



FINAL REPORT

Youth for the Environment
N. 2021-2-PT02-KA210-YOU-000051236



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

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I ntroduction

This report plays a crucial role in providing an in-depth insight into the implementation of our project, which has aimed to awaken and foster ecological and sustainable awareness among young Europeans through the use of the Digital Active Citizenship methodology. This pioneering approach has been adopted in response to the growing need to effectively engage youth in climate action and sustainability initiatives by facilitating workshops and encounters that aim to enhance their active citizenship skills.

Through a detailed analysis of youth participation in ecological and sustainable contexts in Europe, this project has highlighted the importance of youth participation in various democratic and sustainability processes at local and national levels. Particular emphasis has been placed on the challenges faced by young people in participating in these areas within the European framework, identifying barriers, and proposing solutions to overcome them.

The development of a series of documents and tools, ranging from the methodology used to recommendations for good practices and activities, aims to promote a more active and conscious participation of young people in sustainability issues. These tools have been designed to be applied in face-to-face workshops in the participating countries, adapting to the specific needs of each context and encouraging active participation in improving local and national sustainability.

The activities and workshops implemented have been aimed at raising awareness among young people about the importance of their role in the fight against climate change and in promoting a greener and more sustainable Europe, in line with the objectives of the European Green Pact. Through this inclusive approach, the aim is to develop a young generation that is more informed, participatory, and committed to the green and sustainable future of their communities and the European continent.

Ultimately, this project has also included a pilot testing phase consisting of workshops, allowing for a broader participation of young people. This holistic approach not only seeks to identify sustainable needs and solutions but also to align them with the perspectives and experiences of experts who can contribute their knowledge and expertise in the field of sustainability and climate action.

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Background

In the current context, characterized by a growing interest in environmental sustainability and the active participation of youth in building a more aware and committed society, the need to develop a guide for youth leaders was identified. This guide aims to empower young Europeans through environmental education, thus promoting their active participation in the fight against climate change and the preservation of European values of sustainability and cooperation.

It can be observed that in Europe more and more relevant measures are being taken that take the environmental component into account. Most governments are setting their sustainable goals for 2050 where tangible results can already be observed that have a direct and positive impact on the planet.

But the undeniable fact is that these measures will not be able to achieve the proposed objectives and expected results if society is not aware of the situation and prepared to act effectively.

Thus, this guide was born. It is important to start this awareness-raising work from an early age so that young people understand how environmental policies work, what their purpose is, and, of course, what role they can play in this situation.

The guide is essentially divided into two parts. In the first part, you will find a broad and solid research work that will facilitate the reader's understanding of the subject and offer useful tools to answer their questions, offering a much more complete and balanced perspective on the current situation of society. Topics such as European values, EU strategies, the role of young people in climate advocacy, etc. are covered.

On the other hand, the second part of the guide presents a much more practical version. It provides a set of activities, that have been concretely implemented in this project, but which are encouraged to be implemented in other youth and environmental organizations.

It is considered essential to combine activities of an informative and theoretical nature with other practical activities that support and consolidate the learning and knowledge to be disseminated.

M

ethodology

For the development and implementation of this project, a participatory methodology, centered on young people and youth workers, was adopted, consisting of the following stages:

1. Diagnosis and Needs Assessment

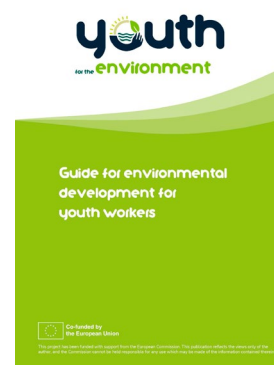
Needs Analysis: Assessment of the data collected to identify gaps in knowledge and participation, thus facilitating the creation of specific and targeted content. Several group workshops were held with the youth workers to identify and explore which topics needed to be developed. Also, a structuring of the whole content of the project and how it was to be realized was carried out.



2. Content and Tools Development

Creation of Educational Materials: An environmental guidebook was designed with the agenda that was contemplated in the first phase of the project, as well as the creation of different digital resources that integrate theory and practice on sustainability, the European Green Pact, and the importance of active citizen participation.

