

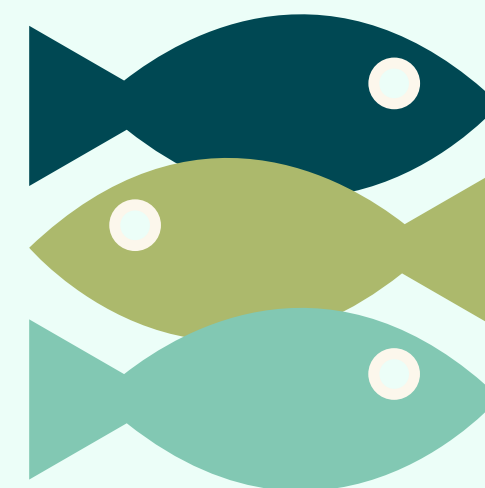
Time to Act Publication



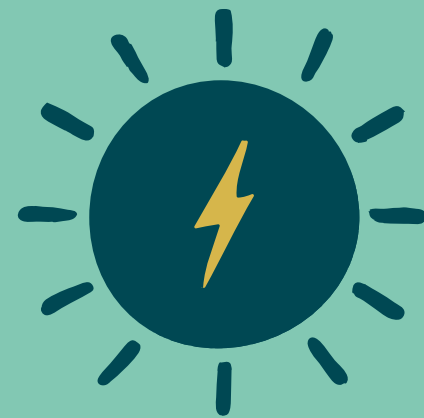
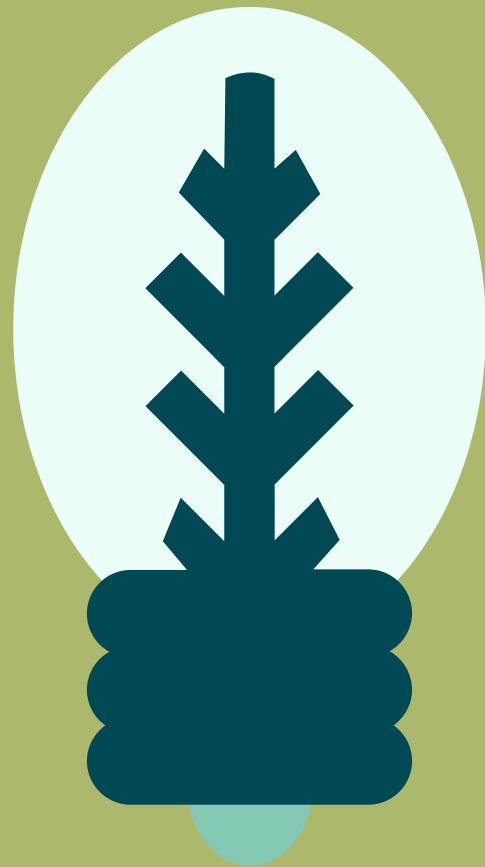
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Agenda



TOPICS

01. Overview
02. About the project
03. The beginning of the YE
04. Getting to Know Each Other
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This publication was developed as part of the Erasmus+ Youth Exchange “Time to Act”, organised under the Erasmus+ Accreditation in the Youth Sector and implemented in Dobczyce, Poland, from 5–13 May 2026.

The project was co-funded by the European Union within the Erasmus+ Programme.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the National Agency.

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About the project



“Time to Act” was a youth exchange created for young people who wanted to explore ecology, sustainability, climate action and environmental responsibility through direct experience, international cooperation and outdoor education.

The project took place in Dobczyce, Poland, between 5 and 13 May 2026. During these days, we learned together, walked together, reflected together and created ideas for action that we could take back to our local communities.

The main idea of the exchange was simple but powerful: young people do not need to wait to become changemakers. We can already observe, learn, question our habits and take meaningful action for nature, for our communities and for the future.

Through workshops, peer learning sessions, a group hike, reflection activities, task groups, intercultural evenings and action planning, we explored what sustainability means in practice and how the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially those linked with climate action and responsible consumption, can become part of our everyday lives.

This publication presents our learning journey from a youth perspective. It is not only a report about what happened. It is a collection of reflections, ideas, lessons and messages from young people who believe that now is the time to act.

The programme of the youth exchange was designed as a step-by-step process. We started by creating a group, building trust and understanding the purpose of the project. Then we explored sustainability, the SDGs and responsible consumption. After that, we moved deeper into the topic of respect for nature and climate action, prepared for the hike and used nature as our classroom. In the final days, we transformed our learning into peer education, open space discussions and follow-up action plans.

The main topics of the programme included:

- getting to know each other;
- programme learning expectations;
- teamwork and group contract;
- sustainability and personal responsibility;
- SDGs and environmental challenges;
- responsible consumption;
- respect for nature as climate action;
- preparation for the hike;
- hike as a way to learn and reconnect with nature;
- lessons learned from the hike;
- preparation for peer learning sessions;
- Youth for SDGs peer learning sessions;
- open space discussions;
- work in task groups;
- daily reflection;
- intercultural learning;
- follow-up and action planning;
- evaluation and final reflections.





The Beginning of Our Exchange

Our journey started with arrivals in Dobczyce, Poland. For many of us, this was the first moment of meeting people from different countries, backgrounds and experiences. At the beginning, we were a group of individuals arriving with our own expectations, questions and sometimes uncertainties.

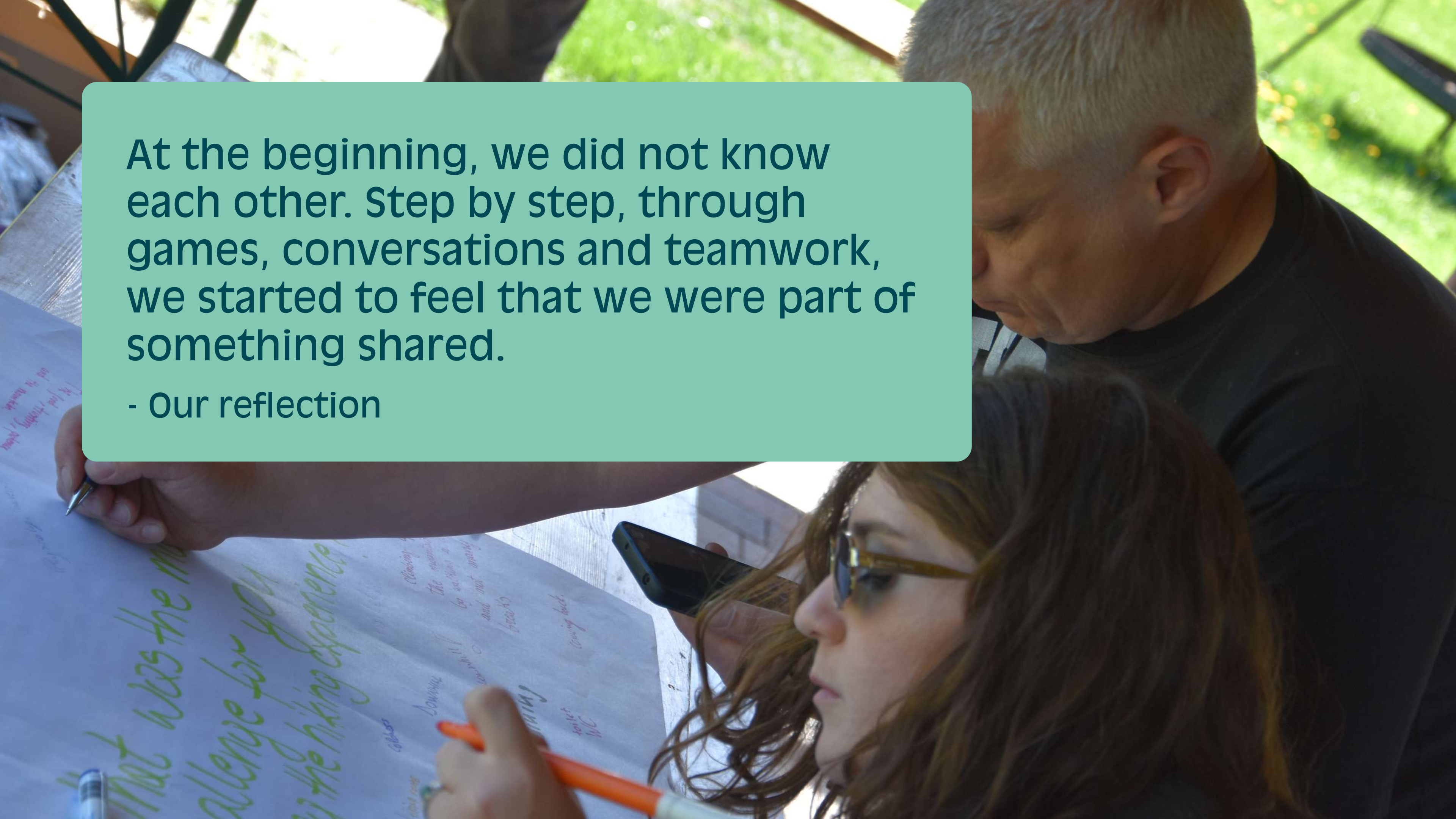
The first evening and the first sessions helped us slowly become a group. We introduced ourselves, learned each other's names, shared where we came from and started discovering what connected us. We also began to understand that this project was not only about learning facts about ecology. It was also about cooperation, respect, active participation and shared responsibility.

