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# CLIMentines

Empowered Youth  
for Climate Action

D2.2 Scoping Study



**CLIMentines**  
Empowered Youth for Climate Action

## D2.2 Scoping Study

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ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL ITALIA, ITALY

GROUPE SOS SOLIDARITES - ASSFAM, FRANCE

OESTERREICHISCHE JUNGARBEITERBEWEGUNG - ÖJAB, AUSTRIA

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# Introduction

## The Project

The CLIMentines project came into being after thoughtful consideration of two pivotal factors: young people in Europe care about the environment and wish to embark on climate action, but they either lack the knowledge and tools or feel overshadowed with their voices not heard in the public sphere. By developing relevant tools and investigating the existing initiatives functioning on the basis of participatory and deliberative democracy, the project wishes to address both. To put it simply, the project's main objective is to foster a new generation of young people in Europe who have the knowledge and tools to actively engage and impact climate action policies in their countries and at the European level.

## The Structure of this Scoping Study

The present Scoping Study functions as the theoretical precursor of a series of impactful and well-designed activities, which include the establishment of the CLIMentines network, co-creation workshops, and the CLIMentines Toolbox, to name just a few. It is a valuable tool aiming to map and analyse the existing models and practices concerning youth engagement in climate action across local, national, and European spectrums. More precisely, accentuated focus is placed on identifying initiatives and methodologies that apply participatory and deliberative democracy principles. This is because there is a lack of a systematic body of work on the analysis and assessment of youth participation in decision-making at local, national, and European levels. As a result, this Scoping Study offers youth policymakers recent and evidenced insights on what needs to be done in the future in the participating countries and beyond.

The Scoping Study includes:

- I. The EU context with
  - a. Information on youth participation in climate action on the EU level
  - b. The analysis of two youth participation models, identified as the most relevant for the assessment of participatory initiatives in climate action
  - c. The presentation of two Good Practices at the EU level, assessed using the specific participation models.
- II. Country-based information and Good Practices from Greece, France, Austria, Finland, Italy and Poland
- III. Conclusions and Recommendations

## EU Context

### Deliberative Youth Participation in EU Initiatives

One of the main goals of this Scoping Study is to identify and assess youth participation initiatives in regard to their deliberation levels from the side of young participants. In order to have a clear understanding of the criteria based on which we assess the national Good Practices, it is necessary to address the broader context of deliberative youth participation on EU level at first.

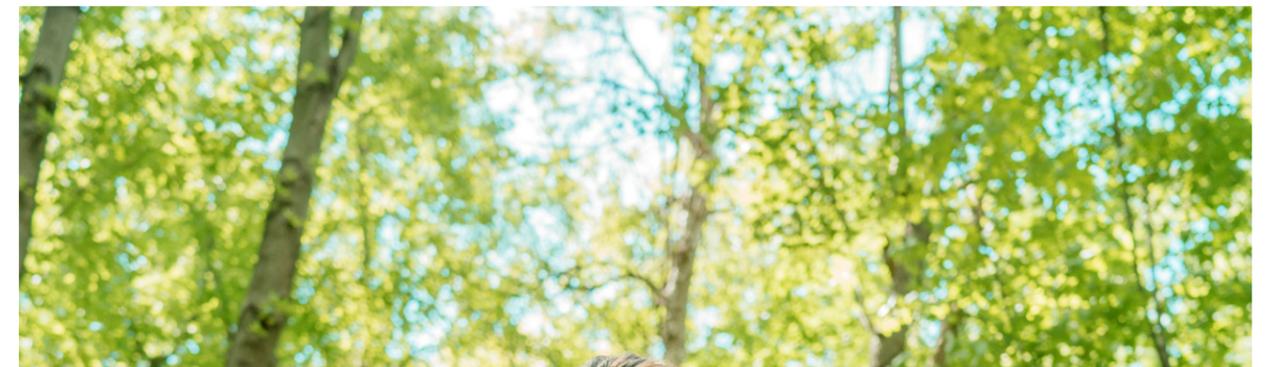
Deliberative democracy, as conceptualised by practitioners, emphasises public engagement processes that prioritise discussion, reflection, and consideration over mere voting. It aims to include diverse stakeholder populations in decision-making, promote thorough deliberation or discussion of topics, and have a genuine influence on policy outcomes (Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005). This approach values truthful dialogue, respect for opposing arguments, and openness to changing one's stance based on superior reasoning (Steiner, 2012).

Various methods, collectively termed mini-publics, aim to uphold the ideals of inclusiveness, deliberation, and influence in deliberative democracy (Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005). These methods include citizens' juries, consensus conferences, and deliberative polling, among others, each designed to foster high-quality deliberative processes (Fung, 2003). Mini-publics form part of a broader set of deliberative mechanisms within democratic systems, and efforts to support diverse mechanisms and nurture connections among them are seen as vital for strengthening democratic processes (Dryzek, 2010; Hendriks, 2006; Mansbridge et al., 2012).

The three criteria of deliberative democracy are inclusion, deliberation, and influence (Bulling et al., 2013). Ideally, the higher the quality of each criterion application, the more deliberative the youth participation. Depending on the nature of the event or initiative, the selection process might differ and, thus, the levels of inclusion. Since the focus of the Study is youth participation in such events or initiatives, the approaches might be more selective regarding the communities the young people represent or be following a random selection. What is crucial is that different views are represented. The deliberation level is important under all circumstances, but especially when we have a mixed group of participants in terms of age, for example, in a jury or assembly. In that case, moderation should be effective enabling young people to meaningfully contribute and be active agents in the deliberation process without being sidelined (Bulling et al., 2013). Finally, influence is the driving force for youth participation since the possibility of having your voice heard and shaping policymaking motivates young people. Although it is rather difficult to assess the attained level of influence on policymaking, striving for it to the fullest, will not transform youth participation into tokenism (Bulling et al., 2013).

A relevant example at the EU level is the Climate Pact Ambassadors, which is one of the ways young people are involved in climate action and stems from the European Climate Pact<sup>1</sup>. The European Climate Pact offers opportunities for young people to get involved through pledges, becoming ambassadors, organizing peer parliaments, and participating in youth-focused events. The main feature of the Ambassadors' course of action is, at first, the collaboration among young people, which is emphasised as essential for driving change, whether through protests, lobbying, or collective action. Also, ensuring youth representation in decision-making processes, both domestically and internationally is deemed crucial for effective climate action (European Union, 2022)

Another EU-level initiative structured around deliberative youth participation is the Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables (EESC, n.d.). It materialised in the aftermath of the European Economic and Social Committee's opinion "Towards structured youth engagement on climate and sustainability in the EU decision-making process" adopted in 2020 (EESC, n.d.). Based on the information available online, the assessment of the Round Tables, based on the three criteria discussed above, is quite satisfactory. However, it is essential to state that so far, there have been four round tables, so the sample is not extensive.



### Youth Participation Models Employed in this Scoping Study

There is a rather small pool of fully developed youth participation models that can be used to practice assessing a deliberative democratic process. For the present Scoping Study, we decided to delve into two of them, namely Hart's ladder and Cahill and Dadvand's models (See Appendices 1 & 2). In the national reports that follow, the project partners were free to use whichever of the two fitted their analysis best. The reason why these two were selected is that the first has paved the way for youth participation in general and it is rather practical to employ thanks to its visual representation. Nonetheless, it is rightfully considered outdated. The second is much more up-to-date, and the most recent one that has been developed and brings forward contextual factors are highly important when we are assessing youth participation.

<sup>1</sup> The European Climate Pact is "a movement of people united around a common cause, each taking steps in their own worlds to build a more sustainable Europe. Launched by the European Commission, the Pact is part of the European Green Deal and is helping the EU to meet its goal to become climate-neutral by 2050" ([https://climate-pact.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://climate-pact.europa.eu/index_en))

## Good Practices

### #EUYouth Dialogue

#### #EUYouth Dialogue

 **Organisation**  
European Union

 **Level**  
EUROPEAN

 **Platform Used**  
[youth.europa.eu/eu-youth-dialogue\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/eu-youth-dialogue_en)

 **Target Group**

- Representatives of youth ministries and other ministries
- National youth councils
- Local and regional youth councils
- Youth organisations,
- Representatives of the National Agency for Erasmus+ youth in action
- Young people from diverse backgrounds
- Youth information providers, and
- Youth researchers.

#### Description

The EU Youth Dialogue serves as a platform to ensure that the opinions, views, and needs of young people and youth organisations are considered in the development of EU youth policies. It operates in 18-month work cycles, focusing on themes set by the Council of Youth Ministers. The latest completed cycle, from early 2022 to mid-2023, centers on “**Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe**”, aligning with the Youth Goals of Inclusive Societies and Sustainable Green Europe.

National working groups in each Member State conduct consultations and activities with young people, youth organisations, and policymakers. The Trio Presidency, supported by the European Commission, National Agencies, and youth civil society representatives, coordinates the implementation of the dialogue.

The outcomes of national and European activities are compiled, analysed, and discussed at EU Youth Conferences, held twice a year. Here, youth representatives and policymakers collaborate to present a joint message to the EU. The conclusions may lead to the adoption of policy documents reflecting young people’s views, such as the creation of the 11 Youth Goals in 2018. This strategy mobilises EU-level policy instruments and encourages stakeholder actions at national, regional, and local levels to realise the vision of young people.

#### Inclusion/Diversity

According to research conducted on the extent to which young people from minority backgrounds have accessed EUYD across its 6th to 9th cycles, the findings are rather positive.

At the European level, ethnic minorities, religious minorities, young people with disabilities, and LGBTI youth are significantly overrepresented in the EU Youth Dialogue (EUYD), with each group comprising between two to three times the expected number of participants. However, the participation rates of rural youth closely align with expectations, while NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth are slightly underrepresented.

Overall, it’s estimated that **49.5% of EUYD participants belong to a minority group**, potentially higher than the participation rate of young people with fewer opportunities in Erasmus + Youth KA1 actions (estimated at 30%). Participation rates vary between EUYD cycles and across different countries, with some countries excelling in engaging certain minority groups while lagging in others. Gender ratios also show a pronounced trend towards overrepresentation of young women, increasing over time. These findings underscore the success of efforts to prioritise inclusion in EUYD, despite limitations in data collection (Moxon & Barta, 2023).

#### Effectiveness

**Over 300 participants** from across Europe gathered in Prague from 11 to 13 July 2022 for the Ninth Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue conference, focusing on two key EU Youth Goals: Inclusive Societies and Sustainable Green Europe. Discussions emphasised the active involvement of young people in fostering a sustainable and inclusive Europe, highlighting the pivotal role of youth-led organisations. Panels and workshops showcased exemplary practices and success factors for achieving sustainability and fostering inclusive societies. Participants underscored the importance of intergenerational dialogue in addressing climate challenges. The recommendations put forward by youth delegates will play a significant role in shaping the Conference report and Council Conclusion, thereby influencing EU policy on youth dialogue outcomes (SwissCore, n.d.).



## Impact

Although the topic of the Scoping Study is climate action, the EU Youth Dialogues are spread over a wide range of topics, including climate action in their 9th circle more explicitly. Since the latest two circles, the 9th and 10th, which is still ongoing, haven't produced any concrete outcomes yet the impact of the initiative will be based on a general assessment of the overall impact young people's involvement had on decision-making through the Dialogues.

- **1st Circle (2010-2011):** Final joint recommendations were taken on board in the [Council Conclusions on Promoting Youth Employment to achieve the Europe 2020 objectives](#) and in the [Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the member states meeting within the Council, on youth employment](#).
- **5th Circle (2016-2017):** Final joint recommendations were adopted by the Council (Education, Culture, Youth and Sport) meeting in Brussels on 22 and 23 May 2017. In this cycle, the efforts to expand to new types of organisations start showing positive effects with an increase in the number of public bodies and civil organisations involved.
- **6th Circle (2017-2018):** This cycle was marked by the adoption of eleven [European Youth Goals](#) that feature as Annex in the EU Youth Strategy. These goals reflect the views of young people in Europe and represent the vision of those active in the EU Youth Dialogue (European Youth Portal, n.d.).

## Participation level

Although there is no specific research that examines the participation level after the involvement of young people in the initiative, taking into account its structure, we can draw some general conclusions. Broadly speaking, EU Youth Dialogue considers the basic aims of Participatory Democracy by fostering and raising participation, especially by offering to them the possibility to view political decisions from a general perspective and exchange with other young people. The format of the initiative is an effective way to at least try to empower young citizens to take action and be more engaged in the decision-making process at a European level.

## Deliberation level

Using Hart's ladder, we could assess that step number 6 (See Appendix 1) has been reached. The particular part is entitled "Adult-Initiated, Shared Decisions with Young People". In this case, adults are the EU officials who have established the EU Youth Dialogue while young people are involved, participating, and sharing their opinions in the process. However, there is nothing binding to ensuring that young people's opinions are always consulted or meaningfully taken into consideration by the stakeholders relevant to youth policy-making.

## Summary – General assessment

The EU Youth Dialogue serves as a pivotal platform, engaging representatives from youth ministries, national and local councils, youth organisations, Erasmus+ agencies, youth information providers, and researchers. Operating in 18-month cycles, it prioritizes themes set by the Council of Youth Ministers. The Ninth Cycle, focusing on Inclusive Societies and Sustainable Green Europe, convened over 300 participants in Prague. Discussions underscored youth involvement in fostering sustainability and inclusivity, showcasing best practices and emphasising intergenerational dialogue to address climate challenges.

Across cycles, the Dialogue has yielded tangible outcomes. The First Circle contributed to youth employment initiatives, while the Fifth Circle expanded participation to various organisations. The Sixth Circle notably led to the adoption of eleven European Youth Goals, shaping EU policy. Moreover, research indicates significant representation of marginalised groups in Dialogue activities, emphasising its commitment to inclusion.

Although the impact of recent cycles awaits assessment, the Dialogue continues to empower young voices, influencing EU policy and fostering a sustainable future.





## Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables



### Organisation

European Youth Forum and the European Economic and Social Committee



### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

[www.eesc.europa.eu/en/agenda/our-events/events/youth-climate-and-sustainability-round-table-3/events](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/agenda/our-events/events/youth-climate-and-sustainability-round-table-3/events)



### Level

EUROPEAN



### Target Group

Youth representatives from EU member countries

## Description

The Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables facilitate regular dialogue between youth and EU decision makers. It is hosted twice a year by the European Economic and Social Committee in collaboration with various organisations. Each round table focuses on a specific climate or sustainability topic during which around ten youth representatives participate in discussions with relevant Commissioners. There is an established follow-up mechanism that ensures youth demands are considered by the European Commission. Youth representatives submit outcome documents with policy demands, receiving written responses from Commissioners. All the events are webstreamed for public viewing and participation.

## Inclusion/Diversity

In the initiative opinion drafted by the EESC inclusion is underlined multiple times and especially when referring to its own commitment to “amplify the voices of young people and youth organisations through considered inclusion in opinions relating to climate and sustainability, by proactively seeking input from youth representatives and continued invitations to them as speakers at EESC events” (EESC, 2020).