Innovation in Participation Tools: Development of a website to facilitate interaction and active engagement of young people in environmental initiatives, this website collects all the intellectual materials that have been created throughout the project and also serves as a dissemination tool.



3. Training and Empowerment

Youth Leadership Training: Organisation of face-to-face workshops to train young leaders to act as multipliers of environmental knowledge and European values in their communities.



4. Evaluation and Feedback

Project Monitoring and Evaluation: The activities gathered in the environmental guide have been carried out to improve the needs that have been detected during the implementation and to be able to have the best version by the end of the project.

Satisfaction Surveys: Conduct surveys to gather feedback and suggestions from participants, adjusting the program as necessary to optimize its effectiveness.

This methodology seeks not only to impart knowledge but also to empower young people to become active agents of change, promoting sustainable solutions and active participation in Europe's civic and environmental life.

Summary of activities carried out

The activities included in the guide and carried out by the youth animators cover a wide range, from workshops on recycling and responsible consumption to community action initiatives, such as clean-up and reforestation campaigns. In addition, debates and forums on the importance of citizen participation in environmental management were promoted.

In a more specific way, the concrete activities that were implemented during the implementation of the project are mentioned, divided by each of the participating organizations:

1. Community activities

Name of the activity Beach cleaning.

Organisation High on Life, Italy

Number of participants 30 participants.



Description of the activity The activity consisted of a beach clean-up day. The participants gathered at a meeting point and rode their bikes to the selected beach. Once there, small groups were formed, the necessary cleaning materials were distributed and litter was collected on the beach. Finally, the collected waste was checked and an open discussion about the activity was initiated. Finally, the participants cycled back to the meeting point.

Adaptations of the activity To ensure the safety and comfort of the participants, a coordinator was assigned to each group to supervise the clean-up and provide guidance. In addition, a rest area with water and snacks was set up for participants during the day. To promote community involvement, local groups, schools and environmental organisations were invited to participate in the activity.

Results The activity raised awareness among participants about the problem of pollution on beaches and the negative impact of litter on the marine environment. By collecting and analysing the waste, participants became aware of the amount and type of litter found on the beach, which motivated changes in their behaviour and habits to reduce waste generation and promote more sustainable practices. In addition, the activity fostered teamwork, a sense of environmental responsibility and empowered participants to take concrete actions to protect the environment.

Name of the activity Street and forest clean-up
Organisation High on Life Spain
Number of participants 30 participants.

- Description of the activity** An investigation was carried out to identify the areas most affected by pollution. This included main streets, nearby parks and other critical locations requiring attention. Volunteers worked in teams to collect rubbish and waste in designated areas. Gloves and rubbish bags will be provided, and participants will be instructed on the importance of separating different types of materials for later recycling.
- Adaptations of the activity** The activity was adapted to be as inclusive as possible, so people of all ages and abilities were considered. Intergenerational teams were organised where older adults participated in supervisory and assisting roles, while the young people were able to carry out more physical tasks.
- Results** This activity significantly reduced litter and waste in the target areas, contributing to improving the environmental and aesthetic quality of the community. It also raised public awareness of pollution problems and the importance of recycling and proper waste management. This resulted in a change of attitude towards environmental care. In addition, the activity fostered a sense of unity and collaboration within the community, as people worked together to address a common problem. This strengthened the group's relationship.



Name of the activity	Holding an awareness-raising event
Organisation	Youth for the Future (Portugal)
Number of participants	20 participants
Description of the activity	A community outreach campaign was conducted to invite all local residents to participate in the sustainable event. This included posters in public places, social media postings, emails to community groups and word of mouth. Participants sold second-hand goods, giving a second chance to products they no longer used, thus promoting a sustainable economy. In addition to the sale and exchange of second-hand goods, the fair included educational activities on sustainability, such as talks on recycling, composting, responsible consumption and plastic reduction.
Adaptations of the activity	All proceeds from the second-hand fair were donated to a local environmental organisation. The area was adapted so that anyone could easily access and move around the area. Drinks and food were offered to the visitors.
Results	A high number of sustainable sales were achieved, through which participants realised the importance of giving products a second life. Participants were also able to observe people's willingness to buy second-hand products and the high level of environmental awareness they may have. At the end of the activity, many of them considered selling their clothes through second-hand sales platforms and continuing to promote care for the planet.