Being in an international youth exchange means learning from the programme, but also learning from every conversation, every meal, every evening activity and every cultural difference. From the first day, Dobczyce became not only the place of the project, but also a temporary home for our learning community.

Youth reflection:

At the beginning, we did not know each other. Step by step, through games, conversations and teamwork, we started to feel that we were part of something shared.



A man with short grey hair and a woman with long brown hair and sunglasses are sitting at a wooden table outdoors. They are both focused on writing on a large sheet of paper. The man is holding a pen and writing, while the woman is holding an orange marker and writing. The paper has some handwritten text in green and blue ink. The background shows a grassy area and a wooden fence.

At the beginning, we did not know each other. Step by step, through games, conversations and teamwork, we started to feel that we were part of something shared.

- Our reflection

Getting to Know Each Other and Building the Group

The first full day of the youth exchange focused on getting to know each other, understanding the programme and creating a positive group atmosphere.

We took part in introduction activities, name games and team-building exercises that helped us feel more comfortable in the group. These activities were important because sustainability work also needs cooperation. We cannot discuss global challenges or create local actions if we do not listen to each other and trust each other.

During the session on programme learning expectations, we reflected on what we wanted to learn and what we could contribute. Some of us wanted to understand more about climate change. Others wanted to learn practical eco-friendly habits. Some were interested in outdoor education, while others wanted to improve communication skills or gain confidence in international groups.

The teamwork and group contract session helped us agree on how we wanted to work together. We discussed respect, active participation, time management, inclusion, responsibility and care for each other. The group contract became a common agreement that supported us during the whole exchange.

Our Reflection

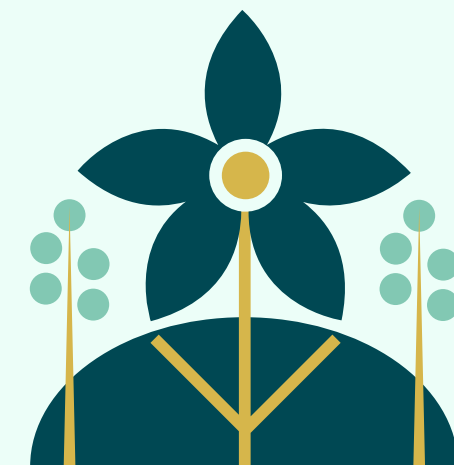
A good learning process starts with trust.

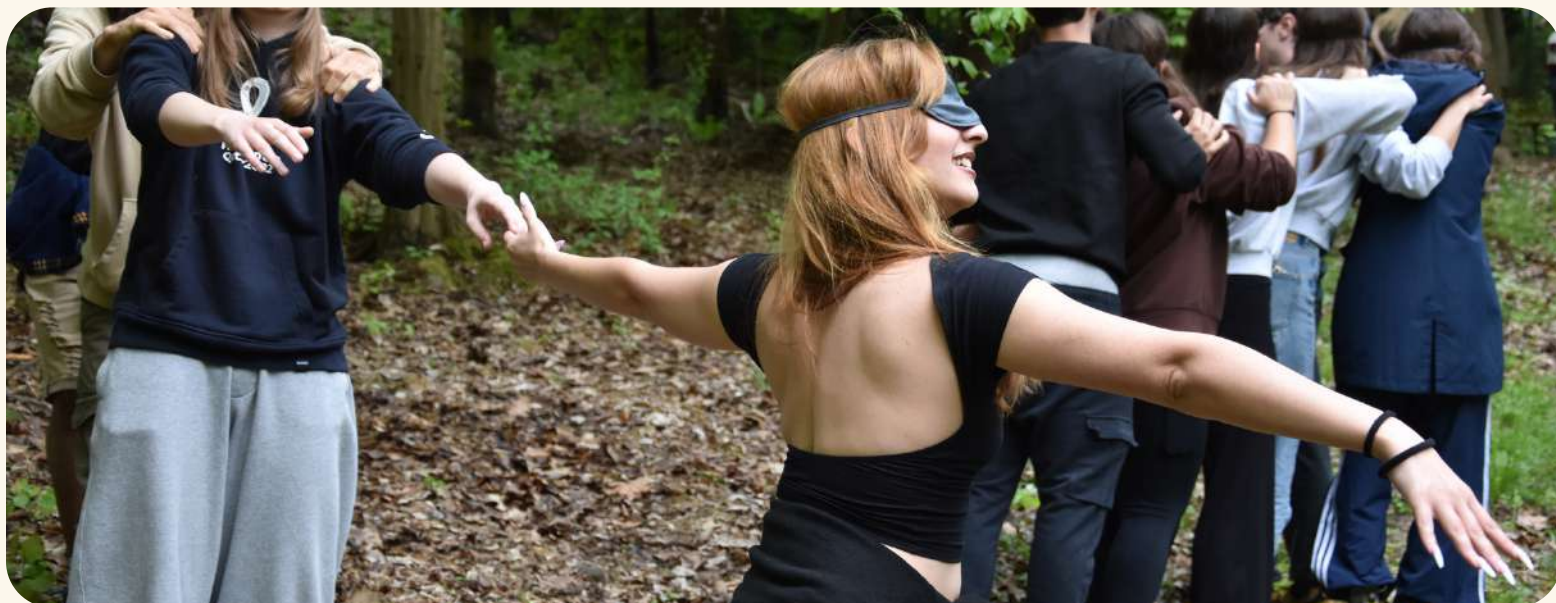
Group rules are stronger when they are created together.

Sustainability is also about how we treat each other.

Before acting for the planet, we needed to learn how to act as a group.

Everyone brings different experiences and perspectives.





Sustainability and Me

One of the first key topics of the programme was “Sustainability and me.” This session invited us to connect sustainability with our personal lives, not only with big global problems.



We reflected on our daily habits: how we travel, what we eat, what we buy, how we use water and energy, how much waste we produce and how we make choices as consumers.

We realised that sustainability is not only about perfect actions or big changes. It is also about awareness, small steps and honest reflection.

For many young people, sustainable living can feel complicated. Sometimes eco-friendly options are more expensive. Sometimes we lack information.

Sometimes social pressure or convenience influences our choices. During the session, we could speak openly about these barriers without feeling judged.

This helped us understand that sustainability should not be presented as guilt. It should be presented as a process of learning, trying, improving and supporting each other.



Sustainability became more real when we connected it with our own choices and not only with distant global problems.

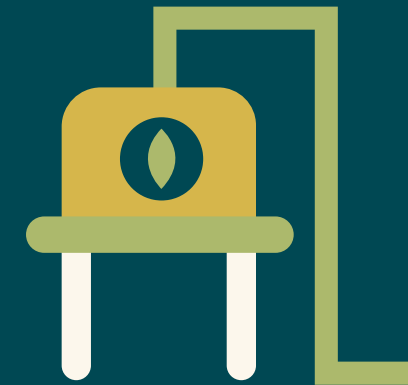
- Our reflection



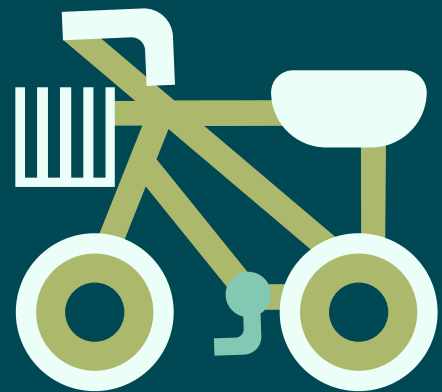
Questions we explored



What does sustainability mean to me personally?



