

# Engaging youth with environmental action and sustainability in the EU



**Topics:** EU environmental initiatives and goals, youth engagement in sustainability, local and global environmental activism

## Pedagogical objectives

- Introduce EU environmental goals
- Encourage teamwork and planning
- Link local actions to global effort
- Enhance presentation skills



## Necessary material

- Laptop and projector
- Paper (or virtual) sheets for participants
- Pre-prepared quiz questions
- Writing utensils



## Educational methods

Presentation, group discussion, brainstorming, practical activity (action plan creation), peer feedback



Age:16+



Max. 15 participants



75 minutes

## Activity description

### 1 Introduction and interactive quiz (15 minutes)

- Overview of EU Environmental Goals: For smoother dynamics in the workshop, please start with a concise introduction to the European Green Deal, the 2030 Climate Targets, and the 8th Environment Action Programme (see more in Further Reading and Additional Resources).
- Warm-up activity: After the overview, conduct an **interactive quiz** with eight questions (**example available on the last page**) to test participants' understanding of EU environmental policies. Use each question to provide additional context and insights.

### 2 Action plan creation (30 minutes): Divide participants into small groups (maximum 3 groups) and assign each group one of the following challenges:

- **Promoting circular economy:** Develop strategies to encourage reusing, recycling, and reducing waste in alignment with the EU's circular economy goals.
- **Advocating for renewable energy:** Create initiatives to support the transition to renewable energy sources, such as solar or wind, in local communities.
- **Improving urban green spaces:** Plan actions to enhance green areas in cities, contributing to the EU's biodiversity strategy.

**Brainstorming and drafting:** Groups brainstorm ideas and write their action plan on paper or virtual sheets, focusing on:

- Specific actions to address their challenge
- Needed resources and tools
- Community engagement strategies

**Creating a digital presentation:** Groups summarise their plan in a simple digital presentation (e.g., slides), highlighting key goals and strategies for Step 3.

Facilitators support brainstorming and ensure the plans are actionable and realistic.

### 3 Group presentations and feedback (20 minutes)

Groups present their action plans in the assigned order determined by the facilitator, using the laptop and projector to enhance their presentation with a slide deck or visual materials.

Presentations should cover:

- Key goals: The specific change they aim to achieve.
- Planned actions: A step-by-step outline of their project.
- Community engagement: Strategies to involve peers and stakeholders.

Facilitators encourage the use of visuals like charts or mock social media posts to make ideas more engaging. After each presentation, participants ask questions for clarification, provide constructive feedback, discuss feasibility and impact, etc.

The facilitator ensures discussions are respectful, focused, and linked to EU environmental goals.

**Tip:** Remind participants that even small actions can lead to significant change and that collaboration is key to making a lasting impact.

### 4 Reflection and wrap-up (10 minutes):

Participants form a circle, creating an inclusive and open environment for reflection. Each participant shares their main takeaway from the workshop in 1-2 sentences, such as a new idea they found inspiring or a skill they developed.

The facilitator summarises the key points raised during the workshop, emphasising:

- The importance of youth-led action in achieving sustainability.
- How small, well-planned initiatives can connect to broader activist movements.
- The value of collaboration and creative problem-solving in tackling environmental challenges.
- Encourage participants to think about how they can implement their action plans in real-life contexts, whether in their schools, communities, or online platforms.

**Tip:** After the presentations, encourage participants to reflect on both the strengths and potential challenges of the plans presented to foster critical thinking.

## To go further

- +** **Online workshop:** Conduct the session on Zoom (or similar platforms) using breakout rooms for group discussions and action planning. Participants can collaborate via shared documents like Google Docs and present their action plans using screen sharing.
- +** **Custom quizzes:** For warm-up purposes, facilitators can create quizzes tailored to participants' interests, knowledge level, or regional environmental issues. This makes the workshop more engaging and relevant while encouraging active participation.
- +** **Role-playing:** Enhance engagement by assigning roles, such as policymakers, local business owners, or activists. Participants can tailor their action plans based on their assigned perspectives.
- +** **Extended workshop:** Spread the workshop across multiple sessions. Use the first session for exploring real-world examples of successful campaigns and the second for developing and presenting action plans.
- +** **Creative campaigns:** Encourage participants to design elements like social media posts, infographics, or short videos to make their campaigns more impactful and modern.

## Sources and additional resources

- European Commission. (n.d.). [The European Green Deal](#).
- European Environment Agency. (n.d.). [8th Environment Action Programme](#).
- European Commission. (n.d.). [2030 Climate Targets](#).
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (n.d.). [UNFCCC Process and Meetings](#).
- Arnot, G., Pitt, H., McCarthy, S., Collin, P., & Thomas, S. (2023). [Supporting young people in climate decision-making](#). Health Promotion International, 38(6).
- Daly, A. (2022). [Climate Competence: Youth Climate Activism and Its Impact on International Human Rights Law](#). Human Rights Law Review, 22(2).



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# Sample quiz: Understanding EU environmental action



ECO QUEST

- 1** What is the primary goal of the European Green Deal?
  - a) To ban single-use plastics
  - b) To make Europe climate-neutral by 2050
  - c) To eliminate fossil fuels entirely by 2030
  
- 2** How much does the EU aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030?
  - a) 30%
  - b) 55%
  - c) 75%
  
- 3** What is the 8th Environment Action Programme focused on?
  - a) Climate neutrality and resilience
  - b) Planting trees in urban areas
  - c) Reducing industrial waste only
  
- 4** Which EU initiative promotes energy efficiency in buildings?
  - a) Horizon Europe
  - b) Renovation Wave Initiative
  - c) Common Agricultural Policy
  
- 5** What does “climate neutrality” mean?
  - a) Eliminating all air pollution
  - b) Balancing emissions with removal efforts
  - c) Transitioning entirely to renewable energy
  
- 6** Which group is most affected by climate change, according to global studies?
  - a) Elderly populations in developed countries
  - b) Vulnerable communities in developing countries
  - c) Urban middle-class populations
  
- 7** What is the purpose of the LIFE Programme?
  - a) A renewable energy policy
  - b) A funding tool for environmental and climate action
  - c) A wildlife conservation project
  
- 8** What is a key feature of the European Climate Pact?
  - a) It focuses on citizen engagement and grassroots action
  - b) It only supports government-led projects
  - c) It sets specific national carbon reduction quotas



**Correct answers:**

1.b 2.b 3.a 4.b 5.b 6.b 7.b 8.a