Name of the activity Sustainable fair
Organisation Youth for the Future (Portugal)
Number of participants 30 participants



- Description of the activity** A product exchange event was organised where participants brought in items that they no longer needed but were still in good condition. From books and clothes to toys and tools.
The idea was to exchange items with other members and thus encourage reuse and reduce waste.
The occasion was used to discuss issues related to sustainability, reuse and conscious consumption through workshops and educational talks.
- Adaptations of the activity** The space was adapted so that anyone could access and move around easily.
The availability of items of all varieties was also promoted to facilitate exchange between young people of different interests and ages.
- Results** The young people actively participated in positive actions for the environment, promoting and strengthening their environmental awareness.
The youth group learned about different ways to carry out sustainable actions that they will be able to do on a daily basis.

2. Creative and practical workshops

Name of the activity	Paint your own totebag
Organisation	High on Life, Italy
Number of participants	20 participants.
Description of the activity	In this activity, each participant had the opportunity to personalise their own tote bag. They were provided with a second-hand fabric bag in a solid colour and special fabric paints, allowing them to express their creativity and personal style while promoting sustainable practices.
Adaptations of the activity	He ensured that the paints and materials used were safe and environmentally friendly. In addition, an additional youth operator was assigned to provide support and assistance to participants who might need help with their designs. An atmosphere of collaboration and mutual support was fostered among participants to inspire and share creative ideas.
Results	The activity offered participants the opportunity to learn about sustainable practices while engaging in a creative and fun activity. By personalising their own bags, participants actively contributed to the reduction of textile waste by giving a second-hand bag a new life. In addition, the activity encouraged self-expression and creativity, while promoting awareness of the importance of adopting more sustainable practices in everyday life.

Name of the activity	Recycling workshop
Organisation	High on Life Spain
Number of participants	20 participants.
Description of the activity	This activity consisted of a craft and recycling workshop in which participants created an object from other recycled objects. Reusable materials were provided and participants were encouraged to use their creativity to transform these materials into new objects of value. The aim was to promote recycling and reuse of materials, as well as to raise awareness of the importance of reducing waste and adopting sustainable practices in everyday life.
Adaptations of the activity	The activity was adapted to ensure that everyone involved, regardless of their skills or abilities, could participate in a meaningful way. Simple and more complex project options were provided to meet the needs and abilities of each participant. In addition, an inclusive and mutually supportive environment was promoted, where participants were able to share ideas and assist each other in the creation of their recycling projects.
Results	The activity succeeded in fostering creativity and innovation among participants, while promoting awareness of recycling and reuse of materials. Participants acquired practical skills in transforming recycled objects into new products, allowing them to experiment with new forms of artistic expression and design. In addition, the activity promoted appreciation of the value of recycled materials and the importance of adopting sustainable practices in everyday life.

Name of the activity	Workshop on the fashion industry and the circular economy.
Organisation	High on Life Spain
Number of participants	30 participants.
Description of the activity	An introduction to the topic was given: The fashion industry is recognised as one of the most polluting industries worldwide. It highlights the worrying fact that approximately 97% of the clothes that are manufactured are eventually wasted, contributing significantly to environmental and social problems. This was followed by a division into groups, where the participants were divided into groups of 3 to 4 people. Each group will be tasked with researching and finding concrete ways to reduce the negative impact of our choices and actions in the fashion industry. The groups are encouraged to explore various areas such as production, consumption, waste management and promoting more sustainable practices. To conclude, a debate on circular economy and second-hand clothes shops will be held, discussing the concepts of circular economy and the practical applications of this philosophy in the context of the fashion industry. Special attention will be paid to second-hand clothes shops as a sustainable alternative to prolong the life cycle of garments and reduce the demand for new products.
Adaptations of the activity	All aspects of the activity were considered to make it possible for any interested young person to participate and therefore, a virtual space was also included in which online virtual tools were used to facilitate communication and teamwork. Visual elements, such as infographics, images, videos, were also included to facilitate the exchange of information and the acquisition of knowledge.
Results	Participants developed a deeper understanding of the environmental and social problems associated with the fashion industry, including garment waste and pollution. In addition, the groups identified a variety of creative and practical solutions to reduce the negative impact of the fashion industry, addressing aspects such as sustainable production, conscious consumption and waste management.