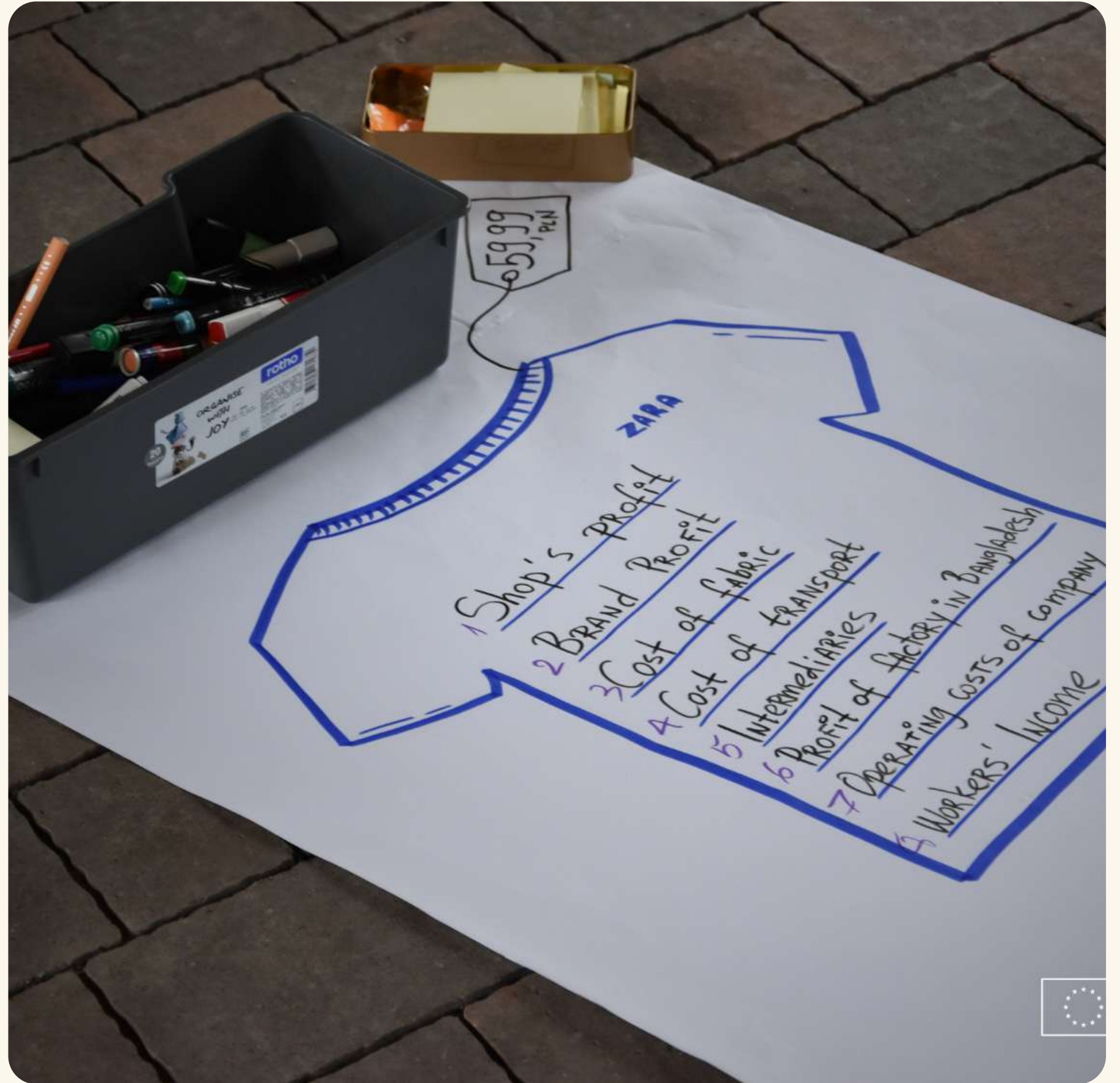
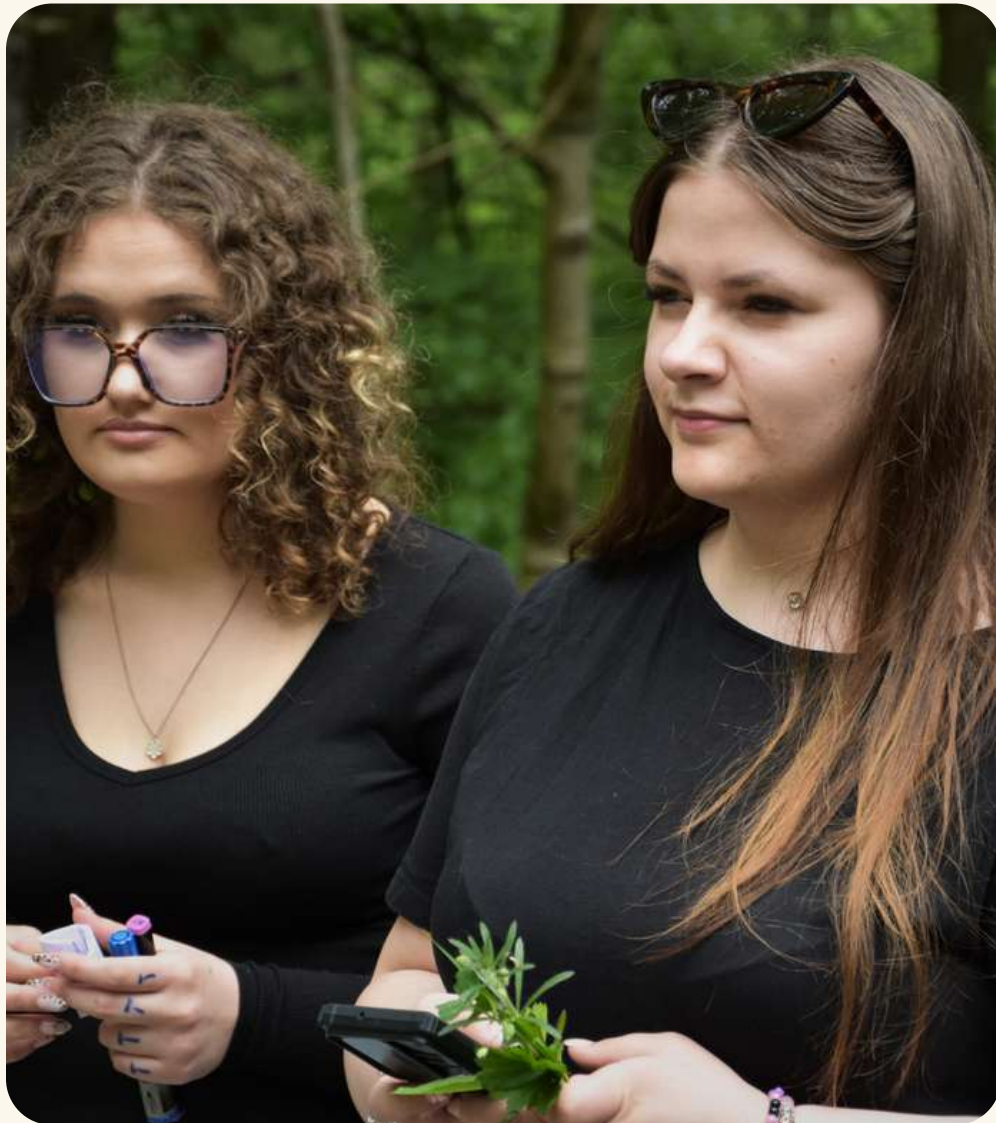
Which habits would I like to change?



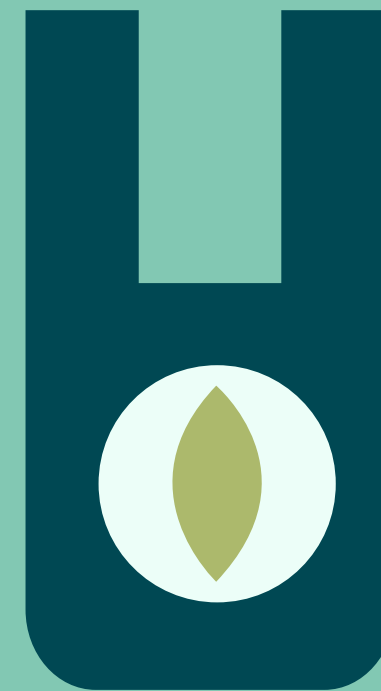
Which sustainable habits do I already practise?



What makes sustainable choices difficult for young people?