Having followed the recorded webinars that are available online the intention to foster inclusion and diversity in the group of youth representatives can be partially confirmed. Of course, it is not possible to get information or data, since there is no publicly accessible survey, regarding all aspects of the participants' profiles. What can be verified is the diverse backgrounds of youth representatives who change in every round table. Indicatively, in terms of sex, since information about gender identity is not available and is private, male and female youth are almost equally represented, with slightly more female participants. In regard to countries of origin, they are young people who were born or have origins from places outside Europe but currently reside and work in Europe, enriching the perspectives of the group as a whole. However, it is important to note that most young people reside in capitals and big urban centers in Europe much more compared to rural areas.

## Effectiveness

The structure of the initiative and the discussion offers the opportunity for the youth representatives to be heard, given that there are around 10 in each session. On the one hand, the number of participants can be perceived as a small sample, but on the other hand, the smaller size of the group allows for more in-depth discussions and sharing of opinions. Another key feature is the fact that the sessions are moderated by young people who work for the organising institutions, the EESC and the Youth Forum. This means that the tone is set by the youth itself while the presence of more official EU representatives is always attained but kept more moderate without monopolising the time and discussions.

Finally, the follow-up mechanism with the policy recommendations drafted by the group of youth representatives and made available in the website of each event contributes to the initiative's effectiveness. More precisely, the website section dedicated to each round table features a sub-section where the document with the policy recommendations around the topic discussed, for example, biodiversity in the case of the 2nd round table, is uploaded, followed by the written reply by the respective Commissioner.

## Impact

Although not entirely connected to the Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables per se, the website of the initiative hosted a similar webinar on “EESC youth delegate to COP: debrief and info session” at the beginning of January 2023. The aim of this info session was to talk about the latest youth delegate's experiences that attended COP26 and COP27 the summit of the countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). At the same time, the session was dedicated to explaining the new application and selection round. Therefore, the impact of the round tables can be extended and contribute to one of the youth delegates or another young person committed to climate action who has been following them to take a step even further in their involvement on a higher political level where young people's views need to be represented.

## Participation level

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While there isn't particular research analysing the extent of youth participation following their engagement in the initiative, an assessment of its framework allows for some general observations. Fundamentally, the Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables align with the fundamental objectives of Participatory Democracy by encouraging and enhancing participation, particularly by affording young people opportunities to comprehend political decisions holistically and interact with their peers. The structure of the initiative serves as a viable approach to empowering young individuals to potentially become more proactive and involved in the European-level decision-making process.

## Deliberation level

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Applying Hart's ladder, we can securely say that step number 6, labeled "Adult-Initiated, Shared Decisions with Young People," has been attained. Here, EU officials and EESC representatives, acting as adults in the context of the Round Tables, have initiated the discussions, with young individuals actively involved, participating, and expressing their viewpoints in the process. Nonetheless, there's no guarantee or obligation in place to ensure that the opinions of young people are consistently solicited or substantially incorporated by stakeholders involved in youth policy-making. The only obligation is that the respective Commissioner has to provide a written answer to the young people's recommendations.

## Summary – General assessment

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The Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables serve as a crucial platform for fostering dialogue between youth representatives and EU decision-makers, hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in collaboration with various organisations. Held twice a year, each round table focuses on specific climate or sustainability topics, with around ten youth representatives engaging in discussions with relevant Commissioners. The initiative emphasises inclusion, with diverse backgrounds among youth participants enriching perspectives.

Webstreamed for public viewing, these sessions allow for in-depth discussions moderated by youth themselves, ensuring a balanced dialogue. A follow-up mechanism ensures that youth demands are considered by the European Commission, with outcome documents featuring policy recommendations uploaded to the event website. The structure enables meaningful engagement, despite the smaller size of the group, facilitating more comprehensive discussions.

Moreover, the initiative extends beyond the round tables, hosting webinars like the "EESC youth delegate to COP" session, providing opportunities for further engagement and political involvement for youth committed to climate action. Overall, the Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables effectively amplify young voices, contributing to EU policy formulation and empowering youth in climate advocacy. However, there is always room for improvement, for example increasing the times during the year the round tables are organised.



# France

## Setting the scene

France has witnessed a surge in youth activism, particularly in climate action, reflecting a global trend of increasing awareness and engagement among young people. The motivations behind their involvement are diverse, ranging from environmental concerns to reactions to political events. This report explores the current state of youth participation in France, focusing on climate activism. It delves into initiatives, participatory processes, key events, and the changing structure of the movement.

Youth participation in France has intensified, with a notable focus on climate activism. Initiatives such as the “Fridays for Future” strikes, and the emergence of the Extinction Rebellion movement have mobilised a significant number of young individuals. The resignation of Nicolas Hulot in 2018, seen as symbolic by activists, further fueled their desire to address environmental issues. The youth climate movement in France reflects a global phenomenon, with events like the 11th Conference of Youth held before the historic Paris Climate Summit and the Fridays for Future strikes acting as catalysts for increased coordination and institutionalisation of young activists.

### Evolution of the Movement Structure and Actions

The climate activism movement in France has evolved towards horizontal structures, emphasising collective representation based on engagement in actions rather than hierarchical structures. This flexibility has attracted a younger demographic resistant to centralised organisations, although it poses challenges for accessing European and international funding (INJEP, 2023).

However, one of the most relevant disadvantages is that access to European and International Funding is generally conditioned to the existence of a legal and legitimate structure that would be able to insert itself in the field of public politics or that would be able to candidates for funds.

Concerning the type of actions performed by the groups of activists such as Alternatiba, Extinction Rebellion and Youth for Climate, climate activism has increasingly focused on forms of action that sociologist Sarah Pickard (2019; 2018) groups under the term “Do It Ourselves (DIY) politics,” because their action involves the development of local awareness-raising actions, and direct actions against the fossil fuel industry. Although these actions appear highly diverse because of the use of radically different methods, they can be characterised as acts of civil disobedience. The latter could be defined as the voluntary and conspicuous refusal to comply with the law, done publicly, in a non-violent and collective manner.

## Good Practices



### Les eco-delegué.es

**Organisation**  
Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports

**Target Group**  
The target group comprises high school students ranging from 16 to 18 years old in all French educational institutions.

**Level**  
LOCAL | NATIONAL

**Platform used**  
(Website, Social media accounts)

There are numerous digital tools provided:

- [The official portal with the downloadable guidelines](#)
- [A digital portal dedicated to youth](#)
- [A great number of resources for young students](#)
- [A summary of the projects held in the framework](#)
- [A Prize for the action of the eco-delegué of the year](#)

### Description

Since the beginning of the 2019 academic year, the Ministry of National Education launched a programme that consists of the election of eco-delegates in each middle school and high school class. The widespread presence of eco-delegates in educational institutions (MEN, 2019 and 2020) is intended to facilitate the implementation of education for sustainable development (ESD) through the involvement of students and institutions in sustainable development efforts. Eco-delegates are meant to play a role in raising awareness and mobilising efforts to make middle schools and high schools address climate change issues. The four pillar purposes of this programme are:

- **Transmitting** students' proposals and suggestions to the college authorities and informing classes about projects they can join.
- **Representing** other students in meetings and representing their college/high school at local, regional, or national events.
- **Raising awareness** among other students about environmental issues through communication campaigns (posters, articles in the school newspaper, articles for the school blog or website, sharing information on social media).
- **Ensuring** the accountability of the actions taken by participating in surveys and project evaluations.

Also, each year there is a prize which aims to encourage and valorize the projects carried out and initiated by eco-delegates in their school with the support of the educational community and external partners.

## Inclusion/Diversity

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Regarding inclusion and diversity, the approach is as democratic as can be. High school education adheres to national standards. Furthermore, the election of eco-delegates is carried out through a voting process involving all class students, reinforcing the democratic principles within the system.

## Effectiveness

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Regarding the effectiveness of the programme, the presence of the eco-delegates has not only raised awareness about ecological issues but has also translated into tangible actions that contribute to sustainable practices. The programme's emphasis on youth leadership yields positive results, as evidenced by the growing number of initiatives undertaken and the number of students that start to engage in a political activism from early stages.

## Impact

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This programme has a significant impact on promoting environmental awareness and sustainability in schools. It encourages students to take an active role in environmental issues within their schools, has generated positive changes in the attitudes and practices of both students and staff. As a consequence, it facilitates the implementation of eco-friendly measures and projects in schools which translates to a noticeable reduction in waste production, increased recycling rates, and improved energy efficiency within these educational institutions. Moreover, the initiative has fostered a sense of responsibility and environmental consciousness among the students, who take part in green initiatives beyond the school premises.

## Participation level

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According to Hart's Ladder, where adults take the initiative and share decision-making with younger individuals, this programme exemplifies a collaborative approach. While adults initiate the process, young people actively participate in decision-making, planning, and executing the project. Notably, in this specific programme, the responsibility for conceptualising and effectively carrying out actions rests in the hands of the youth.

## Deliberation level

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The Ministry has crafted and disseminated a set of guidelines tailored for middle school and high school students, offering tips and examples on engaging in ecological activism practices. Additionally, a comprehensive list of key stakeholders involved in these initiatives is provided. In essence, every student possesses both the authority and information to make informed decisions. They have the power to cast votes and articulate their perspectives confidently.

Furthermore, students have the opportunity to engage with their principals and professors, and dedicated internet portals are established specifically for the programme, facilitating seamless communication and interaction.

## Summary – General assessment

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In conclusion, the Eco-delegates programme has proven to be an institutionalised platform for awareness-raising and the development of democratic citizenship tools among youth. The fact that they are compelled to transmit their own proposals and suggestions to the school's authorities, representing their peers in meetings and events, ensures their taking accountability for their actions. Even though the programme is established by the school authorities, the execution of it relies entirely on youth. They vote for their delegates and projects. They design them and coordinate them. In this sense, youth participation is crucial.

Furthermore, the programme has proven to be effective in raising awareness and translating it into tangible actions, with an increasing number of initiatives and engaged students. It also promotes environmental consciousness beyond school premises, resulting in reduced waste production, increased recycling rates, and improved energy efficiency in schools. This collaborative approach empowers students to make informed decisions and actively participate in decision-making, planning, and executing eco-friendly projects. The Ministry has provided guidelines and resources to support students in their ecological activism practices and established dedicated portals for communication with principals and professors. This first active citizenship approach in the classroom leads the way to a promising continuity of activism for climate change.

Overall, the program has had a significant impact on promoting environmental awareness and sustainability in schools, encouraging students to play an active role in addressing ecological challenges.





## FONDATION POUR LA NATURE ET L'HOMME

### Fondation pour la Nature et pour l'Homme - Génération Climat



#### Organisation

Fondation pour la Nature et pour l'Homme - Génération Climat



#### Target Group

Young Project Promoters engaged in climate change.



#### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



#### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

[www.fnh.org/generation-climat/](http://www.fnh.org/generation-climat/)

### Description

Since 2016, the Foundation has been encouraging individuals aged 18-30 to launch their projects in support of climate and biodiversity. Through the programme Génération Climat they provide financial support to those with innovative projects regarding climate issues.

### Inclusion/Diversity

The funding programme is inclusive, open to young people that want to deploy projects on the following themes:

- a. **Biodiversity preservation:** for example, by creating a pond, greening the walls of your city, developing educational workshops or resources (documentaries, podcasts), or planting a forest.
- b. **Promoting access to healthy and sustainable food:** for example, by planting a “food for est” or “edible forest garden”, offering solidarity-based organic student baskets, or creating an anti-waste and solidarity canteen.
- c. **Advocating for pesticide-free agriculture:** for example, by establishing agroecology training or an organic urban garden in your neighborhood.
- d. **Encouraging decarbonized mobility:** for example, by offering bicycle moving services for students, promoting sharing solutions, or encouraging bicycle use.

### Effectiveness

The annual Génération Climat initiative has proven to be highly effective in empowering young individuals between the ages of 18 and 30 to contribute meaningfully to climate and biodiversity causes. By opening its call for projects each year, the programme provides crucial financial support, offering a €2,000 boost for initial initiatives and a €5,000 helping hand for the sustainability or expansion of ongoing actions. Beyond the financial aspect, Génération Climat fosters a network of like-minded students, creating a supportive community for collaboration and shared experiences. Since its inception, the programme has successfully accompanied and catalysed the implementation of 1,172 projects led by passionate and engaged young individuals, making a tangible impact on environmental conservation and sustainable practices.

### Impact

The project extends far beyond the direct support it provides to young environmental initiatives. Its influence reaches into the broader sphere thanks to the vision and mission of the accompanied initiatives. An example is the media “Les Joies Sauvages” incubated thanks to the fund and network made available by the Foundation. They cover a vast number of subjects staying focused on political and ecological transition. This sponsorship has played a key role as it has served as an outlet to amplify young people’s influence through the dissemination of stories, insights, and perspectives on political and ecological transitions. This way, the impact has been broadened creating a wider-reaching narrative that inspires and informs a larger audience.

### Participation level

This initiative plays a pivotal role in raising participation and embodying the principles of Participatory Democracy. By providing financial support and a collaborative network, the program empowers young individuals to transition from passive observers to active participants in environmental stewardship. Through their sponsorship they foster a sense of responsibility and ownership in addressing climate and biodiversity issues. This participatory approach aligns with the fundamental aims of Participatory Democracy, as it transforms citizens into active agents who contribute meaningfully to decision-making processes. The initiative’s emphasis on young people developing and implementing their projects not only raises awareness but also ensures a diverse range of voices and perspectives are considered in addressing environmental challenges.

## Deliberation level

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After the candidate's selection they provide a guide to the establishment of the project so that all participants have access to the same level of information and resources. With the availability of a comprehensive guide accessible to everyone involved, the program fosters a deliberative atmosphere where political decisions regarding climate and biodiversity issues are shaped through fair and reasonable citizen discussions. This commitment to equalizing power and information among participants is essential for promoting a high deliberation level. By encouraging open dialogue, the initiative ensures that all citizens, regardless of background or expertise, can contribute meaningfully to discussions, exchange arguments, and consider various claims.

## Summary - General assessment

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Génération Climat stands as a multifaceted programme that transcends its role in supporting environmental projects. Beyond providing financial assistance, it serves as an inclusive platform for deliberation, ensuring that diverse voices contribute to decisions grounded in shared knowledge between the young and the experts. This deliberative approach exemplifies a powerful model for participatory activities, empowering young citizens to actively engage in addressing climate and biodiversity challenges. Indeed, the participatory model is the highest on Hart's ladder since the young propose their projects, and they cannot only secure funding but also benefit from the mentorship and assistance of experts integrated into the structure, resembling the supportive ecosystem found within an incubator.