Name of the activity	Learning to reuse plastic
Organisation	Youth for the Future (Portugal)
Number of participants	25 participants.
Description of the activity	The activity focused on reusing plastic bottles to give them a second use, instead of throwing them away. Each participant brought plastic bottles from home and learned how to transform them into useful or decorative objects using colours and scissors. The aim was to raise awareness of the negative impact of excessive plastic use on the environment, while promoting creativity and teaching reuse skills.
Adaptations of the activity	To facilitate participation and ensure that everyone has access to materials, recycling kits were prepared including clean plastic bottles and other supplies needed for the creative activities. These kits were distributed according to the needs of the participants. In addition to creative activities, environmental education was also emphasised by providing more detailed information on the life cycle of plastic, sustainable alternatives and the importance of reducing waste.
Results	Participants furthered their understanding of the negative impact of waste on the environment, including pollution, landscape degradation and impact on wildlife. Participants also increased their creative skills with the creation of these new products and additionally gained ideas on sustainable practices that they can apply in their daily lives and thus contribute to the care of the environment.



Name of the activity Zero waste cooking workshop
Organisation Youth for the Future (Portugal)
Number of participants 15 participants.

Description of the activity A cooking expert coordinated the activity and guided participants through practical demonstrations of waste-free cooking techniques. Participants got the most out of every part of the food, how to store food properly to prolong its shelf life and how to plan meals to reduce excess ingredients.

The group learned how to prepare a variety of delicious recipes using common ingredients that are often discarded, such as leftover vegetables, fruit skins, herb stems and other less conventional ingredients. The importance of creativity in the kitchen to transform “discarded” ingredients into delicious and nutritious dishes was emphasised.

Adaptations of the activity To facilitate participation and ensure that everyone had access to the necessary ingredients, ingredient kits were prepared for participants prior to the event. These kits contained the necessary ingredients for the recipes that were prepared during the workshop.

The different dietary restrictions and food preferences of the participants were also taken into account, and personalised recipe options were provided to suit the different needs of the group, such as vegetarian, vegan or gluten-free recipes.

There was also time for participants to share their own experiences and tips on how to reduce food waste in their households. This encouraged the exchange of ideas and the creation of a community committed to conscious consumption.

Results Participants improved their cooking skills by learning new techniques to make the best use of ingredients and reduce waste in the kitchen.

The workshop raised awareness of the problem of food waste and provided participants with information and practical tools to address it in their own kitchens.

The workshop also inspired participants to be more creative in the kitchen, using ingredients in new and exciting ways to create delicious and nutritious meals from what they have available.

Finally, by reducing food waste, participants contributed positively to the reduction of the environmental footprint associated with food production, distribution and disposal.

3. Discussions and reflections

Name of the activity	Documentary on fast fashion.
Organisation	High on Life, Italy
Number of participants	25 participants.
Description of the activity	The activity consisted of a screening of a documentary on fast fashion and its unsustainable impact on the fashion industry. Participants were invited to watch the documentary and to participate in a subsequent discussion on the subject. The aim was to raise awareness among young people about the negative effects of fast fashion on the environment and on the working conditions of workers in the textile industry.
Adaptations of the activity	To promote active participation and a greater understanding of the topic, a trained facilitator was assigned to facilitate the discussion following the screening of the film. Supplementary materials, such as relevant articles and statistics, were provided to enrich the discussion and provide additional information on fast fashion. An inclusive and respectful environment was fostered where participants felt comfortable sharing their opinions and concerns on the topic.
Results	The activity succeeded in raising awareness among participants about the environmental and social impacts of fast fashion. Young people gained a greater understanding of how the fashion industry really works and how their consumption choices can influence it. In addition, the discussion afterwards allowed participants to share their reflections and commit to taking concrete actions, such as reducing their consumption of fast fashion and opting for more sustainable brands. Overall, the activity helped empower young people to make informed and ethical fashion choices.

