

Earth and You(th)

Youth Policy Proposal for a Sustainable and Just Future



*A collaborative policy proposal developed by 32 young participants of the
Earth and You(th) Erasmus+ Youth Exchange project*

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1. Introduction

The Earth and You(th) project brought together 32 young people from Portugal, Greece, Ukraine, Italy and Hungary to explore solutions to today's most pressing environmental and social challenges. Through workshops and collaborative learning activities, participants examined key areas related to sustainability and developed a set of youth-driven policy recommendations.

Young people are among those most affected by climate change and environmental degradation. At the same time, they represent a powerful force for innovation and social change. This document outlines the collective recommendations of the participants in six key policy areas necessary for achieving a sustainable and socially just transition.

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2. Climate Action and Energy Transition

Problem:

Climate change represents one of the most urgent global challenges. Many countries still rely heavily on fossil fuels, which contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and environmental degradation.

Policy Recommendations:

- Increase public investment in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind energy.
- Increase urban greenery and tree planting to improve climate resilience.
- Promote sustainable mobility options such as cycling and public transport.
- Encourage reduction of consumption and waste, including composting systems.

Expected Impact:

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Greater energy independence and resilience.
- Increased use of renewable energy sources

3. Agriculture and Food Transition

Problem:

Current food systems contribute to environmental degradation and biodiversity loss through high levels of food waste. A transformation towards sustainable agriculture and responsible consumption is needed.

Policy Recommendations:

- Support local and sustainable farming practices.
- Encourage the collection of rainwater for agricultural use.
- Promote ecological packaging such as paper and glass instead of plastic.
- Support alternative protein sources and affordable plant-based food options.

Expected Impact:

- Healthier ecosystems and soil systems.
- Reduced food waste.
- Strengthened local economies and communities.

4. Finance and Sustainable Investments

Problem:

Financial institutions and investment systems still support industries that contribute to environmental damage. Redirecting financial flows toward sustainable initiatives is essential.

Policy Recommendations:

- Increase public funding for green research and innovation.
- Provide tax incentives for companies that repair, reuse, recycle and/or upcycle products.
- Support local businesses and cruelty-free farming practices through financial programmes.
- Invest in digitalization and sustainable infrastructure. Expected

Impact:

- Growth of green innovation and entrepreneurship.
- More responsible financial markets.
- Increased support for sustainable projects and start-ups.

5. Sustainable Mobility and Transport

Problem:

Transport is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in many countries. More sustainable mobility solutions are required to reduce environmental impact.

Policy Recommendations:

- Invest in accessible and affordable public transportation.
- Develop safe cycling infrastructure and pedestrian-friendly cities.
- Introduce unified public transport ticketing systems and digital ticket solutions.
- Support carpooling incentives and school buses for rural areas.

Expected Impact:

- Reduced emissions from transportation.
- Improved quality of life in urban areas
- More inclusive and accessible mobility systems.

6. Education and Awareness

Problem:

Many young people lack access to practical knowledge about sustainability and climate solutions. Education plays a crucial role in empowering responsible choices and active citizenship.

Policy Recommendations:

- Integrate sustainability and climate education into school curricula.
- Promote outdoor education activities such as nature excursions and school gardens.
- Encourage community events and campaigns promoting eco-friendly lifestyles.
- Promote sustainable habits such as reusable bottles, lunchboxes and upcycling practices.

Expected Impact:

- Greater environmental awareness among young people.
- Stronger community engagement in sustainability
- More sustainable daily lifestyle choices

7. Just Transition and Social Equity

Problem:

The transition to a sustainable economy must be fair and inclusive. Communities and workers affected by economic changes should receive support and opportunities.

Policy Recommendations:

- Provide accessible loans and financial support for green initiatives and farmers.
- Create training programmes for green jobs and sustainable industries.
- Promote knowledge-sharing and innovation exchange, especially with farmers and local communities.
- Support policies that ensure fair taxation and inclusive green economic development.

Expected Impact:

- A socially fair climate transition.
- Greater social equity in climate policies
- New sustainable employment opportunities.

8. Conclusion

Young people are not only future beneficiaries of sustainability policies but also active contributors to shaping them today. The participants of the Earth and You(th) project call on policymakers and decision-makers as well as every involved party to take inclusive and coordinated actions toward a sustainable and socially just future.

This policy proposal reflects the collective voice of 32 young participants who believe that cooperation and youth engagement are essential for building a greener and more equitable world.



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