The initiative's dynamic approach reflects its commitment to fostering systemic change, influencing not only individual projects but also contributing significantly to the broader discourse on environmental sustainability and climate action. In shaping a generation of informed, engaged, and proactive individuals, Génération Climat becomes a catalyst for positive transformation within both the political and ecological landscape.



# Italy

## Setting the scene

In Italy, youth are on the periphery in the distribution of power and often do not find representation or places where they can be protagonists in the definition of public policies. The age group between 18 and 30 constitutes approximately 13% of the population, and data show that within the Italian Parliament, the most represented age groups are 40 to 69, thus causing a high mismatch between the electorate and actual youth representation (ISTAT, 2024; Orizzonti politici, 2021). This is relevant because, especially in recent years, the younger generations, with growing intensity, have played a leading role in the debate on climate issues by joining movements, also organised at an international level, to bring to the attention of political decision-makers and public opinion the need to act to cure the climate crisis. Unable to find any ear from Italian politics or any space where they could bring their claims and movements, they decided to radicalise the non-violent struggle with increasingly visible actions through roadblocks or the use of paint on monuments. However, the Italian government's response was to approve the so-called law against 'eco-vandals' (Law 6/2024) with the aim of punishing the actions promoted by movements such as Extinction Rebellion and Ultima Generazione.

Regarding the institutional bodies aimed at ensuring the participation of young people, the main one is represented, under Law 145/2018, by the National Youth Council (NYC) because it can be heard by the Prime Minister or the delegated Minister, draw up opinions and formulate government-initiated legislative proposals on matters and policies that may impact on young people. At the same time, at the sub-national level, various solutions have been attempted, and almost all the 20 regions and 2 autonomous provinces have adopted laws that provide for the establishment of bodies for young people's participation in policy-making under their jurisdiction. In 2024, only 8 of these are still active (Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Lombardia, Toscana, Trento, Umbria, Val d'Aosta), while 6 are on standby (Basilicata, Calabria, Marche, Piemonte, Sardegna, Sicilia), and the others have been decommissioned or have never started their work (Abruzzo, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Molise, Puglia, Bolzano, Veneto).

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) represents a national coordination tool that can inform environmental and territorial planning, programming and assessment. In this context, the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security (MASE) has established the 'National Forum for Sustainable Development' with the aim of involving civil society in the different stages of the NSSD, reserving one of the six working groups for young people belonging to organisations and youth associations. Finally, on December 21, 2023, Italy approved the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC), which should establish the National Observatory for Adaptation to Climate Change in 2024. A Forum should be formed to involve civil society in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies on adaptation.

## Good Practices

### Citizens' Assembly for Climate of Bologna<sup>1</sup>



#### Organisation

Municipality of Bologna supported by Fondazione Innovazione Urbana



#### Level

LOCAL - Municipality of Bologna | NATIONAL



#### Target Group

A randomly selected sample of citizens that reflects the socio-demographic characteristics of the Municipality of Bologna



#### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

Website -

Bologna Partecipa: <https://www.comune.bologna.it/partecipa/percorsi/assemblea-cittadina-per-il-clima>

### Description

As a result of a long mobilisation promoted by Extinction Rebellion Bologna<sup>2</sup>, on 30 September 2019 the Municipality of Bologna stated the climate and ecological emergency, identifying the establishment of citizen assemblies among the actions to be promoted. After the start-up of an inter-sectoral working group, the promotion of the participatory path 'A climate of participation' with the aim of supporting the process for the realisation of the assemblies, and the launching of a negotiation table in which institutional, economic and environmental representatives took part, on 29 July 2022 the Regulation 'on citizens' rights of participation and information' was amended, which punctually defines the procedures for setting up and implementing the citizens' assemblies. After further mobilisation promoted by Extinction Rebellion Bologna, on 19 December 2022, the city council proclaimed the first deliberative assembly on Bologna's climate. Over the period of nine meetings held from May to November 2023, the Assembly was called to answer three questions proposed by the City Council corresponding to three thematic areas related to the challenges of climate change: mitigation, adaptation and administrative instruments. The process was structured into four phases (I. information and training; II. hearing and exchanging views with stakeholders; III. deliberation; IV. decision), resulting in 6 recommendations and 127 proposals for action, which, according to the Rules of Procedure, must be discussed by the City Council.

<sup>1</sup> The findings are the result of monitoring and evaluation activities carried out by ActionAid Italia E.T.S., in collaboration with Osservatorio Italiano delle Assemblee Cittadine, during the deliberative process.

<sup>2</sup> Extinction Rebellion is a global movement born in 2018 as an urgent response to the ecological devastation caused by anthropogenic activities. The movement acts mainly through local grassroots committees developed from the ground calling for decisive action and proposing mass non-violent civil disobedience to gain the attention of governments and induce them to adopt radical and immediate policies. Among the main demands of this movement are the establishment of deliberative climate assemblies.

## Inclusion/Diversity

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The Assembly organisers ensured that the City Users were also represented through collaboration with the mobility company TPER, with whom 10 non-residents but workers in the municipality of Bologna were selected, and the University of Bologna (UniBO), with whom non-resident students were involved. The selected full members were 100 of whom 80 residents were chosen and drawn through the stratified sampling technique. Considering that 12 participants in the 16-29 age range (15% of the sample) were selected from among the 80 residents and that the 10 non-resident students from the University of Bologna were added to these, it is possible to state that the youth representation on the 100 members who took part in the process was 22%. In general, it is possible to note that the process saw a good gender balance among participants (49% men and 51% women) and that 12 people with a migratory background were included in the process (10 from another European state, 1 born in Italy but with citizenship of another state and 2 who acquired Italian citizenship).

## Effectiveness

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In terms of effectiveness, the deliberative process was valuable in building participants' know-how and their preparedness to be involved in other participatory processes.

Communication about the deliberative process was weak from a very early stage, as confirmed by the interviews conducted. In the participant selection phase, this weakness in communication might have resulted, as confirmed by the interviews, in the perception by the participants that the invitation letter was a “joke” or an “advertisement”, or that they felt inadequate to participate. Between December 2022 and December 2023, 48 publications were mapped, including online and print articles, and most of them were produced by local newspapers or entities related to the organisers. At the same time, it is important to note that many dissemination and awareness events during the final months of the process were promoted by civil society, as in the case of the events organised as part of the “Festival della Partecipazione 2023” or those promoted by Extinction Rebellion Bologna and Volt Bologna.

The whole process has taken place within an institutionalised framework that requires the City Council to discuss the Assembly's proposals and recommendations. It will also consider the possibility of some proposals being included in the Climate City Contract that the Municipality of Bologna will submit to the European Commission within the NetZeroCities project.

## Impact

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The deliberative process had less impact on public opinion also due to the lack of effective communication activities. Nevertheless, it was possible to track a strengthening of the knowledge of single participants and civil society in Bologna that may contribute to the achievement of the Bologna climate goals.

Even though Extinction Rebellion Bologna is in a better standing with institutions at the local level than other cities, it is important to point out that the movement's participation in the stakeholder hearing phase made it possible to generate solidarity between participants and the movement. This allowed the movement's recommendation concerning the Sanitary Impact Assessment on the Bologna 'Passante', a highly contested development of the city's highways system, to be incorporated into the Assembly's final document.

At the end of the process, the monitoring committee was constituted, composed by 22 participants of the assembly, ensuring the representation of the neighbourhoods, with the task of presenting, observing and promoting the adoption of the recommendations elaborated. Alongside the monitoring committee, during the last meeting, the Association '100 for the Climate' was formally established, promoted autonomously by the participants of the assembly with the aim of being able to dialogue, making its own proposals and recommendations, with the municipality as an organisation. Furthermore, the association joined Bologna's 'Climate Mission' and became, together with other organisations, a partner for the implementation of the municipality's climate policies.

Although the regulation establishes the decision of the Municipal Council on the recommendations of the Assembly, thus allowing an important impact on the climate policies of the municipality to be generated, the presence of a youth-led movement that has followed all phases and the establishment of the association '100 for Climate' will make it possible for civil society to support these proposals through campaigning and advocacy actions. In the end, some of the Assembly's recommendations may be included in the Climate city contract, a normative act that will list strategic commitments, actions and investments needed for Bologna to achieve climate neutrality in 2030 and that shall influence the municipality's climate policies.

## Participation level

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The members of the assembly took an active part in all steps of the process and heard the different positions of the stakeholders as co-decision-makers before the drafting of the recommendations. During the stakeholder consultation process, the organisers avoided any conflict dynamics, especially those that might have arisen with stakeholders who have a major impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

Throughout the deliberative process, various facilitation and group work techniques were experienced, inspired in particular by the Open Space Technology and World Café methodologies, which were useful for the collective elaboration of recommendations. The organisers' choice was to avoid imposing from above the topics to be dealt with, which had to be dealt with by the assembly in its response to the questions, and to mentor the participants with a learning-by-doing and empowerment-oriented approach.

Although the recommendations were not especially radical or challenging, they were drafted considering the positions of the stakeholders involved and the climate actions promoted by the municipality. In a lesser way during the process, in the opinion of the participants, the Bologna neighbourhoods were involved, which would have been helpful in the identification of issues and in the dissemination of the assembly's work. The recommendations were submitted to the city council, which is obliged to take a decision on them within four months after the end of the deliberative process. On 26 February 2024, the municipality of Bologna formally approved all 24 proposals, but only 6 were approved without conditions. The decision nevertheless gives the competent bodies an impulse to include the proposals in the municipality's planning cycle

### Deliberation level

The participants attended the training meetings so that everyone could build their collective reflection on the most balanced and complete information possible. However, the very broad mandate of the assembly, which brought with it the need to investigate many different and technical aspects in depth, had a limiting effect on the deliberation level. In none of the experts' presentations were any possible divergent positions presented, and some proposed specific solutions advocating inclusion in the recommendations. The speakers interviewed stated that due to lack of time they could not go into the topic assigned to them in depth. This would seem to be due to the broad mandate and the number of meetings available, which led the organisers to have to choose different experts on different topics but at the same time to limit the time of the presentations. Consequently, some topics of central relevance or actions currently undertaken by the Municipality of Bologna would not seem to have been fully mastered by the participants and this had a significant impact on the quality of the process output in terms of the radicality, feasibility and innovativeness of the recommendations.

With regard to dialogue, participants received a good level of attention and involvement during group work, although there were some critical issues. A difference was observed between the larger groups (of about 15 persons), where episodes of domination of the conversation were recorded, and the smaller groups (between 5 and 11 persons), where the distribution of turns to speak was more equal. In one particular case, there was an escalation between two male participants (one young and the other middle-aged) who argued openly with verbal aggression. The facilitator repeatedly attempted to restore order, but received in response defeatist interventions from the dominant participants aimed at openly delegitimising her role. Significantly, the conflict was only quelled by the intervention of a male staff member. The interpretation of the observers present at the meeting was that an inequality of authority attributed by some assembly members to facilitation based on gender and age was evident.

### Summary – General assessment

The Bologna Climate Assembly guaranteed a good inclusion of the youth component, which is over-represented in relation to the demographic sampling, and of people with a migration background. In particular, the initiative was at the highest level of Hart's model (Hart, 1992) in that it was possible for all young participants to make shared decisions with adults, thus establishing an intergenerational collaboration. From the point of view of the whole process, the merits and shortcomings of the assembly would seem to be related to the overly broad mandate. While this did not allow the participants to examine the various topics in depth and thus develop recommendations challenging the position of the municipality, it did allow a good general knowledge base regarding climate change to be established.

At the end of the assembly, however, it can be said that the know-how of the participants and the climate action of the Bologna municipality's own civil society was strengthened. In particular, the participation of Extinction Rebellion Bologna in the stakeholder consultation phase made it possible to learn more about this youth-led movement and to strengthen its proposals. This is even more important given the current Italian context in which a hostile narrative is promoted by the government against youth movements for the climate. Moreover, given the ineffectiveness of public communication on the process, it is important to highlight the important role that civil society organisations played in promoting and disseminating this experience.





## The National Forum for Sustainable Development



### Organisation

Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (MASE)



### Target Group

Civil Society Organisations



### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

Website:

[Ministry of Environment and Energy Security](#)

[ParteciPa platform](#)

## Description

Through Resolution 108/2017 of the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning (CIPE), a collegial body of the Government chaired by the Prime Minister and composed of Ministers with relevant competences in the field of economic growth, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) was approved. The strategy is the tool for implementing the 2030 Agenda and is structured in five areas: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. Each area is made up of a system of strategic choices declined into national strategic objectives, specific to the Italian reality and complementary to the 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda. The strategy interacts with the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the area of Policy coherence for sustainable development.

The CIPE resolution required the MASE to ensure the functioning of a Forum open to non-state actors and civil society to guarantee their active involvement throughout the implementation, monitoring and triennial periodic review, as prescribed by Article 34 of the Environmental Code (Legislative Decree 152/2006). In order to follow up on the regulatory mandate, the National Forum for Sustainable Development (NFSD) was launched in 2019. To date, more than 210 heterogeneous and representative realities of the different realities of the country participate in it, including networks and associations from the voluntary sector, the environmental world, the youth world, academia, organisations from the world of work, the social economy, and small and medium-sized enterprises. The Forum is intended as a shared multi-actor working space based on the meeting of public policies with social energies, in which sustainability subjects and practices can emerge and assert themselves. As part of the forum, the MASE promoted various events and workshops to enhance the participation of the younger generation. Recently, a co-design process was initiated to integrate a virtual working space on the ParteciPa platform, within the 'Line 3 Pilot Open Government Paths' of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiative.

## Inclusion/ Diversity

The principle of participation is an indispensable tool for its implementation. The NFSD is autonomously managed by its member organisations and its main constituencies are the Coordination Group and six Working Groups: 1. Culture for Sustainability, 2. Peace, 3. People, 4. Planet, 5. Prosperity, 6. Youth for Sustainability. As of March 2019, membership of the Forum is open through adhesion to an expression of interest that aims to involve civil society in the widest possible representativeness, addressing all those actors working in the field of sustainability policies. Relevant actors in the field of these policies can join the forum and everyone can participate in only one working group, choosing according to their own interest. In the case of network organisations, which bring together several actors, it is possible to participate in several working groups. The 'Youth for Sustainability' group aims to involve the younger generation in the dialogue on sustainability issues in order to increase their influence in the definition of public policies on sustainability. This working group represents a transversal group made up of young people from member organisations, including the NYC, and youth organisations. Within this framework, the younger generation is included in the decision-making process of the forum through an autonomous group in which they can discuss and make decisions on the outputs required by the forum without external influences. The group therefore enjoys the same prerogatives as the other groups.

## Effectiveness

The Forum has different institutional functions, arising from the national legislation, including the central role of supporting the implementation, monitoring and triennial updating of the NSSD. In this context, each working group must produce a position paper on its theme and the issues identified in its annual agenda. Based on this document, the group expresses its position and provides policy recommendations that are presented at the National Conference on Sustainable Development.