The SDGs and the Challenges Behind Them

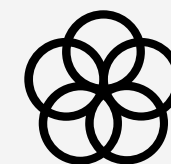
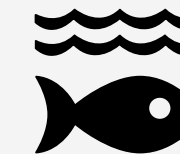
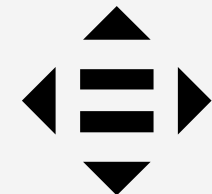
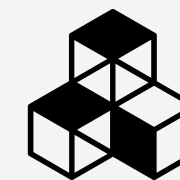
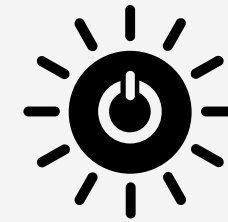


During the exchange, we explored the UN Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the SDGs.

We looked at them not only as colourful icons, but as real challenges that affect people, communities and the planet.

The SDGs helped us understand that environmental issues are connected with many other areas of life: poverty, education, health, equality, responsible production, climate action, peace and partnerships.

This was important because climate action is not separate from social justice and community responsibility.



**We focused
especially on
goals connected
with:**



responsible consumption and production

climate action

life on land

sustainable communities

quality education

partnerships for the goals

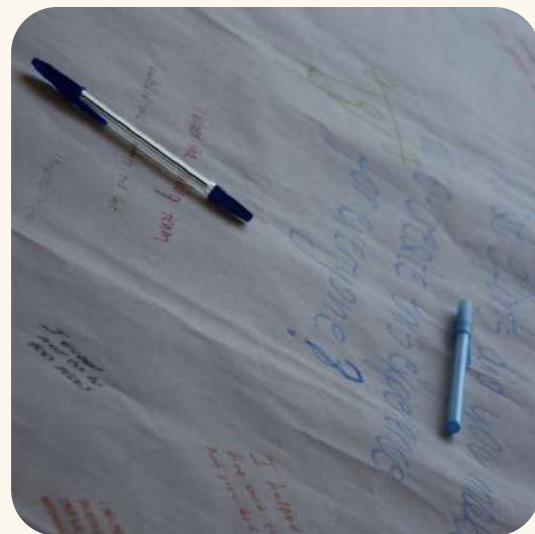
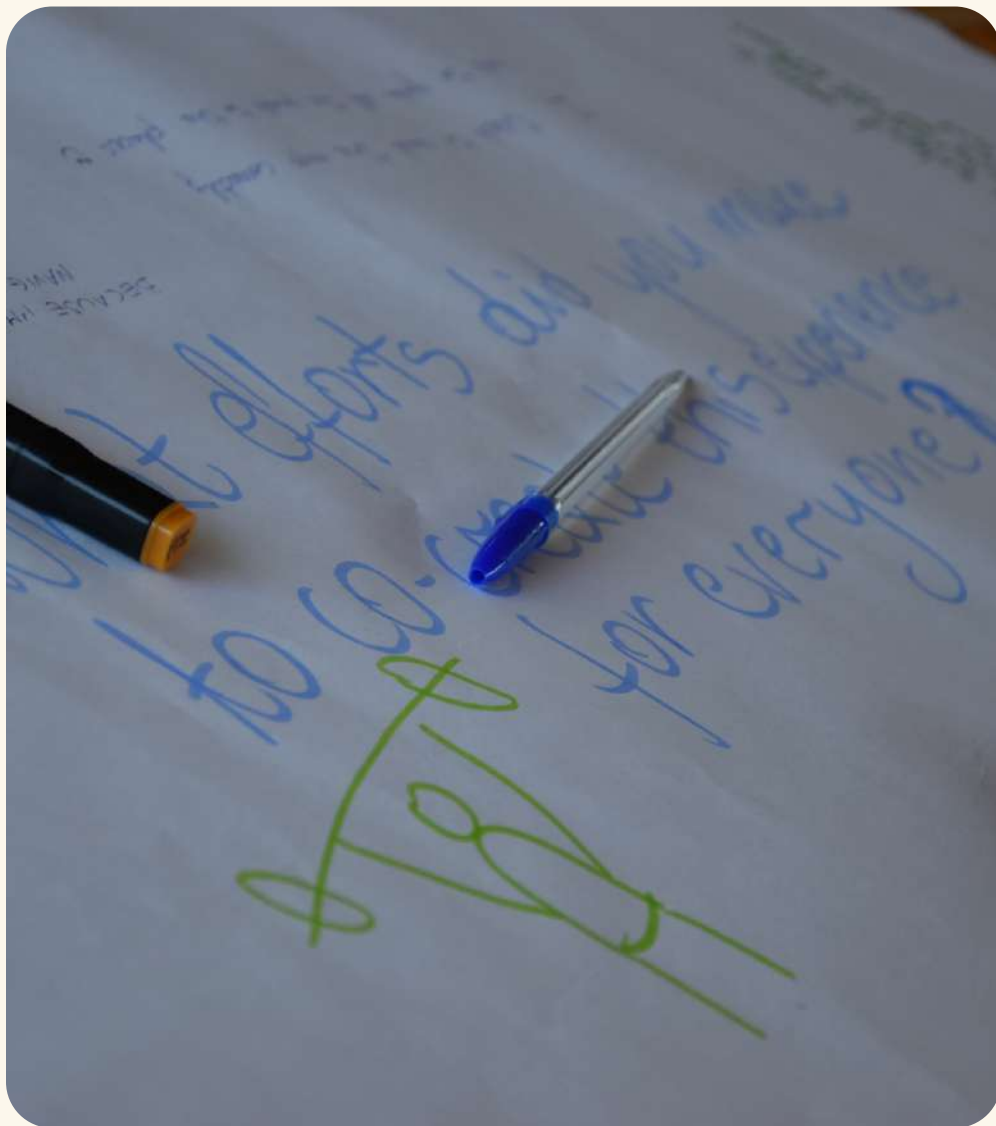
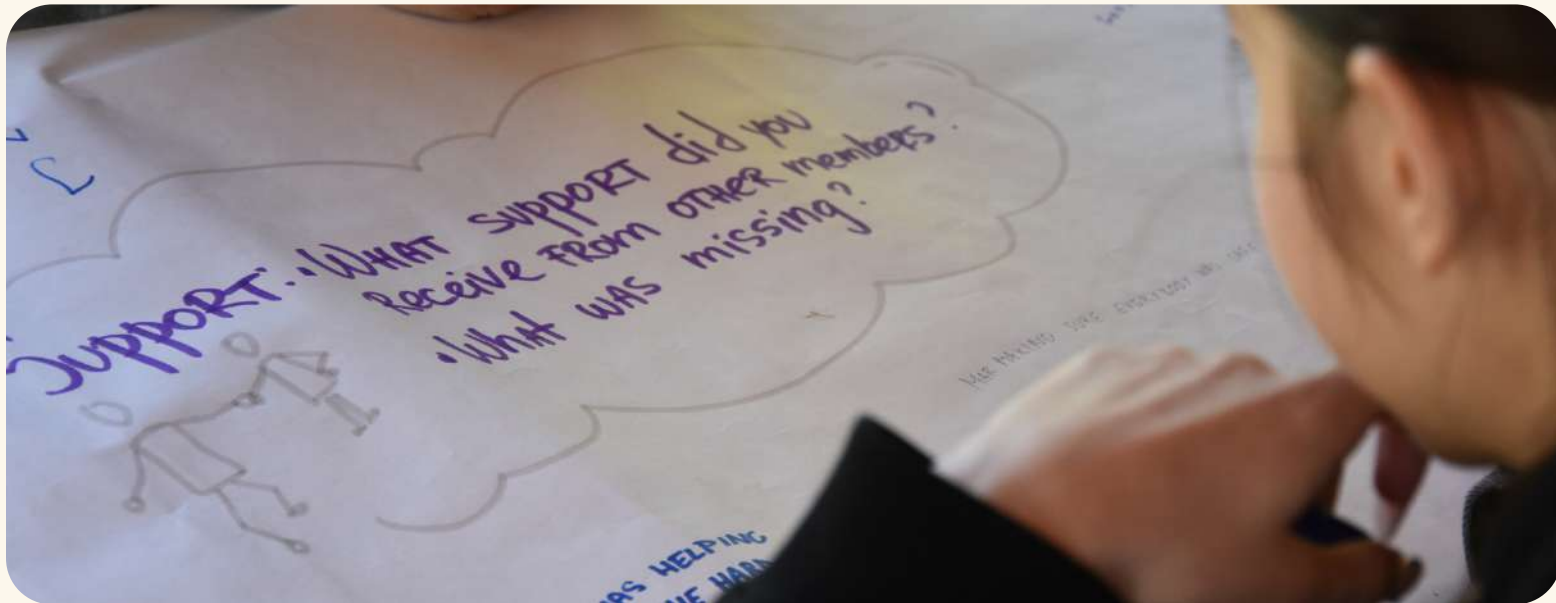
The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as Global Goals, are a set of 17 integrated and interrelated goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that humanity enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030.