Name of the activity New mentality
Organisation High on Life Spain
Number of participants 20 participants.



- Description of the activity** In this activity, participants were divided into teams of four people each. Each team studied and prepared a creative presentation on a specific topic related to sustainable solutions, such as sustainable tourism, sustainable agriculture (biology, permaculture, polyculture), circular economy or water recycling. This was followed by a discussion on the creative and sustainable solutions proposed by each team.
- Adaptations of the activity** The activity was adapted to ensure the inclusive participation of all participants, providing opportunities for each person to contribute unique ideas and perspectives. Specific roles were assigned within each team to promote collaboration and equal distribution of tasks. In addition, resources such as reused paper and pens, as well as laptops, were provided to facilitate the preparation of presentations.
- Results** The activity succeeded in increasing participants' knowledge of emerging sustainable practices in different areas, such as tourism, agriculture and resource management. Participants had the opportunity to develop research, analysis and presentation skills, as well as to practice teamwork and collaboration. In addition, the activity fostered creativity and innovation by exploring sustainable solutions to current challenges. Participants left the activity with a new mindset and a greater awareness of the importance of adopting sustainable practices in their daily lives and communities.

Name of the activity	Let's talk about climate justice, ecology and human rights.
Organisation	High on Life Spain
Number of participants	25 participants
Description of the activity	Several moderators were appointed within the group and the main topic and purpose of the session was shown. Objectives of the discussion were included and the active participation of young people was encouraged. Several topics related to climate justice, human rights and the environment were presented. The moderators introduced questions to generate a fluid rhythm in the debate.
Adaptations of the activity	In order to promote inclusion within the group, the activity was adapted to facilitate the participation of any interested young person. In this way, the debate was also held online, giving young people from different geographical locations the opportunity to take part in the activity, and a person capable of communicating in sign language was available to facilitate communication with any young person with a hearing disability.
Results	By carrying out this activity, participants had the opportunity to explore different ideas and perspectives on the issues that were discussed; young people were also able to find common ground and reinforce and consolidate their ideas; a sense of community and belonging to a group among young people was increased; issues that young people may not have previously considered were addressed, thus opening up their perspective and knowledge on environmental issues. In general the young people were able to discuss issues that are relevant to them and to contrast their views.

Final report

Youth for the Environment



Name of the activity Environmental considerations

Organisation Youth for the Future (Portugal)

Number of participants 20 participants



Description of the activity The session started with a brief introduction on food waste and its impact on the environment. Relevant statistics and concrete examples were provided to contextualise the discussion. Participants also reflected on their own eating habits and their relationship to the environment and asked questions such as: How much food waste do we generate in our household? How could we reduce this waste? What impact do you think food waste has on climate change and the loss of natural resources?

Adaptations of the activity Considering the limitations of face-to-face meetings, the session was adapted to a virtual format using videoconferencing platforms. This allowed for the participation of people from different locations. Also prior to the event, information was collected on the group's eating habits and knowledge of food waste. This provided useful data to guide the discussion during the reflection session.

Results Participants developed a deeper understanding of the problem of food waste and its impact on the environment, as well as on food security and equity. Through reflective discussion, participants identified the underlying causes of food waste in their own lives and in society at large, as well as generating ideas to address these causes and reduce waste. Participants also committed to make changes in their eating habits and food management practices to reduce waste in their homes and communities.