The national forum to date would seem to have been more effective in its institutional functions and in involving civil society actors. In recent years, it would seem to have involved a fair number of actors in the production of recommendations and positioning documents, which flowed, in particular, into the strategy revision approved in 2022. In this context, the Youth for Sustainability Working Group has produced its own position paper that has influenced the revision process of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development. On the contrary, it would not seem to be effective in the dissemination and communication of the forum's work.

## Impact

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The working groups developed several policy proposals that indicated the issues that the National Strategy should have addressed as a priority in the review process that ended in 2022. In this context, the organisations proposed a strategic framework for planning, monitoring and evaluating the sustainability of public policies at different territorial levels. In addition to the support to the NSSD, the paper collects recommendations, suggestions and opinions on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development as foreseen in the National Action Programme for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (NAPCSD), resulting from the collaboration between the MASE, DG Reform of the European Commission and the OECD.

Beyond the direct impact of the Forum's work on the NSSD, it is more complicated to track the impact on other policies, plans and strategies or the allocation of resources of different spending programmes. In this regard, it is crucial to point out that Article 34 of the Environment Code states that the NSSD sets the framework for environmental assessments on strategies, plans or projects. In other words, the NSSD could inform both the drafting phase of these instruments and, above all, the environmental assessment phase, also to ensure coherence between policies. Consequently, the impact of this instrument on cohesion funds, the related 2021-2027 partnership agreement, the NRRP, the National OGP Plan, as well as local level plans and strategies should be further investigated.

## Participation level

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At present, the number of organisations taking part in the forum is approximately 210, among these only 5 (2.3%) are youth representatives these in particular are part of and coordinate the Youth for Sustainability working group, also discussing with young people from the other partner organisations of the forum. In particular, these include the NYC and 'Rete Giovani - Youth Network', both promoted by the Italian government. In general, organisations of different sizes, enterprises, foundations and universities are part of the forum. These participate in the forum through working groups, which are autonomous in the establishment of their working agenda, in the way they conduct their discussions and in the scheduling of their meetings. In compliance with the provisions of the Directive of the Department for the Public Function of 31 May 2017 on "Guidelines on public consultation in Italy", the members must be put in a position to participate in an informed manner in the working groups, being able to count on adequate involvement in the preparation, during the meetings and in the receipt of the minutes and summary documents of the meetings.

In cooperation with the Public Function Department of the Ministry of Public Administration, a virtual space on the ParteciPA platform was set up so that consultation processes take place under the principles of Open Government, such as transparency and support for civic participation in order to improve the quality of public decisions and the democratic life of communities. For example, the elaboration of the position paper for the revision of the NSSD saw, out of approximately 210 member organisations, the participation of 74 participants and the submission of 44 contributions.

Currently, however, the consultation process of the Forum, its work and the weight of the individual positions of the member organisations is not fully transparent to those who do not participate directly in the Forum. In addition, the entire performance of the Forum is difficult for third parties and citizens to evaluate.

## Deliberation level

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The National Forum for Sustainable Development excludes the possibility for individual citizens to participate in its work and, moreover, is not effective in its communication and outreach activities. The Forum is strongly characterised as a space for representing the interests of civil society organisations, so there are no information and training sessions on specific focuses. In other words, each organisation participates in the forum by contributing through its own expertise and thematic focus. The working groups only marginally receive information from the institutions on the topics of interest of the forum. It does not appear that tools or mechanisms are used to counter any power imbalances due to so-called Hidden Hierarchies.

## Summary – General assessment

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The National Forum for Sustainable Development appears to be an important programme tool under Italian law that is in synergy with the country's international commitments, also in terms of its participation in international organisations. The Forum seems to be able to involve different types of civil society organisations and has no formal obligations that preclude membership. The Working Group 'Youth for Sustainability' has the same prerogatives as the other groups and, therefore, the youth organisations that are part of it can make shared decisions on an equal level with the other organisations. Often, however, the main contribution requested of the working group is oriented towards the tabethics of sustainability education and work in schools. The forum is a good basis for the involvement of young people in decision-making processes, but there is a need to increase the stakeholder engagement of youth organisations, which are often unaware of the possibility of participating in this governance body. At present, it is not possible to track the contribution of youth associations to the Forum's work and what impact they generate on policies, strategies, plans and public spending at different territorial levels. Nevertheless, if properly developed, the Forum could ensure greater coherence between different sectoral climate policies.



## Greece

### Setting the scene

Over the past years, Greece has been experiencing the effects of Climate Change and the Climate Crisis first-hand through devastating natural disasters ranging from disastrous wildfires and floods to heatwaves. This has led to the realisation by more and more Greek people, especially among youth, that action should be taken without any further delays. According to the second part of the 2022-2023 European Investment Bank (EIB) Climate Survey conducted in August 2022, 66% of Greek respondents are in favour of stricter government measures to impose a change in personal behaviour to tackle climate change. Even more importantly, 75% of Greeks aged 20-29 say the climate impact of prospective employers is an important factor when job hunting and 18% say it is even a top priority (European Investment Bank, 2023).

In terms of youth participation in climate action in Greece, it is mainly collective initiatives or youth organisations that take the lead and manage to have the highest impact on youth mobilisation. This is also depicted in the poll results conducted by U-Report Greece, which was part of a global survey carried out prior to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP28) (UNICEF, 2023). While 60% of youth respondents replied positively to the question “Do you think you can do something to improve climate policies in Greece?”, which is a clear indicator of their motivation to engage in climate action, 55% of children and young people do not know how to contribute to actually changing Greece’s climate policies. In fact, this comes as a direct correlation to the finding that 2/3 of children and youth consider that they do not receive adequate climate education at school (U-Report Poll Results, 2023). Therefore, this deficiency should be addressed on a national level in order to meet young people’s needs and equip them with adequate knowledge, empowering them to be active agents in climate action.

However, despite the lack of appropriate climate education at school, young people in Greece have been actively involved in climate action. Especially since, like in many other countries in Europe and outside, the global impact of the Fridays for Future movement has set this action in motion. The Greek branch of Fridays for Future Movement was established in March 2019 in Thessaloniki. According to young members of the movement itself, “Greece, unfortunately, faces a number of environmental issues, some of which stem from the lack of environmental education and, therefore, environmental sensitivity”, while it is the hydrocarbon extraction throughout the Greek territory that members of the movement are most concerned about (Popaganda, 2019). Furthermore, active youth participation is one of the team’s key priorities, too, as in the summer of 2023, they released a call for new members and launched a public call on social media for an initiative through which a youth advisory council on climate change would be established, which is currently underway (Fridays for Future Greece, 2023).

### Good Practices



#### Youth Assemblies



##### Organisation

Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) within the framework of the ARSINOE project funded by the European Commission



##### Target Group

The first Assemblies (5 & 6 May, 12 & 13 May 2022) sought to involve University students and High School students, respectively.

The second Assembly was addressed to undergraduate and postgraduate students.



##### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



##### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

<https://arsinoe-project.eu/>

#### Description

Students from various neighbourhoods in the wider Athens metropolitan area were invited to identify and discuss the challenges facing their communities regarding climate change. Through collaborative efforts, they mapped out the specific issues, assessed their carbon footprint, and noted the vulnerabilities of their areas. Additionally, they reviewed existing measures to combat climate change and proposed new actions. These proposals were consolidated through structured dialogues, leading to policy recommendations for a Green Deal tailored to both the Municipality of Athens and the broader Metropolitan Area.

During the Youth Assemblies, participating students energetically presented their proposals, emphasising their firsthand experiences with climate change in their respective neighborhoods. They underscored the unique vulnerabilities of different areas within Athens, highlighting the necessity of considering these variations when implementing mitigation and adaptation strategies.

## Inclusion/Diversity

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This initiative emphasised inclusivity and diversity, providing a platform for young voices from various backgrounds to express their perspectives on climate change.

Students actively engaged in mapping their neighbourhoods' climate challenges, fostering discussions, and proposing solutions. This participatory approach ensured representation from different communities and allowed for the consideration of diverse experiences and vulnerabilities within the wider Athens Metropolitan area. The enthusiastic participation of students showcased their commitment to addressing climate issues and advocating for their communities' well-being.

## Effectiveness

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The Youth Assemblies not only raise awareness about climate change but also empower young people to actively participate in addressing environmental issues.

Additionally, the initiative fosters practical learning experiences by encouraging students to map climate challenges in their neighborhoods, measure their carbon footprint, and propose solutions. These hands-on activities facilitate a deeper understanding of local environmental issues and equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to take meaningful action.

Moreover, the structured format of the assemblies, which includes workshops, presentations, and structured dialogues, ensures that students' ideas and proposals are effectively captured and synthesised into actionable policy recommendations. This enhances the initiative's impact by facilitating the development of concrete solutions to address climate change at the local and regional levels.

Finally, the participation of students from all disciplines and scientific fields is encouraged, in order to showcase the various dimensions of climate change and to develop an interdisciplinary debate for the formulation of the policy proposals.

## Impact

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The initiative has had a significant impact on engaging and empowering young people to take action on climate change. By providing a platform for participation and dialogue, the initiative has inspired students to become actively involved in addressing environmental issues. The number of students who participated in the 1st Youth Assembly is estimated to have been around 20 (Arsinoe Project, 2022).

On top of that, the proposals developed during the assemblies have the potential to influence local and regional climate policies. By synthesising students' ideas and recommendations into concrete policy proposals, the initiative has facilitated meaningful dialogue between youth and decision-makers. This advocacy for policy changes not only amplifies youth voices but also contributes to the development of more inclusive and effective climate action strategies.

## Participation level

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The initiative's impact on participation level may also be evaluated in terms of its ability to sustain engagement over time. The organisation of multiple assemblies and the development of ongoing dialogue between students and decision-makers indicate a commitment to continuous participation and long-term engagement in climate action efforts. Also, drawing from the youth participation models examined in this Scoping Study, young participants in the assembly have the freedom to shape and draft their own proposals representing their views without a strict hierarchy or silencing of their voices. When trying to evaluate the project based on Hart's ladder as a participation model, there are mostly elements at the step entitled "Young people assigned but informed" as the project is adult-initiated and young people volunteer to participate in it. There is mutual respect and the most important is that young people's views are heard and respected. Delving deeper into the structure of the Youth Assemblies though, it can be stated that it adopts some elements from the next step as well, entitled "Young people are consulted and informed". This is because young people's propositions on the topic at the end of the assembly are given weight and are publicly released. Therefore, it is reasonable to place the initiative between these two steps of Hart's ladder.

## Deliberation level

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A noteworthy aspect of the structure of the Youth Assemblies that indicates a deliberation level is that before the main event, participants had received comprehensive educational material, including scientific information and guidelines for decision-making, to aid in the preparation of their proposals. This material, presented in the form of a detailed Study Guide, ensured that participants were well-informed and equipped with the necessary knowledge and procedures to effectively contribute to the assembly.

## Impact

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The Youth Assemblies on Climate Change in the Athens metropolitan area demonstrate commendable effectiveness and impact. By engaging high school and university students in practical learning experiences and structured dialogues, the initiative effectively raises awareness about climate change and empowers youth to become active participants in addressing environmental challenges. The inclusive approach, inviting students from diverse backgrounds, ensures broad representation and enriches discussions on localised climate vulnerabilities and solutions. The enthusiastic participation of students in mapping climate challenges and proposing solutions reflects a high level of engagement and commitment to addressing climate change. Moreover, the initiative's emphasis on providing comprehensive educational material, including scientific information and decision-making guidelines, ensures that participants are well-prepared to contribute meaningfully to the assembly discussions. However, it would be recommended that more information be provided regarding the selection criteria of the participants and the aftermath of the assemblies, especially regarding the policy recommendations of the participants.

## Local Conference of Youth (LCOY)



### Organisation

Co-organisation: The British Embassy in Athens, WWF Greece, as well as young people from AIESEC in Greece, Ecotivity School, UN SDSN Youth Greece and The Land Beyond



### Target Group

Young people interested in climate action



### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

[www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilGreece](https://www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilGreece)

[www.britishcouncil.gr/en/programmes/climate-connection/local-conference-of-youth](https://www.britishcouncil.gr/en/programmes/climate-connection/local-conference-of-youth)



### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL

## Description

The Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Greece, held on October 25th and 26th, 2021, is a pivotal event in the landscape of youth climate action. Under the auspices of UN YOUNGO, it serves as a platform for impassioned young individuals to converge and catalyse meaningful change at both local and international levels. LCOY aims to underscore the imperative for climate action, nurture the next generation of environmental leaders, and elicit a series of tangible climate action pledges. During the workshops following the presentations, participants documented the main climate justice problems in Greece and crafted pledges to address them. These pledges are a detailed plan outlining synergies, steps, and tools to strengthen advocacy strategies, achieve climate justice, and highlight the environmental agenda. Covering areas such as renewable energy, sustainable transportation, waste management, and community resilience, these pledges represent the proactive commitment of Greek youth to combat climate change and foster sustainable development.

## Inclusion/ Diversity

The Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Greece demonstrates a commendable commitment to inclusion and diversity. The conference ensures representation from diverse backgrounds by partnering with various youth organisations and emphasising the importance of active participation. Moreover, the criteria for application prioritise individuals with a strong sense of local and national identity, fostering inclusivity within the context of Greece's unique cultural landscape. Through workshops and discussions, LCOY provides a platform for voices from different communities to be heard, promoting a more inclusive dialogue on climate action.

## Effectiveness

The Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Greece exhibits effectiveness in multiple dimensions. By aligning with UN YOUNGO and highlighting tangible climate action pledges, the conference channels youth energy into actionable solutions for climate change. The inclusion of workshops, talks, and panel discussions led by experts fosters knowledge exchange and skill development among participants, enhancing their capacity to drive change and gather information that could set the base of their personal views and opinions.

Additionally, the conference's partnership with the British Council's COP26 program extends its impact globally, amplifying the reach of Greek youth activism. Overall, LCOY effectively mobilises youth, fosters collaboration, and empowers participants to become agents of positive environmental change.

## Impact

Although the limitations in the amount of information available pose some restrictions in evaluating its impact effectively, it is safe to say that the overall impact of the Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Greece reverberates on multiple levels. By providing a platform for young individuals to voice their concerns and develop concrete climate action pledges, the conference generates tangible outcomes within local communities. These pledges serve as blueprints for addressing pressing environmental issues and fostering long-term sustainability initiatives. Moreover, through partnerships with organisations like the British Council, LCOY extends its influence globally, contributing to a broader dialogue on climate change mitigation and adaptation. By nurturing a new generation of environmental leaders and facilitating collaboration, LCOY leaves a lasting impact on both local and international efforts towards a more sustainable future.

## Participation level

By emphasising active involvement and providing opportunities for meaningful engagement, LCOY ensures representation across communities. This heightened participation not only strengthens environmental activism but also holds the potential for broader political engagement. As attendees develop leadership skills and advocate for climate action, they are empowered to extend their influence into political spheres, shaping policies and initiatives that address pressing environmental challenges. Thus, LCOY serves as a catalyst for fostering active political engagement among youth, amplifying their voices in shaping a sustainable future.