THE GLOBAL GOALS





We discussed how young people can contribute to these goals through local actions, awareness campaigns, peer education, responsible choices and active participation in their communities.

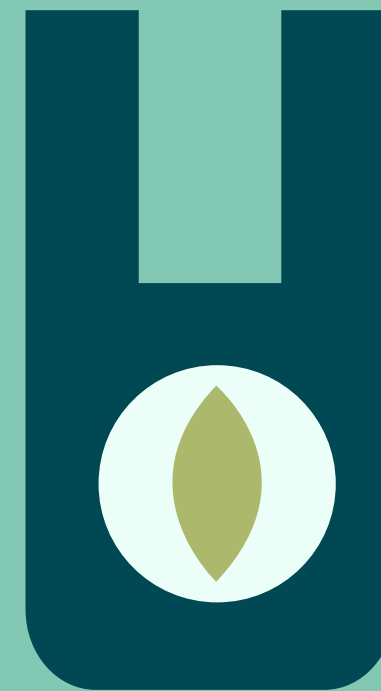
The SDGs gave us a common language. Participants from different countries could compare challenges in their local realities and see that, although our contexts are different, many problems are shared.

What we learned:

- Global goals can guide local action.
- Climate action is connected with daily life.
- Responsible consumption is not only an individual issue, but also a social and economic one.
- Young people can make the SDGs more visible and understandable for their peers.



Responsible Consumption: What We Choose Matters



Responsible consumption was one of the central topics of the exchange. We explored how our choices as consumers influence the environment, other people and future generations.

We discussed examples from everyday life: clothes, food, packaging, electronics, transport, water use and energy use. We talked about fast fashion, food waste, single-use plastics, overconsumption and the pressure to constantly buy new things.

This session helped us understand that responsible consumption is not only about buying “green” products. Sometimes it means buying less, repairing, reusing, sharing, borrowing or choosing second-hand. It also means asking questions about where things come from, who made them and what happens to them after we stop using them.

From a youth perspective, responsible consumption is both important and challenging. Young people are often targeted by trends, advertising and social media. At the same time, many young people want to live more consciously and look for realistic ways to reduce their impact.



Responsible consumption does not mean we must be perfect. It means we should become more aware of the impact of our choices and try to make better ones.

-Our reflection



Practical ideas discussed by us:

use reusable bottles and bags

choose second-hand clothes

reduce food waste

repair instead of replacing

share tools or equipment

avoid unnecessary packaging

organise swap events

talk with friends about
conscious consumption

support local and ethical
initiatives when possible



Respect for Nature as Climate Action



The topic “Respect for nature as climate action” helped us look at environmental responsibility from a deeper perspective



Climate action is often discussed through numbers, policies and global agreements. These are important, but during the exchange we also explored the emotional and personal connection with nature.

We asked ourselves: can we protect something if we do not feel connected to it? Can outdoor experiences help young people care more about the environment? How can respect for nature become part of climate action?

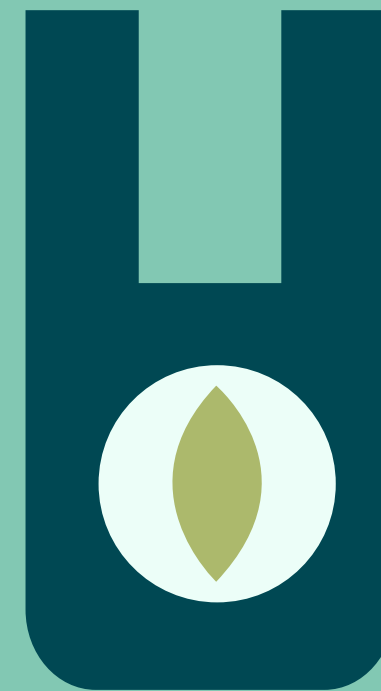
Through discussions and activities, we reflected on nature as a living system, not only as a background for human activities. We talked about biodiversity, ecosystems, forests, water, soil and the impact of human behaviour on natural spaces.

Respect for nature also means responsibility during outdoor activities. We discussed how to spend time in nature without damaging it, how to observe instead of disturb, and how to leave places as we found them or even better.

When we started seeing nature as something we belong to, not something separate from us, climate action became more personal. -Our reflection



Preparing for the Hike



Preparing for the Hike

Before the hike, we took time to prepare both practically and as a group. The preparation was not only about comfortable shoes, water and safety. It was also about understanding the hike as a learning experience.

We talked about how to move as a group, how to support each other and how to stay aware of our surroundings. We discussed safety rules, environmental responsibility and the importance of respecting the natural spaces we would visit.

The preparation helped us understand that outdoor learning requires attention. A hike can be a physical challenge, but it can also be a space for observation, reflection, communication and connection.

For some participants, hiking was already familiar. For others, it was less common or even challenging. This diversity made group support especially important. We learned that outdoor activities should be inclusive and adapted to the needs of the group.



What we prepared



practical equipment and clothing

environmental responsibility

water and personal needs

observation tasks

safety rules

reflection questions

group communication

respectful behaviour in nature

Preparing for the hike reminded us that nature-based learning is not only spontaneous. It also needs care, planning and responsibility.

-Our reflection



The Educational Hike to Mogielnica: Learning by Walking, Cooking and Cooperating

One of the strongest learning moments of the youth exchange was our educational hike to Mogielnica and the outdoor cooking activity at Polana Wały.

This day showed us that learning about sustainability, cooperation and responsibility does not have to happen only in a workshop room. Sometimes the most meaningful learning happens when a group has to move together, make decisions together and take care of each other in a real outdoor environment.

The hike was designed as an experiential learning activity. It was not only a walk from one place to another. It was a shared task in which every participant had a role and every team contributed to the success of the whole group.





Before the hike, participants were divided into task teams. Each team had a specific responsibility:

the navigation team was responsible for the route, orientation and supporting the group in finding the way

the equipment team checked and carried the materials needed for the outdoor activity

the lunch team prepared and organised the main meal during the outdoor cooking part

the snack team took care of small food breaks and energy during the hike

the Know Your Team team prepared activities to strengthen group connection and help participants learn more about each other during the day

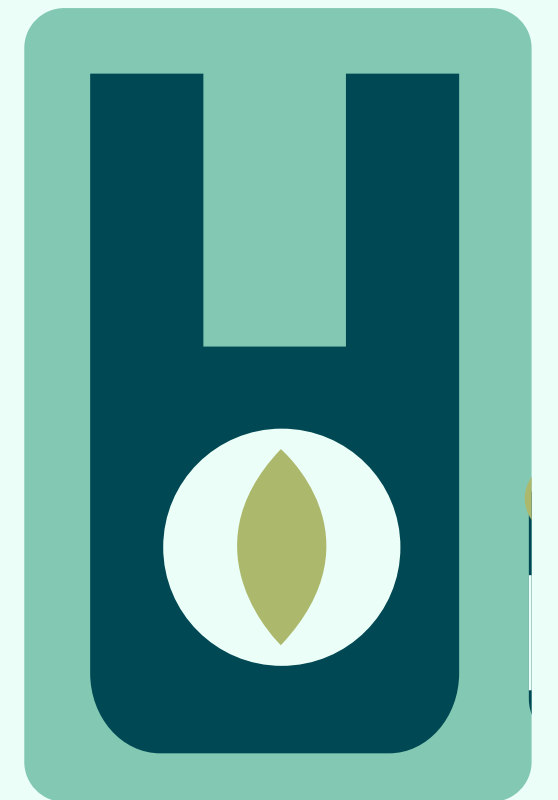
This structure helped us experience shared responsibility in practice. The hike could not depend only on facilitators or group leaders. Participants had to cooperate, communicate and take ownership of the process. Each team had to think not only about its own task, but also about the needs of the whole group.

During the hike to Mogielnica, we learned how important communication is in outdoor education. The navigation team had to make sure that the group understood the route and stayed together.

The equipment team had to be attentive to practical needs. The lunch and snack teams had to think about timing, food, energy and group wellbeing. The Know Your Team team helped us use the hike not only as a physical activity, but also as a social and educational experience.

At Polana Wały, we cooked and ate together outdoors. This part of the day was simple, but very powerful. Preparing food outside required planning, cooperation and patience. It also created a natural space for informal conversations, laughter and connection. Cooking together reminded us that sustainability is also connected with food, shared resources, simplicity and appreciation of what we have.

From a youth perspective, the hike was important because it gave us real responsibility. We were not only listening to information about teamwork, sustainability or outdoor learning. We had to practise these things directly. We had to notice the needs of others, adapt to the rhythm of the group, solve small problems and support each other.