Name of the activity	Film and discussion on Climate justice
Organisation	Youth for the Future (Portugal)
Number of participants	15 young people.
Description of the activity	The film “Before the Flood” was shown, which addressed issues related to climate change, its already visible consequences in terms of climate change, the need to use renewable energy sources and why this change is not being made at the necessary speed, given that climate change is one of the greatest threats the human species has ever known. The film served as a starting point for the ensuing debate and reflection on climate justice. A discussion space was opened to discuss what climate justice is all about, including that it’s not just about climate change in our country but a global phenomenon that needs to be urgently addressed, as it is affecting millions of people in different parts of the world.
Adaptations of the activity	In order to promote inclusion, a film was selected that could be adapted to different ages.
Results	Participants developed a deeper understanding of the causes and effects of climate change. The activity also helped participants to better understand the different aspects of climate justice, realising that the effects of climate change are not felt in the same way in all parts of the world and that the human rights of those most affected need to be safeguarded. Finally, solutions were identified through debate and the exchange of ideas between the participants.

4. Outdoor activities

Name of the activity Wild route

Organisation High On Life, Italy

Number of participants 30 participants.

Description of the activity The proposed activity is an exciting excursion through a nearby natural area, designed to engage participants in a series of challenges and tests that will encourage active exploration, learning and connection with the natural environment. At the beginning of the activity, participants are briefed on the challenges they have to face. These challenges are designed to test your observational skills, botanical knowledge and ability to interpret clues in the natural environment. For example, be tasked with identifying certain plants by their appearance or scent, or determining the approximate age of a tree by examining its bark and other visible indicators. The activity is carried out in teams, where participants will share knowledge and observations.

Adaptations of the activity The activity had some adaptations to ensure the enjoyment and involvement of all participants. Accessibility was considered to be appropriate for all young people, whether they had mobility difficulties, physical disabilities or other circumstances. The level of difficulty was also adapted according to the capabilities of the team. The tests were tailored to focus on the biodiversity of the local area in which they were located, thus providing participants with additional information on the natural environment.

Results With the development and implementation of this activity, participants had the opportunity to immerse themselves in a natural environment that connects them directly with nature. The young people also had the opportunity to learn in an experiential way, through direct observation, testing, research, etc. In addition, the team gained a better understanding of the natural environment and the importance of nature for animals, other living beings and humans. The activity raised awareness about conservation, where participants, through direct contact and close experience, were able to better understand the importance of environmental conservation.



Name of the activity Feeling nature
Organisation High on Life, Italy
Number of participants 30 participants.



Description of the activity The activity took place in a natural setting, such as a park. The group was organised in a circle without talking. The aim was that during this time of contemplation, they would use their senses to identify and recognise five things they could see in the environment, four sounds they could perceive, two fragrances they could smell and one texture they could touch.

Adaptations of the activity

- The activity was adapted so that all participants could enjoy it.
- It was ensured that the chosen environment was suitable for the whole group and that they could access it easily.
- The activity took place in different natural spaces, in order to guarantee different sensory experiences.
- The characteristics of the participants were taken into account and the senses that the activity takes up were adapted accordingly.
- The linguistic diversities of the group were also taken into account and the language was adapted in each situation required.

Results After the activity was completed, it was observed that:

- Participants were able to develop a greater awareness of their senses and use them consciously to interact with their environment.
- By spending time in a natural environment and paying more attention to detail, participants feel a greater connection to nature and appreciate its value.
- This activity also encouraged the development of mindfulness and teamwork.
- Participants after the activity also recorded lower levels of stress, which they quickly linked to the contact with nature.

In short, the participants discovered that the Planet is also us, and that being in contact with nature is good for us and the need to maintain good sustainable habits that have a positive impact on it.

Name of the activity	Cycling route
Organisation	High on Life, Italy
Number of participants	15 participants.
Description of the activity	This activity consisted of a bike ride through a natural area. Participants had the opportunity to enjoy a pleasant afternoon in nature, while also fostering the formation of bonds between them. The bike ride allowed participants to explore the natural environment, enjoy the outdoors and get some physical exercise.
Adaptations of the activity	The activity was adapted to ensure the safety of participants, providing guidance on safe cycling and selecting routes suitable for different levels of ability. In addition, an inclusive and mutually supportive environment was promoted, where participants were able to enjoy the ride together and share experiences in a relaxed and friendly environment. Communication and collaboration between participants was encouraged during the ride, which strengthened the bonds between them.
Results	The activity helped to raise awareness among participants about the importance of protecting and conserving the natural environment, while promoting an active and healthy lifestyle. The activity provided an enriching experience for participants, allowing them to connect with nature and enjoy the benefits of outdoor exercise. In addition, the bike ride promoted social bonding and teamwork among participants, improving group cohesion and fostering a sense of community.