## Deliberation level

Even though the format of the Conference is deemed diverse enough to include various types of activities, like panels, workshops, and forums, it is hard to evaluate the deliberation levels in detail. However, the inclusive nature of the conference encourages diverse perspectives, enriching deliberations and promoting critical thinking. Furthermore, the development of concrete climate action pledges during workshops reflects a high level of deliberation and strategic planning. This heightened deliberation not only enhances understanding but also cultivates a sense of ownership and commitment to the proposed solutions.

## Summary - General assessment

The Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Greece emerges as an impactful and effective platform for youth engagement in climate action. Through its emphasis on inclusion, the conference aimed at attracting diverse participants and fostering collaboration among various stakeholders. The tangible outcomes, evidenced by the development of concrete climate action pledges, underscore the conference's effectiveness in mobilising youth and driving positive change. However, it's worth noting that there were limitations regarding the accessibility of information online, which may have hindered broader awareness and participation. Additionally, there was a lack of concrete information about whether the pledges led to any tangible outcomes, highlighting a potential area for future evaluation and improvement. Despite these challenges, LCOY demonstrates significant potential in empowering young individuals to become agents of environmental change.



# Finland

## Setting the scene

There is a constantly growing discussion about promoting youth participation in Finland, and many actors have included participatory principles in their strategies. Nevertheless, it is not always very clearly defined what “participation” practically means.

According to the Finnish Youth Act, the term youth refers to everyone under 29 years old. Youth participation in Finland parts from a relatively strong legal framework. Most importantly, the Finnish Youth Act defines that municipalities and other state authorities need to offer and organise opportunities for young people to participate in and influence matters related to local, regional, and national youth work and policies. It determines that young people must also be consulted on other matters concerning them. (Finlex, Nuorisolaki).

Basically, there is a youth council in almost all municipalities and wellbeing services counties. However, practically, their opportunities to have influence vary between different regions. For example, in the case of municipal youth councils, many times, not the youth themselves but adults define the actual possibilities for these to have influence. For example, youth councils do not automatically have the right to speak or be present at municipal council or government meetings but these possibilities depend on the municipality (Suomen nuorisovaltuustojen liitto, 2022; Kekki;Kovalainen;& Ollikainen, 2023).

Currently, the Finnish National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme is under renewal for the upcoming period of 2024–2027 (the [statement round](#) to comment on the programme draft just finished end of January). The final version has not been published yet, but the draft for the new programme period includes a mention of strengthening youth participation and influencing opportunities in discussions and activities related to preventing/mitigating climate change and biodiversity loss. There is also a mention of promoting young people’s opportunities to understand and make use of research-based information on these topics. (Lausuntopalvelu.fi). The [previous programme](#) (2020–2023) also included mentions of supporting young people’s climate change mitigation activities:

“Finland will strive to strengthen the role of youth work and cross administrative cooperation in supporting young people in issues related to climate change. The objectives include making this a priority theme in the youth field during both Finland’s forthcoming Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers and Chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020, s. 38).”

The main general operating environments for youth participation in Finland are municipalities, youth work services and youth work organisations, educational institutions and, more recently, different kinds of digital spaces. There are also other regular and occasional very specific opportunities for young people to participate, for instance, in different kinds of positions of trust, working groups and consultations related to climate issues. Young people have also been actively influencing climate issues through more informal mechanisms, such as strikes.

## Good Practices



### Young People’s Climate Change and Nature, “NUOLI”



#### Organisation

The Youth Climate and Nature Group



#### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



#### Target Group

18–25 years old who, through studies or hobbies, have interest and know-how on climate and nature issues



#### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

There are numerous digital tools provided:

[nuortenagenda2030.fi](https://nuortenagenda2030.fi)

[linktr.ee/vnk\\_nuoli](https://linktr.ee/vnk_nuoli)

[www.instagram.com/vnk\\_nuoli?igsh=ZjVzM2swYmRoZWxv](https://www.instagram.com/vnk_nuoli?igsh=ZjVzM2swYmRoZWxv)

### Description

The Youth Climate and Nature Group (NUOLI) operates under the Prime Minister’s Office as part of the Youth Agenda 2030 group. The Youth Climate and Nature Group was established for the first time in 2023. It comprised 14 young people from different parts of Finland. The group began its activities in April 2023, and its duration is two years. The task of the group is to support ministries in planning, implementing, and evaluating youth participation in nature and climate-related issues. The group brings new and emerging perspectives as well as solution models into the decision-making process. The goal is to ensure the fairness of various political actions from the perspective of future generations. The Youth Climate and Nature Group also organises a Youth Climate Summit every two years. The summit aims to enable broader participation of young people in decision-making concerning their future. The group is quite new, so it’s still finding and shaping its ways of operating.

### Inclusion/ Diversity

Diversity was already taken into account during the application phase. When forming the group, emphasis was placed on diverse backgrounds, influencing the composition at that point. Applications were sought from young people aged 18–25 with interest or expertise in climate and environmental issues from various perspectives, such as energy solutions, nature-based solutions, construction, green transportation, environmental economics, forestry, circular economy, automotive industry, law, environmental education, communication, and event organisation. There were 77 applications for the position, from which a diverse group of 14 young people from different parts of Finland was successfully assembled. In the group’s internal activities, it is important to bring out different perspectives and openly discuss various issues together. The group has aimed to ensure that each member can express their own perspective on the matter at hand.

There hasn't been as much external activity for the Youth Climate and Nature Group yet. Their main task this year is to organise a Youth Climate Summit. When organising the summit, the group needs to consider how it can be as accessible as possible to everyone.

### Effectiveness

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The Youth Climate and Nature Group consists of 14 young individuals. The Youth Climate and Nature Group involves regular monthly meetings, reflecting its early development stage and ongoing exploration of internal operational procedures. Comprised of members from various parts of Finland, the group actively works to establish a comprehensive operational model tailored to its unique composition and geographic spread.

The group collaborates closely with ministries, supporting them in planning, implementing, and evaluating youth participation related to nature and climate themes. The group has received some invitations to various events and meetings with different people, but there is a desire for more. The group has been advocating strongly for more invitations to participate in discussions on climate and nature-related issues. With members having different strengths in various topics, efforts are made to identify those with the strongest expertise in specific areas for different events.

### Impact

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It's difficult to assess the impact of the group's activities since it has only been operational for less than a year. The group has been given autonomy in its operations and they have the freedom to decide how to make an impact through their actions. Over the past year, the group has focused on increasing awareness about their group to make their future actions more impactful. The group's aim is to amplify the voices of young people to policymakers and influence decision-making. Internally, the group provides opportunities for young members to have a say, and externally, through initiatives like the Youth Climate Summit, they provide a platform for other young individuals to express their views as well.

### Participation level

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The Youth Climate and Nature Group primarily influences at the national level, where they have the best opportunities to make an impact through the group. The responsibility for the regional and local levels lies more with other youth groups operating in Finland. In the future, the goal of the activities is to listen to the voices of young people at the regional and local levels, which can then be taken forward to the national level.

A major challenge and goal for the group has been to establish stronger connections with the ministry. The group's first year of operation has been focused on increasing awareness and making themselves more visible.

The group operates at various levels depending on the task at hand. However, the main focus of the activities is to convey the message from young people to decision-makers and officials. The group's communication, such as on social media, is mainly aimed at young people.

### Deliberation level

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The focus of the group's activities has been to increase the awareness of the group members and to pass that awareness on to other people. This emphasis has been highlighted during the first operational year of the Youth Climate and Nature Group. The group has undergone training and disseminated information about its activities within its own network. The group receives various invitations to meet different people, including decision-makers and other actors, and to participate in various events and meetings. With members having different strengths in various topics, the group aims to identify those with the strongest expertise in specific areas for different events.

### Summary – General assessment

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Roger Hart's (1992) Ladder of Children's Participation can be used to examine the activities of the Youth Climate and Nature Group. In Hart's ladder, the group's activities mainly focus on levels 5-7. Young people have played a central role in bringing climate and nature issues strongly into politics. Young people have also been seen to have a lot to contribute to developing solutions, which is why there was a need for the establishment of the Youth Climate and Nature Group. The group was formed by adult and supports ministries in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of youth participation. The goal is to ensure the fairness of various policy actions from the perspective of future generations.

The Youth Climate and Nature Group actively participates in activities. The group operates largely independently, but there are also aspects that come from adults to young people. For example, meeting various ministers and other stakeholders mainly originates from adults to young people. The Youth Climate and Nature Group receives invitations to meetings, and then they decide whether all members of the group will participate in the meeting or only those who have the best expertise on the topic being discussed.

In addition to some aspects coming from adults to young people, the group has also been given autonomy, and they have the freedom to decide how they make an impact through their actions.





## Finnish Nature Association



### Organisation

Luontoliitto ry; Finnish Nature Association  
The good practice analysis presented here focuses on the so-called action groups under the FNA (these action groups form one sub-area within the organisation, see description for details on how the organisation works as a whole to understand the context under which the action groups function):

- Climate Action Group
- Forest Action Group
- Wolf Action Group
- Nature Hobby Action Group
- Baltic Sea Action Group
- Stream Water Action Group



### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



### Target Group

13–29 years old



### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

Website:

<https://luontoliitto.fi/toimintaryhmat/>

<https://www.instagram.com/luontoliitto/>

[Instagrams' of the action groups:](#)

<https://www.instagram.com/llilmastoryhma/>

<https://www.instagram.com/metsaryhma/>

<https://www.instagram.com/susiryhma/>

<https://www.instagram.com/itameriryhma/>

## Description

### About the Finnish Nature Association

The Finnish Nature Association is a nation-wide environmental non-governmental nature and environmental protection organisation for children and youth. It was founded in 1943. FNA is the only ENGO in Finland mainly focusing on environmental youth work and today has around 7 000 members, eight regional branches, two local organisations, six youth-oriented action groups and 200 active volunteers in Finland.

The Finnish Nature Association also acts as a general ENGO monitoring the state of the environment.

### About the action groups

As described above, there are different kinds of actors and spaces under the Finnish Nature Association, one of these being the so-called action groups. The action groups form a specific youth-oriented and youth-led mode of operation and spaces for voluntary based youth participation and action opportunities under the association. They are separate actors from, for example, the local branches, however, activities of the different actors under the association sometimes intertwine. Generally, all the action groups operate on the same principles, thus the current good practice presents many things at a general level. However, as youth-oriented and youth-led spaces the groups are also flexible in the sense that their participants can have a lot of influence in what they prefer to work on and how.

Thus, specific activities of the action groups mostly depend on the interest and motivation of the participants to the groups. In other words, they principally are self-initiated and self-organised activities of the participants to the groups (but supported by the employees of the FNA if necessary).

### Inclusion/Diversity

Most of the participants in the action groups are between 20-29 years old. However, the groups welcome all interested in their topics, and thus, there are also some younger, as well as older, participants.

Taking part in the activities of the action groups is mostly free of charge for the participants. There are action groups in most major cities across the country, but the Finnish Nature Association also covers travel costs for all members of the association participating in the action groups' activities from remote locations. There are also many opportunities to participate online in different group activities. The activities free of charge are made possible with support such as Finnish state aid for youth organisations and project funding. There are some exceptions in cases of e.g. camps, where the participants sometimes need to pay minor participation fees, to in turn also get e.g. all the meals. Descriptions of the activities of the action groups generally include accessibility information especially related to physical accessibility of the venues, such as if there are ramps and toilets. Also, safer space principles and equality and harassment contact persons are commonly used in all activities. In addition to these contact persons separately named for specific activities, there is also a person responsible for equality and harassment related matters on an associational level in the Finnish Nature Association. Albeit there is some room for improvement in the sense that sometimes when young people organise activities just by themselves, as many times is the case in the context of the action groups, they forget to pay attention to the matters described in this last chapter.

## Effectiveness

The activity levels of the different action groups vary a bit depending on factors such as time and surrounding social context. At the moment, the Forest Action Group is the most active, as for the past couple of years there has also been an ongoing lively social discourse on conditions and protection of forests in Finland. The second most active group is the Climate Action Group.

The following numbers describe the totals of participants to different activities of the action groups in 2023 (in the numbers below persons are counted more than once if they've participated in several activities):

- Forest Action Group: 1 258
- Climate Action Group: 922
- Wolf Action Group: 565
- Baltic Sea Action Group: 526
- Stream Water Action Group: 286

The following numbers describe the amounts of activities of the two currently most active action groups in 2023:

- Forest Action Group: 70+ one day national level activities; 15 more than one day national level activities (e.g. camps); 2 international activities.
- Climate Action Group: 26 one day national level activities; 1 week-long national level camp; 9 international activities.

Social media followers (Instagram):

- Forest Action Group: 4 700
- Climate Action Group: 1 281
- Wolf Action Group: 2 634
- Baltic Sea Action Group: 1 935

## Impact

In regard to impact, it is quite a common starting point that first only a few young people in an action group become highly inspired and motivated to have influence on a certain matter. After this, with their personal so to speak “strength of will” and hard work they manage to attract more and more young people to join the “forces” and together they manage to have greater impact. These kinds of situations not only increase the social/environmental impacts of the actions of the groups, but are also impactful for the participants’ personal development and learning processes, though there are also concerns related to the well-being of young activists in terms of burnouts etc.

Altogether, the action groups contribute to many larger social/environmental objectives, but at the same time their impact should not only be affiliated to the direct social/environmental impacts of the action, as an important aspect of these groups is also to create spaces for youth-oriented environmental education and advocacy.

## Participation level

The action groups mostly operate on local levels across Finland. Many of the activities take place in the capital area (which clearly is the most densely habited area of the country, too). However, there are participants who join the activities of a certain region from another region or from more remote locations. The locations of the activities also depend to some extent on e.g. targets of diverse campaigns (could be a specific forest, to give an example). Then again, for example, topics of the activities of the Climate Action Group tend to be somewhat wider in the sense of allowing more operations/cooperation also on the national level.

The starting point for the functioning of the action groups is youth-oriented, referring to the principle that ideas for activities organised by these groups come from the participants themselves (from youth to youth). However, workers from the FNA/other so to speak adults can support the participants in the action groups with e.g. writing funding applications or lead carrying out larger-scale project work.

## Deliberation level

The term “deliberative” is quite rarely used to describe the aims and activities of the action groups, despite there are some quite clear deliberative principles in what they do.

First, it is to emphasise the educational aspects of the activities of the groups which are, first and foremost, non-informal spaces created for young people to develop and increase aspects such as their skills, knowledge, critical thinking, and active citizenship.

Secondly, the groups foster collaboration, community spirit, peer learning and support among young people coming from diverse backgrounds but with a shared interest in pro-environmental actions.



## Summary – General assessment

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Considering the Hart's ladder model of participation (Hart, 1992), the operating principles of the action groups situate this mode of operation as a whole on the three highest ladders: it includes features of the ladders related to child-initiated shared decisions with adults, child-initiated and directed and adult-initiated, shared decisions with children.