The hike also helped us reconnect with nature.

Walking through the landscape, observing the environment and spending time away from screens created space to slow down and be more present.

Nature became our classroom: honest, practical and sometimes unpredictable.

It reminded us that environmental responsibility begins with attention - with noticing where we are, how we move and what impact we leave behind.

This activity connected many elements of the project: outdoor education, sustainability, group cooperation, responsible behaviour in nature, communication, leadership and reflection.

It showed that young people learn deeply when they are trusted with real tasks and when learning is connected with experience.

What the hike taught us:

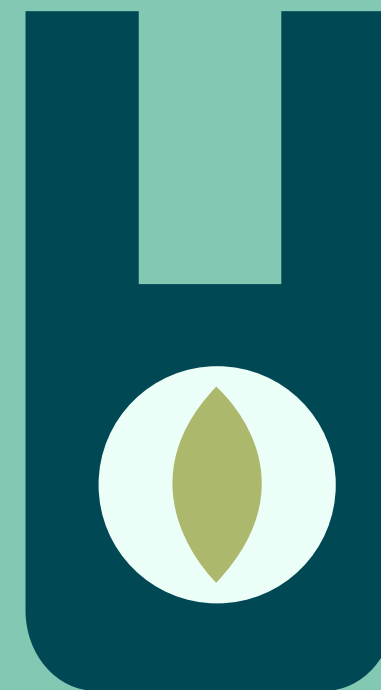
- Nature can be a powerful learning space.
- Responsibility becomes real when the group depends on your task.
- Navigation teaches decision-making and trust.
- Cooking outdoors teaches cooperation, patience and practical sustainability.
- Team roles help everyone contribute.
- Outdoor activities build communication and confidence.
- We understand sustainability better when we practise it together.

The hike was not only about reaching Mogielnica. It was about learning how to move as a group, how to care for each other and how to experience nature as a place of cooperation, responsibility and reflection.

-our reflection



Lessons Learned from the Hike



After the hike, we reflected on what we had experienced. This session helped us transform the outdoor activity into learning.

We shared moments that stayed with us: a view, a conversation, a difficult part of the route, a moment of silence, a group decision, or a personal feeling. We realised that everyone experienced the hike differently, and each perspective added something valuable.

Some participants focused on nature. Others focused on the group. Some reflected on their own limits, patience or need to slow down. This showed us that one activity can create many different learning outcomes.

Our lessons from the hike:

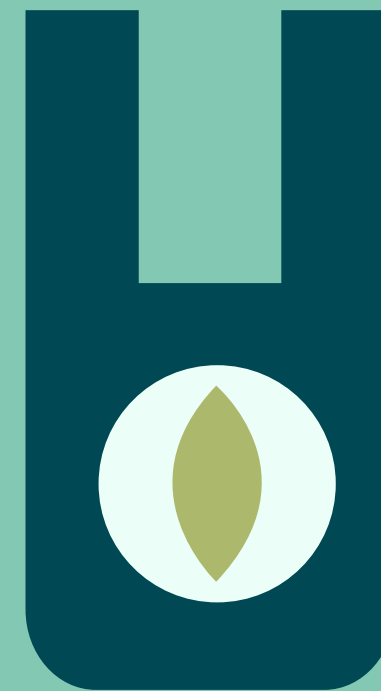
- 1. Nature teaches patience. We cannot control everything outdoors, and this helps us adapt.**
- 2. Connection comes through experience. We understand nature differently when we spend time in it.**
- 3. Teamwork matters. A group hike requires communication, care and support.**
- 4. Small details are important. Observation helps us appreciate natural spaces.**
- 5. Respect is practical. It is visible in how we walk, behave and leave the place behind.**
- 6. Climate action needs emotion and knowledge. Facts are important, but personal connection can inspire action.**
- 7. Outdoor learning is powerful. It helps us remember and understand more deeply.**

The hike gave us a
memory that connected
knowledge with feelings.
This made the topic of
environmental
responsibility stronger.

-our reflection



Work in Task Groups: Shared Responsibility in Practice



Throughout the exchange, we worked in task groups. These groups helped us take responsibility for different parts of the project community and learning process.

Working in task groups showed us that participation is not only about attending sessions. It is also about contributing, helping, organising, communicating and taking care of common needs.

Task groups can be simple, but they teach important skills. We practised cooperation, planning, problem-solving and accountability. We also learned that small contributions can influence the atmosphere of the whole group.

In the context of sustainability, task groups also reminded us that responsibility is shared. Environmental action is similar: everyone can do something, and collective effort creates stronger results.



Youth for SDGs: Preparing Peer Learning Sessions



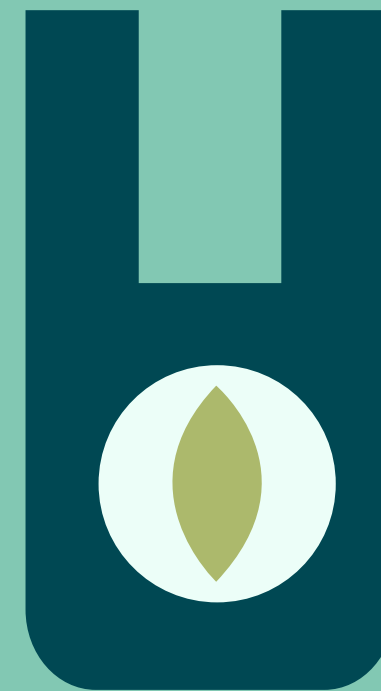
In the second part of the exchange, we started preparing peer learning sessions under the topic “Youth for SDGs.” This was an important shift in the project. We were no longer only participants; we became young educators and facilitators for each other.

In small groups, we chose topics connected with the SDGs and developed activities to share with others. We had to think about our message, method, timing, group involvement and learning outcomes.

Preparing peer learning sessions helped us understand how difficult and meaningful educational work can be. It is not enough to have knowledge. We also need to explain clearly, engage people, ask good questions and create space for participation.

This part of the project showed that young people can educate other young people. Peer learning can be powerful because it is based on shared language, trust and real-life experiences.

Youth for SDGs: Peer Learning in Action



During the peer learning sessions, participants presented activities and discussions connected with the SDGs. These sessions gave space for youth-led education, creativity and active participation.

The topics were connected with sustainability, climate action, responsible consumption and environmental responsibility. Each group brought its own perspective and method. Some activities were based on discussion, others on games, reflection, group tasks or creative work.

Peer learning allowed us to learn from each other instead of only from facilitators. It also helped us see how young people from different countries understand environmental challenges and what solutions they see in their own communities.

The sessions showed that the SDGs can become more accessible when young people explain them to other young people in practical and creative ways.



When young people lead learning, the atmosphere changes. It becomes more direct, honest and connected with real life.

-our reflection



What we learned from peer sessions

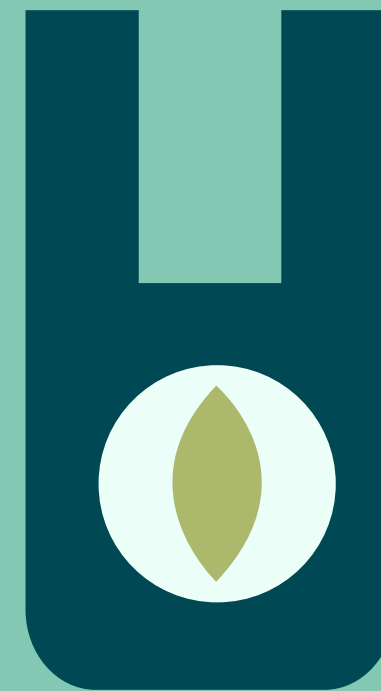
**Peer learning
builds
confidence**

**We can multiply
project results in
our local
communities**

**Youth voices
matter in
sustainability
education**

**Creative methods
make complex
topics easier to
understand**

Open Space: What Young People Want to Talk About



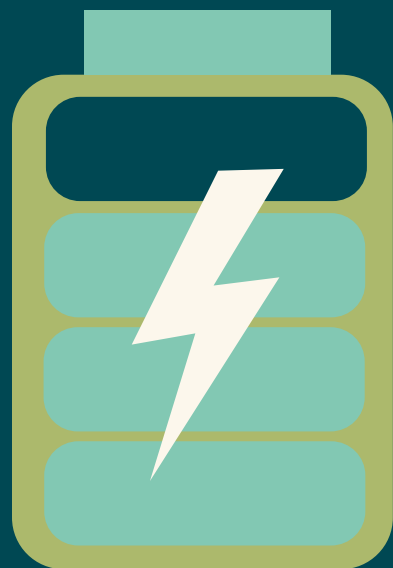


The Open Space session gave participants the opportunity to bring their own topics, questions and ideas.

