. NGOs must put their experience, expertise, networks, and platforms at the service of communities and schools to multiply exchange opportunities for schools, teachers, students, and affected communities, so that actions aimed at mitigating, counteracting, and raising awareness about issues such as climate change and migration are not isolated but can be shared and replicated. The role of civil society organizations is also important to connect students to local, national, and global movements, encouraging young people to learn from their peers, be inspired, grow, and design a more sustainable future together.

Policymakers' Support

If actions are to be driven from the bottom up, mobilizing students, schools, and communities, it is equally important that they be supported with the right means. Policymakers must echo the inspirations of young people, providing them with support in two directions: legislative support, pushing for school reforms where issues such as climate change and migration are present in national curricula, to allow students to study and understand the complex intersection between climate change and migration and prepare them to contribute to solutions. Policymakers must also facilitate both education programmes on these issues and the actions undertaken by young people with adequate funding to provide financial support so that young people can concretely develop actions in their schools, communities, and with their peers. It is important to also create national platforms, supported by governments, where young people can meet and exchange their ideas and actions, and reflect together on the next steps and policies to be taken to address these and other global challenges.



Conclusion

In the various countries involved in the project, climate change is impacting populations, and trends predict that the consequences will increasingly be a cause of human displacement. The initiatives presented in the report each have a unique way of responding to the call to action; however, some common themes have emerged, highlighting the strong sense of urgency felt by participants to bring these issues to school and society.

The different initiatives have allowed students to make their voices heard, engage together and be agents of change. Actions like El Dia Del Migrante and Drawing routes: a journey through the causes of migration, have found in artistic expression a tool to raise awareness about climate change and have encouraged students to see migration from a human perspective. The importance of community involvement has been fundamental in initiatives such as Swap-party and Colillatón, where locals and migrants together have implemented collective actions on recycling and waste management, examples of shared and inclusive responsibility. Other similar initiatives have seen students come together in street campaigns to not only raise awareness about issues of migration and displacement but also to raise funds for organizations committed to a more just and equitable society, such as Sleep-Out and Save the Kiserdó!, highlighting how collective actions, in addition to reinforcing the message, have a very strong impact on society.

The involvement of young activists has also been fundamental. Their direct experience with the consequences of climate change in their communities has brought students closer and allowed them to develop greater empathy. Students had the opportunity to interact and learn directly from a young climate activist, and together they reflected on potential projects to develop together making this not only an opportunity for peer-to-peer cultural exchange but also a means to multiply efforts.

However, despite the existence of various initiatives and institutions that involve young people in decision-making processes there is still a pressing need to go further, by creating opportunities that ensure all young people are included, especially those who may not have had access to education on climate issues or opportunities to participate in the debate, such as youth from rural areas, those with fewer opportunities, or those from migratory backgrounds.

Projects like Change Environment play a vital role in schools, fostering education and awareness among young people of different ages and backgrounds. These initiatives not only educate but also empower youth to become leaders of their generation, by making climate advocacy and action accessible to all, and ensuring that the responsibility to address climate change and its impacts is shared equitably, rather than being limited to a privileged few. Inclusivity and active participation are critical to building a future where all voices contribute to solutions for our planet.



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