Considering a perspective of another framework, Cahill and Dadvand's model of youth participation highlights more the fluid nature of participation and consists of seven interrelated domains: purpose, positioning, protection, power relations, process, perspective, and place (Cahill & Dadvand, 2018). In case of purpose, the action groups under the Finnish Nature Association are low-threshold ways for youth interested in climate issues to both increase their knowledge and take action, as well as to get to know new people with similar interests.

With principles such as safer space guidelines or financial supports for participants coming from more remote locations, the action groups aim to attract participants with diverse backgrounds and with different kinds of perspectives. Their starting point positions youth as active agents in climate action, as also does the general discourse in Finland on different societal levels and sectors. Young people are the main leaders of the activities of the action groups, but there is constant institutional support available for them from the Finnish Nature Association. The activities of the action groups form part of the Finnish civil society and are also supported financially, for example, by state aid(s). Both the institutional and financial supports can be seen as protective measures for youth engagement in climate issues. However, these protective measures do not aim to define the activities of the action groups, but participants to the groups have power to act based on their interests.



# Austria

## Setting the scene

Austria provides many opportunities for youth involvement, especially when it comes to combating climate change. Younger people in the country have demonstrated an amazing level of involvement in a variety of initiatives that aim to influence climate policy and promote sustainable practices. This involvement demonstrates the youth's dedication to environmental issues and the general public's realisation of how urgent it is to take action on climate change.

### Climate Initiatives

Through activism projects and sustainability campaigns, **Jugend Umwelt**, the Austrian Youth Environment Council, empowers youth and promotes their active participation in environmental protection efforts.

**The Fridays for Future Austria** movement have inspired thousands of Austrian students to take part in climate strikes and demand decisive action from political leaders, mirroring the global call for urgent climate action started by Greta Thunberg.

Additionally, by encouraging sustainability and environmental awareness and building a network of young activists dedicated to building a sustainable future, **Kijunetz** supports youth initiatives.

**Boja- Nachhaltige ÖJA** aims to ensure that environmental consciousness is integrated into youth work practices throughout Austria by supporting open youth work with a sustainability focus.

Understanding the relationship between education, sustainability, and climate action is facilitated by **RCE Vienna**, the Research Centre for Education and the Learning Economy.

Through its involvement in conservation efforts, the **WWF Jugend Community** gives young people a practical platform and (leadership) training to contribute to environmental protection and climate action.

The youth's active participation in climate action in Austria demonstrates an important shift in environmental governance and policy making. It provides a good example of successful youth engagement in addressing climate change thanks to contributions from groups like CliMates Austria, educational websites like Umweltbildung.at, and campaigns like Fridays for Future Austria. A resilient and sustainable future shaped by the inventive spirit and group action of the younger generation is promised by this growing involvement.

## Good Practices

### Klimajugendrat (Climate Youth Council)



#### Organisation

Klimajugendrat (Climate Youth Council)



#### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



#### Target Group

Young people aged 14-30 from across Austria



#### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

The main information and updates about the Climate Youth Council are shared on the official website of the Bundes Jugend Vertretung (<https://bjv.at/klimajugendrat24/>) and potentially through associated social media channels.

### Description

The Climate Youth Council was launched for the first time in 2022. At the time, it was the highlight and final event of the #timeforchange climate campaign, which was organised by the Federal Youth Council 2020-2022

Now, this initiative convenes annually at the Austrian Parliament in Vienna, where it creates a forum for young Austrians to engage directly with legislators from all political factions represented in the Parliament. The purpose of the event is to provide participants, ages 14 to 30, with the confidence to approach political figures with their concerns, creative ideas, and cooperative exploration of workable solutions for climate-related issues.

The format of the Klimajugendrat is specifically crafted to provide a comprehensive and all-encompassing conversation. Because the participants are chosen from all throughout Austria, a diversified cross-section of the youth generation is reflected, guaranteeing a wide range of perspectives and insights into the climate discourse. The Climate Youth Council is a multi-day event that takes place once a year. The dialogue with decision-makers and political representatives also takes place during that time.

One of the main features of the Climate Youth Council is the Climate Action Award ceremony, which honours and rewards exceptional climate projects spearheaded by young people or organisations. This award intends to encourage and inspire peers to take additional action in the fight against climate change, in addition to highlighting the proactive role that youth play in this effort. In 2023, for example, the Federal Youth Council, together with the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, honoured the following three winner projects:

Category 1- Climate dialogue: [Klimadashbord](#)

Category 2 - Climate action [Klimazeltlager „Nicht mit uns'rer Welt“](#)

Category 3 - Climate Art & Culture: [M\\*ode – empower clothing](#)

The Klimajugendrat's dedication to eliminating obstacles to involvement is demonstrated by the fact that it offers free admission, along with lodging, meals, and travel reimbursements when needed. This guarantees that the participation of enthusiastic youth who are willing to add to the climate conversation is not impeded by financial limitations.

The Austrian Parliament and other governmental organizations have supported the event, which is a testament to their shared understanding of the vital role that young participation plays in establishing a sustainable future.

## Inclusion/ Diversity

Inclusion and diversity are foundational pillars of the Klimajugendrat, reflecting a deep-seated commitment to ensuring that the voices of all young Austrians, irrespective of their socio-economic background, geographic location, or educational status, are heard in the climate conversation. The initiative's broad age range of 14-30 years is a testament to its inclusive approach, welcoming the vibrant energy of younger teenagers as well as the mature perspectives of young adults.

The Klimajugendrat goes to great lengths to ensure diversity among its participants, employing a variety of outreach strategies to engage young people from urban centres to rural areas, from different cultural backgrounds, and with varied levels of climate knowledge. This diversity enriches the dialogue, bringing a wealth of experiences, ideas, and viewpoints to the fore, and fostering a more holistic understanding of climate issues and solutions.

To further bolster inclusivity, the Climate Youth Council provides comprehensive support to participants, including covering travel expenses and accommodation needs, thus removing financial barriers that might otherwise prevent eager young individuals from participating. The event also places a strong emphasis on creating an accessible and welcoming environment for all, including those with disabilities, ensuring that every young person has the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the discussions.

## Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the Klimajugendrat as a platform for youth engagement in climate policy can be assessed through its tangible outcomes and the depth of its impact on both participants and policymakers. The initiative has proven itself as an important conduit for channelling the concerns, aspirations, and innovative ideas of young Austrians into the national climate policy discourse. Through structured dialogues, workshops, and collaborative sessions, the Klimajugendrat facilitates a meaningful exchange of knowledge and perspectives, bridging the gap between youth and legislators.

One of the most significant indicators of the Klimajugendrat's effectiveness is the direct interaction it fosters between young participants and political representatives. This direct line of communication allows for real-time feedback, mutual learning, and the establishment of a shared understanding of the complexities surrounding climate issues. It is this very interaction that amplifies the voices of the youth, ensuring that their ideas and concerns are heard.

60 young people took part in the Climate Youth Council in 2022 and 80 young people throughout Austria in 2023. Members of all parties represented in parliament were present in both years.

Out of 22 projects submitted, 4 projects in the following categories were recognised and honoured with the Climate Action Award in 2022:

1. **Climate Communication:** Generation Talk Klimakrise! – Jugend- und Bildungshaus St. Arbogast
2. **Climate policy commitment:** Österreichische Jugendklimakonferenz – Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) Austria – CliMates Austria
3. **Climate action:** Angarteln 2021 – ClickIn
4. **Self-formulated category:** „Oafach dussa macha“ – Jugendzentrum Graf Hugo

In 2023, there were 3 categories and 3 winners, which have already been mentioned in the description part. In 2023, the winning projects received a certificate, a climate-friendly goodie bag and an ÖBB voucher worth €500.

## Impact

The direct engagement with policymakers facilitates a mutual learning process, where young individuals gain insights into the complexities of policy-making, while politicians are exposed to fresh, innovative perspectives and the urgent demands of younger generations.

The Climate Action Award, a key feature of the Klimajugendrat, serves as a powerful tool for recognizing and promoting youth-led climate initiatives, encouraging a culture of innovation and action among young people.

This acknowledgment not only boosts the morale of the awardees but also inspires their peers, creating a ripple effect that motivates further youth engagement in climate action.

Moreover, the recommendations and outcomes of the Klimajugendrat discussions have the potential to influence national climate policies, making the youth a critical stakeholder in Austria's environmental future. The event's impact is further magnified by its ability to inspire similar youth engagement models in other regions, showcasing the value of incorporating youth perspectives in tackling global environmental challenges.

## Participation level

The Klimajugendrat showcases a good level of youth participation, reflecting the initiative's wide appeal and accessibility. The diverse demographic of participants, spanning ages 14 to 30, brings together a rich tapestry of perspectives, experiences, and ideas, enhancing the depth and breadth of the discussions. This participation level is a testament to the initiative's effective outreach and engagement strategies, which successfully attract a broad cross-section of Austrian youth, from various socio-economic backgrounds and regions.

The initiative's commitment to inclusivity, by providing financial support for travel and accommodations, ensures that barriers to participation are minimised, allowing for a more representative youth voice in the climate dialogue. The enthusiastic involvement of young Austrians in the Klimajugendrat underscores a growing awareness and concern for environmental issues among the youth, as well as their eagerness to contribute to meaningful change. The active participation of such a large and diverse group of young people not only enriches the discussions but also strengthens the credibility and impact of the collective youth voice in shaping Austria's approach to climate policy.

## Deliberation level

The deliberation level at the Klimajugendrat is characterised by its depth and constructive nature, facilitated by a programme that encourages critical engagement and exchange with a wide range of climate-related topics. The participants engage in in-depth analyses, debates, and collaborative problem-solving sessions, tackling complex issues from climate science to policy and sustainable practices.

The inclusion of interactive workshops and panel discussions with experts and policymakers further enhances the quality of deliberation, providing valuable insights and fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas. The direct dialogue with political representatives is a crucial aspect of the Klimajugendrat, offering a unique opportunity for participants to directly present their views and recommendations to decision-makers. This level of engagement ensures that the deliberations are not only theoretical but are grounded in the practical realities of policy-making and implementation.

The level of deliberation at the Climate Youth Council culminates in the formulation of well-considered, actionable recommendations that reflect the collective vision of the youth for a sustainable future. These recommendations, documented and disseminated to a wider audience, serve as a testament to the thoughtful and proactive approach of young Austrians to climate challenges, highlighting their potential to contribute significantly to policy and societal change.

## Summary – General assessment

The Klimajugendrat in Austria exemplifies a remarkable model of youth engagement in climate action, demonstrating the profound impact that informed and passionate young individuals can have on environmental discourse and policy. Through its inclusive, participatory approach, the initiative ensures a wide representation of youth voices, enriching the climate dialogue with diverse perspectives and innovative solutions. The structured deliberations, characterised by their depth and constructiveness, facilitate meaningful exchanges that bridge the gap between young activists and policymakers, fostering mutual understanding and collaboration.

The significant participation level, with participants spanning a broad age range and hailing from various backgrounds, underscores the initiative's success in mobilising and inspiring Austrian youth to take an active role in shaping their environmental future. The Klimajugendrat's impact extends beyond the event itself, influencing national climate policies and inspiring similar initiatives globally, showcasing the critical role of youth in driving sustainable development.

Overall, the Klimajugendrat stands as a good step in the direction of environmental advocacy.



## Jugend-Umwelt-Plattform



### Organisation

Jugend-Umwelt-Plattform



### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



### Target Group

Young adults interested in environmental and sustainability issues, looking for opportunities in volunteering, career orientation in the green job market, and active participation in environmental projects.



### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

Website: [jugendumwelt.at](http://jugendumwelt.at)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/jugendumwelt/?hl=de](https://www.instagram.com/jugendumwelt/?hl=de)

## Description

Since its founding in 2011, JUMP (Jugend Umwelt Plattform) has become an important player in encouraging young people in Austria to take action and become environmentally conscious. The platform stands out for its dynamic approach to environmental activism and education, offering an organised yet flexible approach to learning and activism, ranging from engaging workshops lasting a few hours to longer projects lasting several months.

These initiatives aim to create a community of knowledgeable, engaged and proactive people who are ready to support sustainable development, not just disseminate knowledge.

Its vision is to link social, ecological and economic concerns and actively support the sustainable development of society. They also want to encourage participation in environmental and socio-political processes

One of its best-known initiatives is the Voluntary Environmental Year. As part of the Voluntary Environmental Year, young people who have finished school can volunteer for 6-12 months as part of the Voluntary Environmental Year and have this time recognised as a substitute for civilian service. The opportunities are diverse and range from conducting climate protection workshops in schools, harvesting carrots in organic fields, looking after visitors in the national park, analysing data for research projects, etc.

Participants can choose their place of work from 90 organisations throughout Austria

Additionally, JUMP has Career Orientation and Volunteer Programs focused on the green employment sector. By providing participants with the skills, information, and hands-on experience needed to succeed in the environmental field, these programs aim to develop the next generation of environmental leaders.

## Inclusion/Diversity

The way the organisation adapts its programs to different levels of engagement and understanding of environmental issues is indicative of its inclusive approach. JUMP ensures that every young person, regardless of prior knowledge or experience, can find a meaningful way to contribute. From basic workshops on the basics of sustainability and climate change to more involved, long-term volunteer opportunities that provide immersive experiences in environmental projects.

The platform therefore offers an inclusive and diverse programme for young people. However, there is no explicit reference to diversity management or specific measures, at least on the website. This does not necessarily mean that no active efforts are made in this regard, but merely that no active attention is paid to this point, at least in the organisation's public presentation. So, in terms of inclusion and diversity, this is therefore an aspect that should be made more visible to the outside world. It's also worth noting that out of a team of 16, which includes paid staff as well as volunteers, 13 are female.

## Effectiveness

JUMP's initiatives and volunteer opportunities provide a hands-on introduction to actual environmental conservation initiatives. Participation in these activities provides participants with invaluable real-world experience, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in concrete contexts ranging from local community initiatives to larger, international environmental campaigns. This experiential learning component greatly enhances participants' understanding of and commitment to environmental issues.

In addition, the figures that the organisation provides on its website indicate a relevant reach and therefore also the effectiveness of its work:

One example therefore is the project "Klimakommunikation on tour". On behalf of the Climate and Energy Fund, young people addressed current social issues such as climate change and media coverage. In an interactive three-hour workshop, practical and creative exercises were used to jointly develop ways of effectively talking about climate change and refuting false statements. The workshop was developed together with experts from the Climate and Energy Fund.

In this context, a total of **50 workshops** were held in all **9 federal states** of Austria between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2023, reaching **1,140** young people directly.

Another example is their Danube Master Art Programme:

In the Year 2023, as part of this programme, **95** national contributions were submitted by a total of **226** children and young people in Austria. The competition takes place annually at national and international levels in all **14 countries** of the Danube region.