This was important because young people often have concerns and perspectives that may not appear in a fixed programme.

Open Space allowed us to explore the issues that felt most relevant to us. Participants could propose discussion topics, join the conversations they were interested in and contribute freely.

This method supported ownership. It showed that participants are not only receivers of a programme, but co-creators of learning. It also gave space for questions that are complex, personal or emerging.



Topics raised during the Open Space

eco-anxiety and hope

climate justice

community gardens

fast fashion

greenwashing

local environmental campaigns

food waste

youth activism

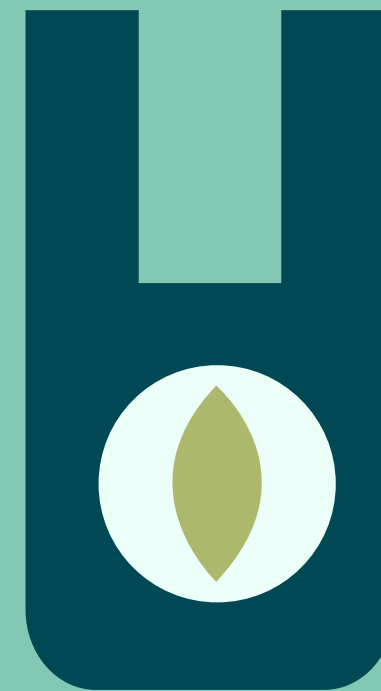
**how to involve friends in eco-
actions**

sustainable travel

digital habits and sustainability

**barriers to sustainable living for
young people**

Intercultural Night and Evening Activities





The youth exchange was not only about formal sessions. Evening activities and the intercultural night were also important parts of the learning process.

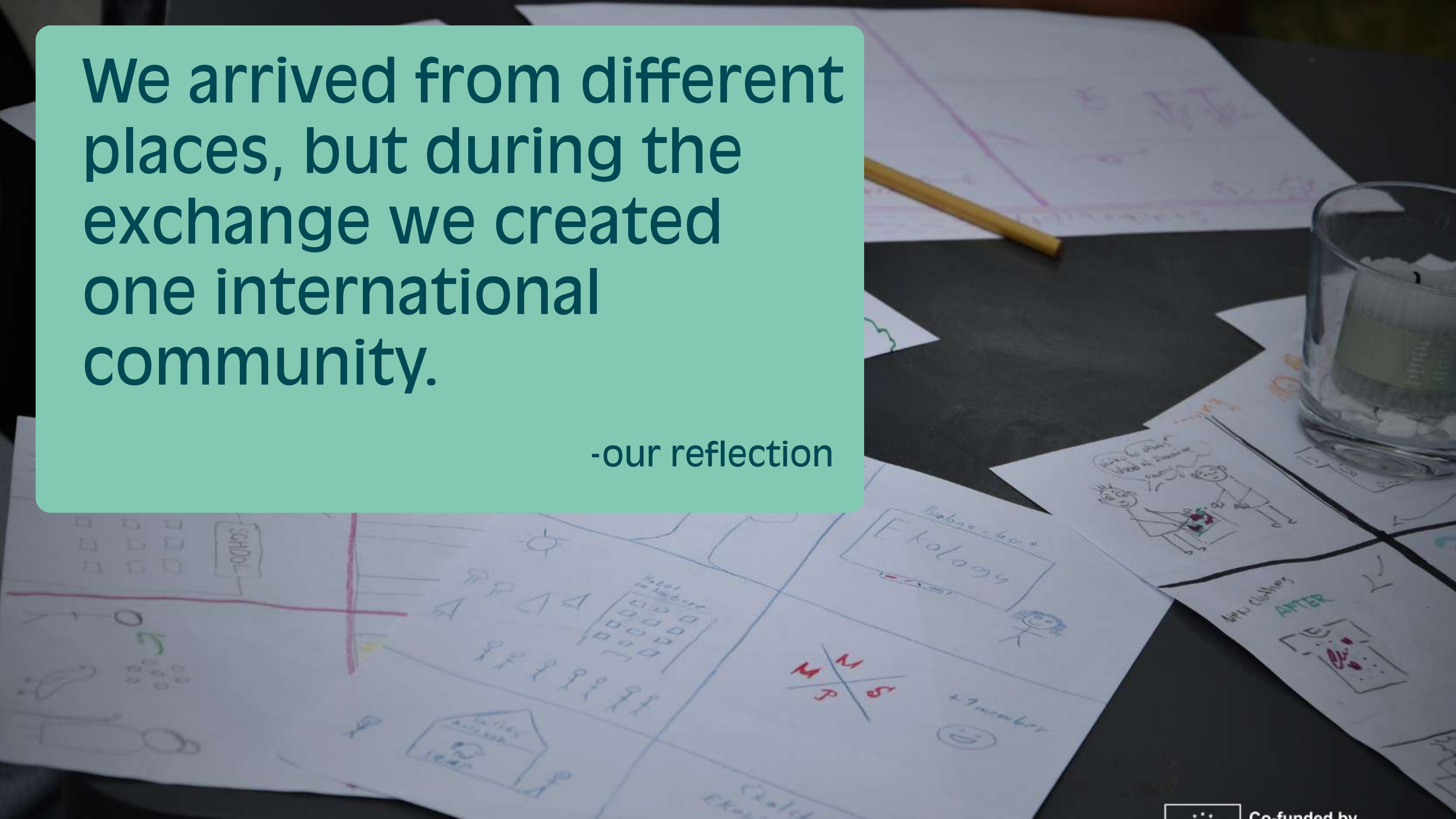
During informal moments, we learned about each other's cultures, traditions, languages, music, food, humour and everyday realities. These moments helped us build friendships and understand diversity in a more personal way.

Intercultural learning is connected with sustainability because global challenges require cooperation across borders. To work together for climate action and the SDGs, we need respect, curiosity and openness toward people from different backgrounds.

Evening activities gave us space to relax, connect and enjoy being together. They supported the group atmosphere and created memories that strengthened the whole project experience.

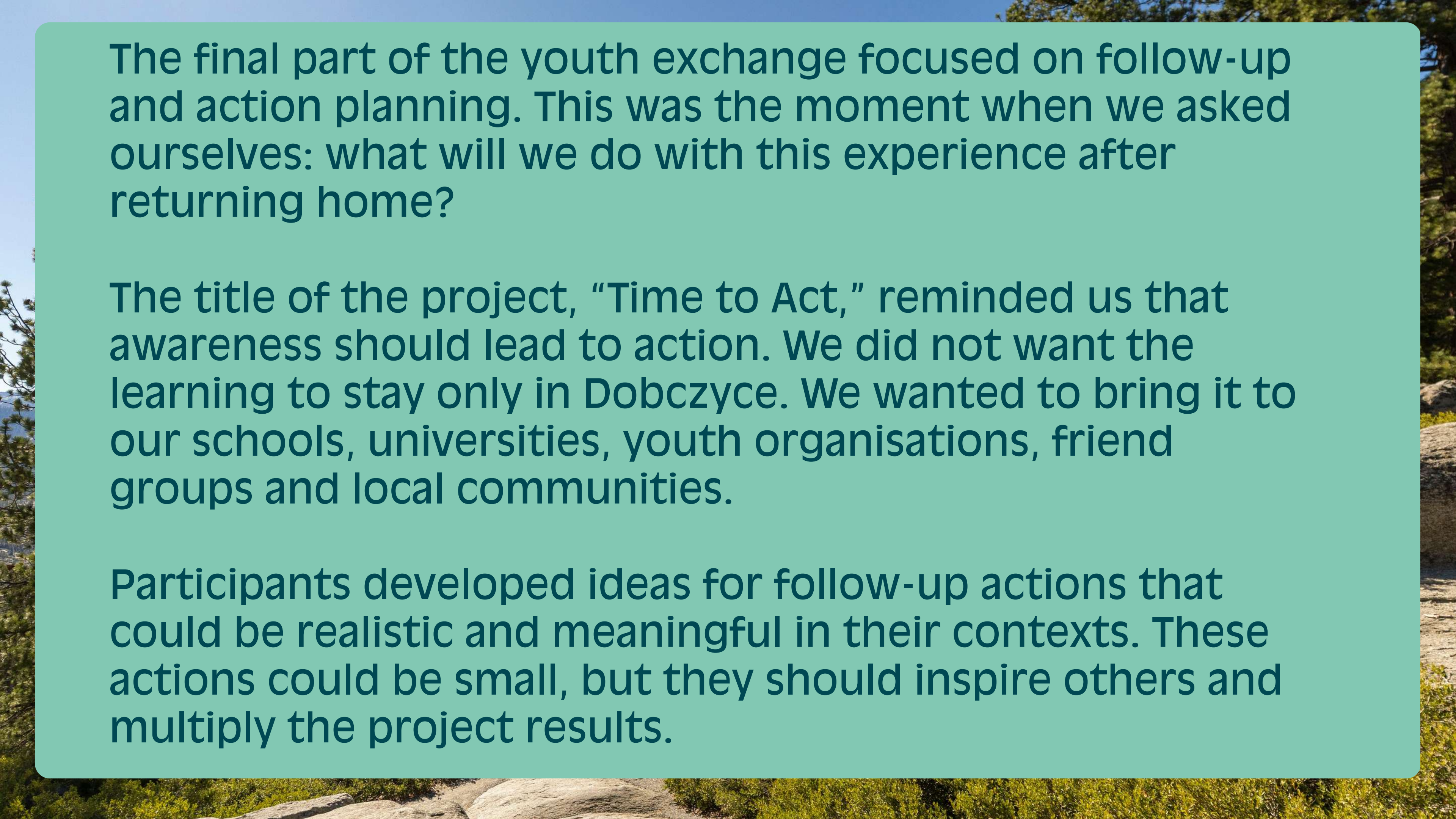
We arrived from different places, but during the exchange we created one international community.

-our reflection



From Learning to Action: Follow-up Plans



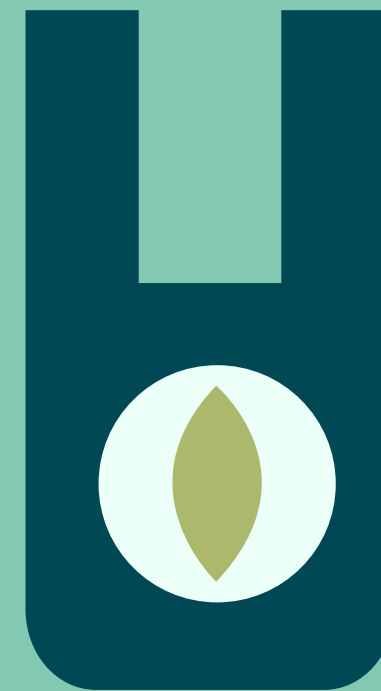


The final part of the youth exchange focused on follow-up and action planning. This was the moment when we asked ourselves: what will we do with this experience after returning home?

The title of the project, "Time to Act," reminded us that awareness should lead to action. We did not want the learning to stay only in Dobczyce. We wanted to bring it to our schools, universities, youth organisations, friend groups and local communities.

Participants developed ideas for follow-up actions that could be realistic and meaningful in their contexts. These actions could be small, but they should inspire others and multiply the project results.

Evaluation: What Changed for Us



At the end of the exchange, we evaluated the project and reflected on our learning journey. Evaluation helped us name what changed in our knowledge, attitudes, skills and motivation. Many of us became more aware of the connection between personal habits and global challenges. We also gained practical ideas for responsible consumption, climate action and environmental education.

The outdoor activities helped us feel closer to nature, while peer learning sessions helped us gain confidence in sharing knowledge with others. The project also developed social and intercultural skills. We practised teamwork, communication, active listening and cooperation in an international group. We learned that sustainability is not only about the environment, but also about relationships, communities and shared responsibility.

Our outcomes:

stronger connection with nature;

better understanding of the SDGs;

more awareness of responsible consumption;

increased motivation for climate action;

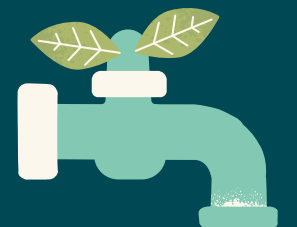
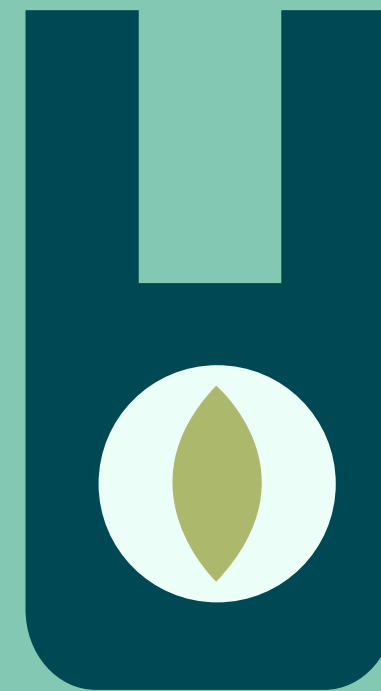
improved teamwork and communication skills;

more confidence in peer education;

practical follow-up ideas;

stronger sense of European and intercultural cooperation.

Our Key Messages



**Sustainability
starts with
awareness**

We cannot change everything at once, but we can start by noticing our habits and understanding their impact.

**Nature is a
teacher**

Outdoor learning helped us understand environmental topics in a deeper and more personal way.

**Climate
action is not
only for
experts**

Young people can take action through education, local initiatives, responsible choices and community engagement

**Responsible
consumption
is powerful**

What we buy, use,
repair, reuse and throw
away matters.

**The SDGs
are local too**

Global goals can be
connected with small
actions in our towns,
schools and youth
organisations.

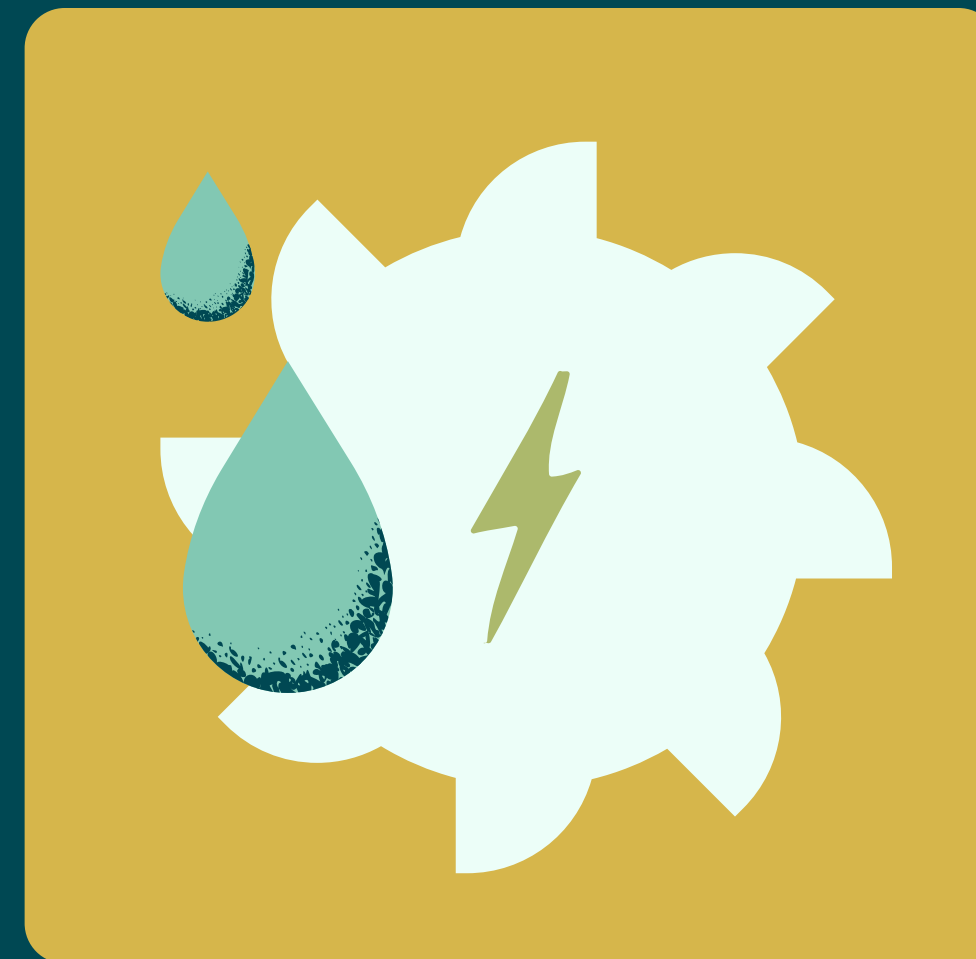
**Peer
learning
works**

Young people can teach,
inspire and motivate
each other.

Contact

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