## Impact

JUMP bridges the gap between awareness and action by giving these young people the tools, knowledge, and platforms they need to become outspoken advocates for sustainability. This empowerment is important because it gives participants the confidence and ability to start a movement in their communities dedicated to grassroots environmental conservation.

JUMP's impact is further demonstrated by its ability to encourage participants to dedicate their lives to environmental causes. JUMP's immersive programs leave a lasting impression, often influencing participants' future career and educational decisions and inspiring a lifelong commitment to environmental advocacy. This lasting impact underscores the importance of JUMP's work in developing the next wave of environmental leaders and innovators.

## Participation level

There is a high level of engagement demonstrated by a number of specially designed projects, such as "Climate Communication on Tour", a workshop created by the Climate and Energy Fund to improve media literacy in the context of the climate crisis, and "Danube Art Master 2023", where children and young people create artistic representations of the Danube or its tributaries.

JUMP's participatory model, which emphasises personal development and active participation, ensures that users' engagement with the platform goes beyond mere attendance. Participants are encouraged to actively contribute to JUMP's goals and mission, creating an environment where everyone's opinion is respected and contributes to the group's overall goal of environmental sustainability.

In addition, as part of its strategy to increase youth engagement, JUMP offers long-term volunteer opportunities, such as the Voluntary Environmental Year, that facilitate deeper engagement with the environment.

This program further solidifies the platform's role in fostering an informed and engaged youth community committed to environmental stewardship by providing opportunities for youth to meaningfully contribute to environmental protection and sustainability. It is an example of how JUMP facilitates meaningful engagement.

## Deliberation level

A key component of JUMP's approach is deliberation, which encourages deep engagement with environmental issues through a series of discussions, workshops, and collaborative efforts. This strategy is designed to foster open conversation and the free exchange of ideas so that JUMP can help its members develop a thorough understanding of sustainability issues and viable solutions. The discussion process is carefully designed to enhance the educational value of JUMP's activities and provide youth with a sense of empowerment by allowing them to express their own opinions and actively participate in the ongoing environmental dialogue.

JUMP's diverse range of activities, designed to encourage careful reflection, critical analysis, and collaborative problem solving, clearly demonstrates this emphasis on deliberative engagement. Through these interactive sessions, participants are motivated to delve into complex environmental issues, challenge prevailing narratives, and explore inventive solutions in a nurturing and stimulating environment.

## Summary – General assessment

JUMP's diverse and accessible programs are carefully designed to provide young participants with a strong sense of purpose, basic skills, and understanding, motivating them to become active participants in sustainability initiatives.

JUMP is a leader in the field of environmental activism because of its strategic focus on encouraging active participation, fostering a culture of thoughtful deliberation, and supporting holistic personal growth. This strategy plays a key role in developing an engaged and knowledgeable group of young environmental stewards who are ready to take on the pressing issues of sustainability. In summary, through its effective programmes, JUMP is not only meeting the urgent need for environmental activism and education, but also laying the foundation for a resilient and sustainable future led by a passionate and informed youth population.



# Poland

## Setting the scene

In recent years, Poland has witnessed a remarkable surge in youth participation, particularly in advocating for climate action and environmental sustainability. As young people across the nation increasingly voice their concerns about pressing issues such as climate change, social justice, and democratic governance, their activism has become a driving force for positive change. This document aims to provide an overview of the current state of affairs regarding youth participation in Poland, with a specific focus on climate action, as well as initiatives to support youth organisations and enhance their involvement in democratic processes.

Poland's youth demographic has emerged as a powerful force in shaping the country's future, with growing recognition of the importance of their perspectives and contributions. From grassroots movements to organised campaigns, young activists in Poland are actively engaging in various sectors, advocating for meaningful societal change and demanding a seat at the decision-making table. The urgency of the climate crisis has galvanized youth activism in Poland, with young people at the forefront of efforts to raise awareness, mobilize communities, and push for ambitious environmental policies. Despite facing unique challenges, such as the nation's reliance on coal for energy, youth-led initiatives are driving momentum towards a more sustainable future, emphasizing the need for renewable energy, conservation efforts, and climate resilience.

Poland has implemented mechanisms to promote youth involvement in democratic processes, including youth councils, advisory boards, and participatory forums. These platforms provide avenues for young people to engage directly with policymakers, express their views, and contribute to decision-making on issues that affect their lives and futures.

## Good Practices



### Organisation

Krakow City Hall  
Faculty of Social Policy and Health  
Youth Affairs Department



### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

In person event with is promoted by local media and council platforms as well as in the social media accounts of organizers. [mlodziez.krakow.pl/2021/04/23/popzednie-edycje/](https://mlodziez.krakow.pl/2021/04/23/popzednie-edycje/)



### Target Group

The target group for YouthKraKHack primarily consists of young people in Krakow, ranging from adolescents to young adults. This includes individuals who are interested in social issues, community development, and civic engagement, regardless of their educational background, socio-economic status, or cultural identity. Additionally, the event may attract participants from surrounding areas or those with a keen interest in the topics being addressed during the hackathon.

Furthermore, YouthKraKHack may also target stakeholders involved in youth development, such as educators, youth workers, community leaders, and representatives from local government or non-profit organizations. These stakeholders play a crucial role in supporting and facilitating the participation of young people in the event, as well as in implementing the outcomes of winning projects in the community.

## Description

YouthKraKHack is a marathon of social projects, which, on the initiative of the Civic Dialogue Commission for Youth, has been carried out continuously since 2018 by the Youth Department of the Faculty of Social Policy and Health of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Kraków. Each event is characterised by a different topic, and the participants' task is to develop their own projects in the field of youth policy, through which they can express their expectations regarding topics that interest them, are socially important and often concern their future. Participants have only 12 hours to complete the challenge!

Young people taking part in the event have a chance to actively engage in the life of the City, improve and strengthen your social competences, in particular in areas such as teamwork, creative problem solving, presentation and effective communication skills, strengthen the sense of influence on your immediate environment, develop the ability to use social participation tools, and learn the mechanisms of decision-making in the City and democratic forms of influencing them.

Five editions of the hackathon have been organized so far. In 2021 the main topic was Developing a social campaign shaping pro-climate attitudes, addressed to various groups of Krakow residents: youth, families with children, seniors, as well as entrepreneurs and investors.

1st place – “Go into a retro atmosphere” (Carbon Footprint band)

2nd place – “A childishly simple recipe for the future” (Knedliczki team)

3rd place – “Ecolendar” (Power of 10 band)

The winning projects are implemented by the Krakow City Hall.

## Inclusion/Diversity

YouthKraKHack embodies the principles of inclusion and diversity by providing a platform for young people from diverse backgrounds to come together, collaborate, and contribute to social change. Regardless of their socio-economic status, cultural background, or educational level, all participants are welcomed and encouraged to share their perspectives and ideas.

The hackathon’s inclusive approach ensures that voices that are often marginalised or underrepresented in decision-making processes are heard and valued. By actively engaging with youth from various communities, YouthKraKHack fosters a sense of belonging and empowerment, enabling participants to make meaningful contributions to their city’s development.

Moreover, the diversity of topics addressed in the hackathon reflects a commitment to addressing a wide range of societal issues that affect different groups within the community. Whether it’s promoting pro-climate attitudes, advocating for social justice, or addressing the needs of specific demographic groups, YouthKraKHack strives to be inclusive in its approach to problem-solving.

Through its emphasis on teamwork, collaboration, and mutual respect, YouthKraKHack not only promotes diversity but also builds bridges across different social, cultural, and ideological divides. By bringing together young people with diverse perspectives and experiences, the hackathon creates opportunities for cross-cultural exchange, learning, and growth.

## Effectiveness

The effectiveness of YouthKraKHack can be measured in various ways, including its impact on participants, the community, and the outcomes of the projects developed during the hackathon.

Firstly, in terms of participant engagement and learning, YouthKraKHack offers a dynamic and hands-on experience that allows young people to develop essential skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and project management within a condensed timeframe. Participants have the opportunity to apply their knowledge and creativity to real-world challenges, gaining practical experience that can benefit them in their future endeavors.

Secondly, the hackathon’s effectiveness can be evaluated based on the impact of the projects developed during the event. Winning projects that are implemented by the Krakow City Hall demonstrate the tangible results and recognition of the hackathon’s outcomes by local authorities. These projects contribute to addressing pressing societal issues and improving the quality of life for Krakow residents, showcasing the practical significance of YouthKraKHack.

## Impact

The impact of YouthKraKHack extends beyond the boundaries of a single event, leaving a lasting impression on participants, the community, and the broader society.

Firstly, at the individual level, YouthKraKHack has a transformative impact on participants, equipping them with valuable skills, experiences, and confidence to become active agents of change. Through hands-on engagement in developing social projects, participants cultivate critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication skills that are essential for their personal and professional development. Moreover, the sense of accomplishment and empowerment gained from contributing to meaningful initiatives can inspire participants to continue their involvement in civic activities and pursue opportunities for further leadership and impact.

Secondly, the impact of YouthKraKHack resonates within the local community, where winning projects are implemented to address pressing issues and improve the quality of life for residents. By tackling topics such as pro-climate attitudes or social inclusion, these projects have the potential to generate tangible benefits and positive outcomes, ranging from raising awareness and changing behaviors to enhancing access to resources and services. As a result, YouthKraKHack contributes to building stronger, more resilient communities that are better equipped to address complex challenges and seize opportunities for growth and innovation.

Lastly, the ripple effects of YouthKraKHack extend to the broader society, where the event serves as a model for promoting youth engagement, fostering collaboration between academia, government, and civil society, and driving positive social change. By showcasing the potential of young people to drive innovation and make a difference, YouthKraKHack inspires other communities and institutions to invest in youth-led initiatives and create platforms for meaningful participation and dialogue. Thus, the impact of YouthKraKHack transcends its immediate participants and projects, leaving a lasting legacy of empowerment, innovation, and social progress.

## Participation level

YouthKraKHack encourages greater levels of participation such as equal participation. Here, participants have the opportunity to pitch their projects and receive feedback, indicating a higher level of involvement as well as space to build dialogue. Finally, at the highest level of citizen control, winning projects are implemented by the Krakow City Hall, showcasing the potential for participants to directly influence decision-making processes at the municipal level. Overall, YouthKraKHack facilitates participation across multiple levels of Hart’s Ladder, empowering young people to take an active role in addressing societal challenges and shaping the future of their community.

## Deliberation level

In the context of YouthKraHack, the deliberation level can be understood as the extent to which participants engage in thoughtful discussion, exchange of ideas, and decision-making processes during the hackathon.

At the deliberation level, participants in YouthKraHack are encouraged to engage in open and constructive dialogue with their peers, mentors, and judges. Throughout the event, there are opportunities for participants to brainstorm ideas, collaborate on project development, and provide feedback to each other. This deliberative process fosters critical thinking, mutual understanding, and the exploration of diverse perspectives on the topics at hand.

During project development, participants engage in deliberative processes as they consider various approaches, weigh the pros and cons of different strategies, and make decisions about how to best address the challenges they are tackling. This deliberative approach encourages participants to reflect on the potential impacts of their projects, consider the needs and perspectives of different stakeholders, and strive for solutions that are inclusive, effective, and sustainable.

Moreover, the judging process at the end of the hackathon provides another opportunity for deliberation, as participants present their projects, respond to questions and feedback from the panel of judges, and engage in discussions about the merits of their proposals. This deliberative exchange helps to ensure that winning projects are selected based on their feasibility, innovation, and potential for positive impact on the community.

## Summary – General assessment

YouthKraHack stands as a beacon of youth empowerment, innovation, and community engagement. Since its inception in 2018, the hackathon has provided a dynamic platform for young people in Krakow to come together and address pressing societal challenges through creative problem-solving and collaboration. The event's focus on different topics each year ensures a diverse range of issues are tackled, reflecting the evolving needs and interests of the community.

Through its inclusive approach, YouthKraHack fosters a sense of belonging and empowerment among participants from various backgrounds, equipping them with essential skills and experiences to become active agents of change. The hackathon's effectiveness is evident in the tangible outcomes of winning projects, which are implemented by the Krakow City Hall, demonstrating the practical significance and recognition of the event's outcomes by local authorities.

Moreover, YouthKraHack serves as a catalyst for community building and social cohesion, promoting dialogue, understanding, and collaboration across diverse groups within the city. By embracing inclusion, diversity, and deliberation, the hackathon creates opportunities for young people to engage in meaningful discussions, exchange ideas, and contribute to the collective well-being of their community.



## Project led by the Ministry of Climate and Environment



### Organisation

Ministry of Climate and Environment



### Target Group

Youth interested in climate actions.



### Level

LOCAL | NATIONAL



### Platform used

(Website, Social media accounts)

[www.facebook.com/mlodziejowaradaklimaty-czna/?locale=pl\\_PL](https://www.facebook.com/mlodziejowaradaklimaty-czna/?locale=pl_PL)

## Description

### About the Finnish Nature Association

August 17, 2021 The Minister of Climate and Environment and the Minister of Education and Science signed a Letter of Intent expressing the will to cooperate on ecological and climate education, the main goal of which is to increase the ecological and climate awareness of the young generation, as well as to initiate the next stage in the current cooperation of both ministries.

Initiated above. Through the Letter of Intent, the next stage of cooperation between the two ministries was reflected in the established Team whose task was to implement the demands contained in the Letter of Intent. It is also assumed that specific solutions will be developed in cooperation with interested communities.

The aim of the Team's work was to prepare 40 lesson scenarios regarding issues in the area of climate protection, which could be implemented in the subject of the following lesson:

16 scenarios for grades 1-8 in primary school

24 scenarios for grades I-IV in secondary schools

This task is carried out within the established Working Groups, which include, among others: scientists, experts, practitioners, educators. Representatives of youth organizations (Youth Climate Council, Youth Climate Strike and Polish Council of Youth Organizations PROM) are responsible for coordinating work within the Groups.

## Inclusion/Diversity

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In the project described, inclusion and diversity are integral components, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences are represented and valued. Firstly, the involvement of diverse stakeholders, including scientists, experts, practitioners, educators, and representatives from youth organisations, ensures that the project benefits from a variety of viewpoints and expertise. This diversity enriches the discussion and decision-making processes, leading to more comprehensive and effective outcomes.

Moreover, the project's focus on climate education for youth underscores a commitment to inclusivity by reaching out to individuals across different age groups and educational levels. By tailoring lesson scenarios for grades 1-8 in primary school and grades I-IV in secondary schools, the initiative ensures that climate education is accessible and relevant to a wide range of students, regardless of their academic background or developmental stage.

Additionally, the inclusion of youth organizations such as the Youth Climate Council, Youth Climate Strike, and Polish Council of Youth Organizations PROM demonstrates a commitment to amplifying the voices and perspectives of young people in the decision-making process. This not only empowers youth to actively participate in shaping their future but also ensures that their unique insights and concerns are considered in the development of educational materials and strategies.

## Effectiveness

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The effectiveness of this project lies in its comprehensive approach to climate education, its collaborative nature, and its alignment with established educational frameworks. By integrating climate protection themes into the existing curriculum and developing tailored lesson scenarios for different grade levels, the project ensures that students receive relevant and age-appropriate instruction on climate-related topics. This approach not only enhances students' understanding of climate change but also equips them with practical skills and fosters a sense of responsibility and commitment to climate protection.

Furthermore, the project's collaborative model, which involves diverse stakeholders such as scientists, experts, practitioners, educators, and youth organizations, enhances its effectiveness by drawing on a wide range of perspectives and expertise. This collaborative effort allows for the development of high-quality educational materials and strategies that are informed by the latest research and best practices in the field.

Moreover, by aligning with the core curriculum and the Integrated Qualifications System, the project ensures that climate education is seamlessly integrated into the learning process, maximizing its impact and relevance for students. This alignment also facilitates the scalability and sustainability of the project, as it can be easily implemented within existing educational frameworks.

## Impact

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The impact of this project extends beyond the classroom, potentially influencing both present and future generations in profound ways. Firstly, by equipping students with knowledge about climate change and its implications, the project empowers them to become informed and engaged citizens who understand the importance of environmental stewardship. This heightened awareness can lead to individual behavior changes, such as adopting sustainable practices and advocating for climate action within their communities.

Furthermore, the practical skills developed through the project, such as adaptation and mitigation strategies, can have tangible effects on local environments and communities. For example, students may implement initiatives to reduce waste, conserve energy, or promote biodiversity, leading to measurable improvements in environmental quality and resilience.

In the long term, the impact of this project may be reflected in broader shifts towards a more sustainable and resilient society. As today's students grow into tomorrow's leaders, innovators, and decision-makers, the lessons learned through this project can inform their actions and priorities, shaping the trajectory of environmental policy and practice for years to come.

## Participation level

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Hart's ladder of participation provides a framework for understanding the degree of involvement and empowerment of individuals or groups in decision-making processes. In the context of the project described, participation levels can be analysed through the lens of Hart's ladder to assess the extent to which stakeholders are engaged and empowered.

At the lower rungs of the ladder, stakeholders may be informally consulted or simply informed about decisions without having the opportunity to actively contribute. However, the project's emphasis on collaboration and inclusivity suggests that participation levels likely extend beyond these initial stages. For example, stakeholders such as scientists, experts, practitioners, educators, and youth organizations are actively involved in the development and implementation of educational materials and strategies. This level of involvement suggests a higher rung on Hart's ladder, where stakeholders are consulted and involved in decision-making processes to a meaningful extent.

Furthermore, the inclusion of youth organisations in coordinating work within the project's working groups suggests a commitment to empowering young people and amplifying their voices in the decision-making process. This level of engagement likely corresponds to even higher rungs on Hart's ladder, where stakeholders have significant influence over decisions and outcomes.

## Deliberation level

In assessing the deliberation level of the project described, it's important to consider the extent to which stakeholders are engaged in meaningful dialogue, exchange of ideas, and decision-making processes. Deliberation involves not only consultation but also active participation and reflection on diverse perspectives.

In this project, stakeholders such as scientists, experts, practitioners, educators, and representatives from youth organisations are involved in the development and implementation of educational materials and strategies. The formation of working groups and teams indicates a structured approach to collaboration, providing opportunities for stakeholders to engage in deliberative processes.

Moreover, the project's emphasis on diverse representation, including voices from various sectors and youth organizations, suggests a commitment to incorporating a wide range of perspectives and experiences. This diversity of viewpoints enhances the richness of deliberations, fostering critical thinking and innovation in addressing climate education goals.

## Summary – General assessment

The collaborative effort between the Ministry of Climate and Environment and the Ministry of Education and Science to enhance ecological and climate education represents a commendable initiative with significant potential for positive impact. By signing a Letter of Intent and establishing a dedicated team to implement its objectives, the project demonstrates a proactive approach to addressing climate change through education.

The project's emphasis on collaboration and inclusivity, involving diverse stakeholders such as scientists, experts, practitioners, educators, and youth organizations, enriches the decision-making process and ensures that a wide range of perspectives are considered. This collaborative model not only fosters innovation but also empowers stakeholders to take ownership of climate education initiatives.

However, the true impact of the project will depend on the extent to which stakeholders are actively engaged in deliberative processes and the effectiveness of educational materials and strategies in achieving climate education goals. Moving forward, continued collaboration, evaluation, and adaptation will be essential to maximize the project's effectiveness and long-term impact in fostering environmental stewardship and resilience.

# Conclusions

Across the European countries examined in this study, youth participation in climate action emerges as both a pressing necessity and a dynamic force for change.

In **Italy**, young people face significant barriers to participation, including underrepresentation in institutional bodies and formal requirements that limit access. However, initiatives such as deliberative assemblies offer promising avenues for increasing youth engagement and amplifying their voices in policy-making processes. Moreover, investing in youth involvement not only addresses the immediate concerns of climate change but also cultivates a long-term perspective of change within the political landscape.

In **France**, the youth climate movement demonstrates a vibrant and evolving engagement with climate activism, driven by grassroots organising and a commitment to effecting change at both local and global levels. While challenges persist, including limited access to funding and mental health resources, the widespread use of social media serves as a powerful platform for mobilisation and coordination. Inclusive policies that recognise the diversity within the movement and prioritise emotional politics are essential enablers for sustained youth participation.

In **Austria**, the Climate Youth Council exemplifies a structured approach to youth engagement, providing a platform for meaningful dialogue with policymakers and recognition of youth-led climate projects. However, gaps in geographic inclusivity and climate literacy underscore the need for comprehensive education and outreach efforts to ensure equitable participation opportunities for all young Austrians.

In **Finland**, a strong legal and political framework supports youth participation in climate action, bolstered by a robust civil society and diverse opportunities for engagement. Yet, regional disparities and challenges in reaching marginalized youth highlight the ongoing need for targeted outreach and support mechanisms to amplify youth voices and ensure inclusive participation.

In **Greece**, the growing awareness of climate change's impact on young people's lives has spurred dynamic engagement in climate activism. Despite limited direct involvement in policy-making, Greek youth are organizing locally and globally, demonstrating a strong sense of collective drive and mobilization. Enhancing structured mechanisms for youth participation in decision-making processes can further amplify their impact on climate policies and initiatives.

Similarly, in **Poland**, youth participation in climate action faces challenges such as regional disparities and limited access to inclusive engagement opportunities. However, initiatives like youth-led climate strikes and grassroots organizing efforts underscore the potential for transformative change when young people are empowered to shape the environmental agenda. Strengthening institutional support and investing in youth-led initiatives can unlock the full potential of youth participation in driving climate action forward.

Despite varying contexts and challenges, one common thread emerges: the imperative to create spaces and mechanisms that empower young people to actively shape climate policies and initiatives. By fostering inclusive dialogue, providing resources and support, and recognizing the unique perspectives and contributions of youth, European countries can harness the transformative potential of youth participation in the collective fight against climate change.

## Barriers for Youth Participation in Climate Action:

1. **Limited Funding:** Insufficient financial resources hinder youth-led initiatives and projects, restricting the scope and impact of their involvement in climate action.
2. **Policy Inertia:** Existing policies may not adequately support or encourage youth involvement, leading to a disconnect between youth advocacy efforts and policy implementation.
3. **Institutional Resistance:** Bureaucratic structures and resistance within institutions can impede youth participation, making it challenging for young people to influence decision-making processes.

## Enablers for Youth Participation in Climate Action:

1. **Mentorship and Support Networks:** Establishing mentorship programs and support networks empowers youth, providing guidance and fostering a sense of community.
2. **Access to Resources:** Providing funding, technology, and infrastructure facilitates youth-led projects and initiatives, enhancing their capacity to enact meaningful change.
3. **Recognition and Validation:** Acknowledging and valuing youth contributions fosters a sense of ownership and motivation, encouraging continued engagement in climate action efforts.

## Gaps in Existing Participation Models for Youth in Climate Action:

1. **Limited Representation:** Existing participation models often fail to ensure diverse representation, particularly from marginalized communities. Efforts should be made to include voices from all socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, and geographical regions to ensure holistic solutions.
2. **Tokenistic Engagement:** Youth involvement is sometimes tokenistic, where they are included in discussions merely for optics rather than meaningful contributions. Genuine collaboration entails involving youth in decision-making processes from inception to implementation stages.
3. **Lack of Accessible Platforms:** Many youth face barriers accessing platforms for participation due to factors like digital divide, language barriers, or lack of awareness. There's a need for accessible and inclusive avenues, both online and offline, to facilitate broader engagement.



# Recommendations

## 1. Financial Support and Structural Adaptations:

- Adapt funding structures to suit the decentralised nature of youth climate activism.
- Establish intermediary structures to bridge the gap between movement flexibility and funding eligibility criteria.
- Provide better access to funding, fostering financial sustainability for youth initiatives.

## 2. Mental Health and Resilience Resources:

- Allocate resources for mental health support and resilience-building programmes.
- Incorporate mental health awareness campaigns and accessible counseling services for activists dealing with eco-anxiety.

## 3. Inclusive Policies for Diversity:

- Develop and implement inclusive policies to address diverse backgrounds within the youth climate activism movement.
- Recognise and support initiatives aiming to diversify the activist community, ensuring representation from various socioeconomic backgrounds.

## 4. Facilitation of Open Dialogue:

- Establish formal mechanisms for open and transparent communication between youth activists and policymakers.
- Encourage the creation of forums, town hall meetings, or advisory committees for youth to express concerns and present proposals.

## 5. Comprehensive Climate Education and Engagement:

- Integrate comprehensive climate education into school curricula.
- Create ongoing engagement platforms for continuous communication between youth and decision-makers

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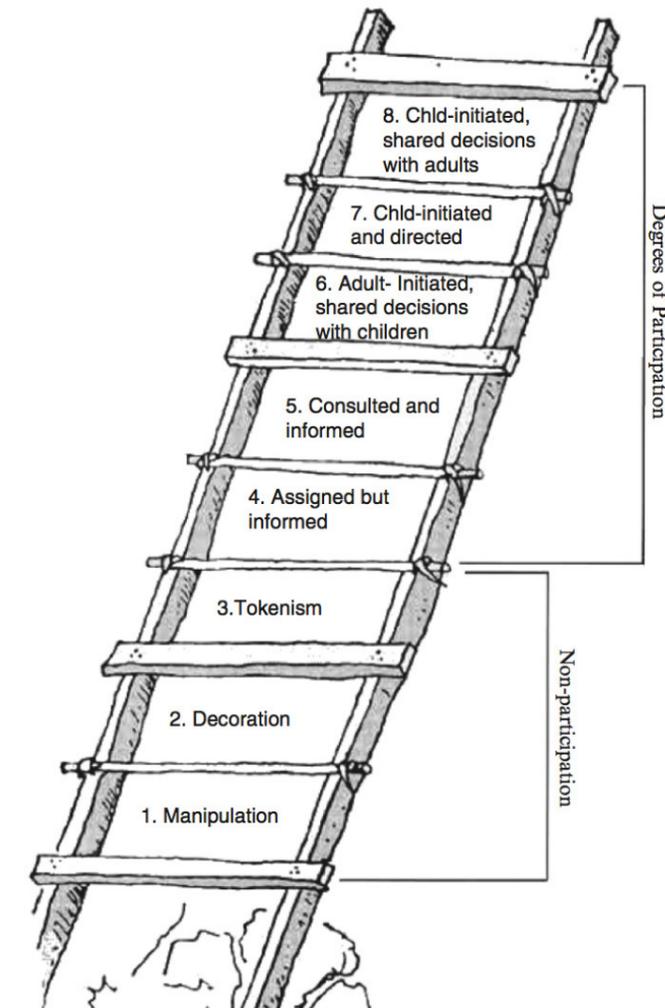
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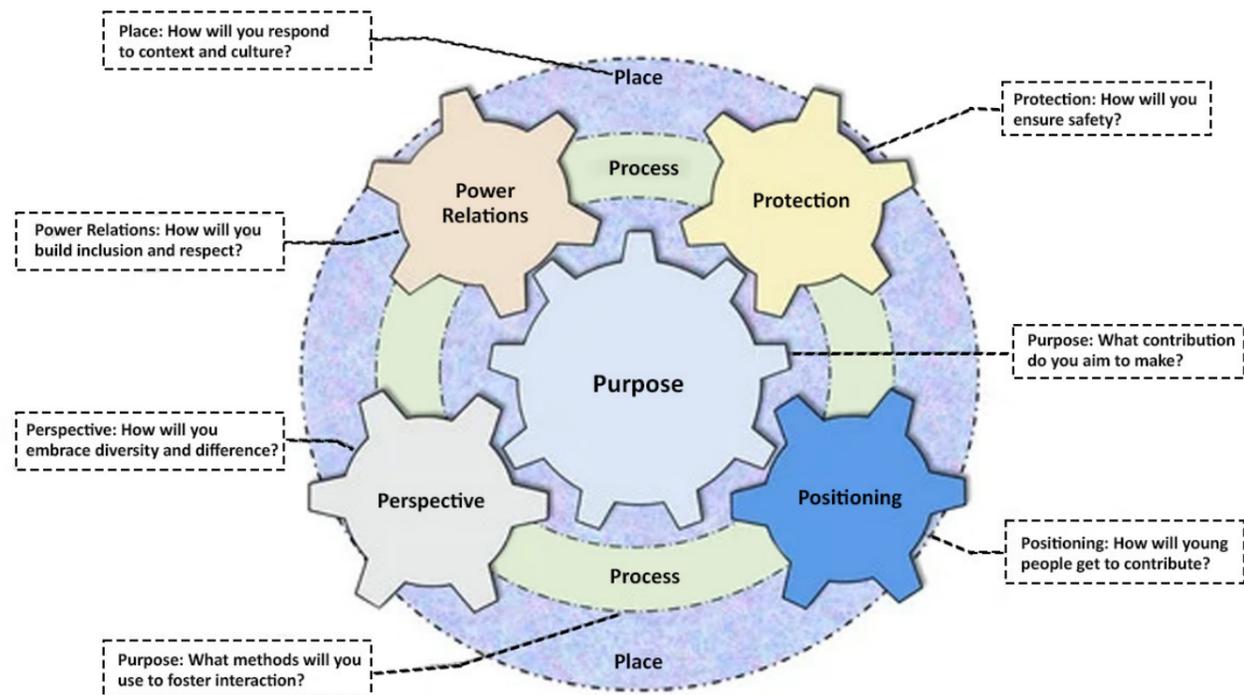
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## Appendices

Appendix 1: Roger Hart's (1992) ladder model of participation



Appendix 2: Cahill and Dadvand's model of participation (2018)



CLIMentines  
Empowered Youth for Climate Action

## D2.2 Scoping Study



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