Name of the activity	Taking care of my plant.
Organisation	High on Life Spain
Number of participants	20 participants.
Description of the activity	In this activity, each participant was in charge of growing their own plant. They were provided with all the necessary materials, such as soil, seeds, pots, etc. The participants had to take care of their plant individually, giving it the specific care that each one required. The idea was to maintain the plant for the duration of the project. As a follow-up, every month, each participant shared a photo of the state of their plant, which made it possible to follow the evolution of each one and see which ones survived at the end of the project.
Adaptations of the activity	The activity was adapted to ensure that each participant received the necessary guidance to properly care for their plant. Additional support was provided to those participants who were less experienced in plant care, ensuring that everyone could actively participate in the project. In addition, a collaborative environment was fostered where participants could share tips and experiences on plant care.
Results	The activity fostered a greater sense of responsibility and connection with nature among the participants, while promoting learning about plant care and the importance of the environment. By following the evolution of their plants throughout the project, participants were able to appreciate the process of growth and development of plant life, leading to a greater appreciation for nature and an increased awareness of the importance of caring for our environment. In addition, the activity promoted community and interaction among participants, creating a sense of belonging and collaboration in the project.

Impact generated

The set of activities generated a significant impact on several fronts, tangibly contributing to environmental awareness, active youth participation, education, and the promotion of sustainable practices.

The activities, which ranged from recycling campaigns to beach and park clean-ups, made participants aware of the importance of environmental protection, waste management, conservation of natural resources, and the effects of every small daily choice, thus allowing them to become active agents of environmental change.

The various activities encouraged the direct involvement of young people in the planning and implementation of concrete actions, and they participated in discussions, creative presentations, and practical projects, having the opportunity to be protagonists in the improvement of their social and environmental context while developing leadership and collaboration skills.

Documentary screenings, seminars, and hands-on workshops provided educational moments on crucial topics such as fast fashion, food waste, and sustainable water management. These activities have raised young people's awareness of global issues, fostering understanding of the complexity of environmental and social challenges and providing concrete tools to address them.

Discussions and forums stimulated critical reflection on environmental and social issues, encouraging participants to express opinions, share experiences and develop innovative solutions, fostering the development of analytical and synthesis skills, and encouraging young people to become active and aware citizens.

Through the organization of creative workshops, such as the design of reusable bags and the creation of handicraft objects through recycling, responsible and sustainable consumption practices were actively promoted. In addition, the organization of markets for the exchange and sale of second-hand products promoted the circular economy, reducing consumption and waste of resources.

Overall, the wide range of activities carried out generated a positive and lasting impact on the integral formation of the participants, transforming them into active agents of change and promoting a more sustainable and supportive lifestyle.

The youth-centered approach ensured active and meaningful participation in all phases of the project. Young people not only participated in the activities but were also involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation, thus ensuring that their voices were heard and that they felt an integral part of the decision-making process. Thus, the activities fostered the creation of a cohesive community committed to sustainability and, through discussion sessions, exchange of ideas, and concrete actions such as flea markets and neighborhood clean-ups, participants developed a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the environment around them.

The project adopted a holistic approach to environmental education, combining theory with practice, classroom training with field activities, and formal with informal learning.

The real impact of a project is manifested when the lessons learned are applied in everyday life and transformed into long-term sustainable habits, so that each project activity is not a one-off event, but is part of an ongoing educational process, thus ensuring a lasting impact on the young participants.

In summary, the participatory methodology adopted had a generative impact in educating and mobilizing young Europeans towards an active and sustainable commitment to environmental protection and the promotion of European values. Through a holistic and participatory approach, continuous education, and practical action, the project has contributed to forming a new generation of environmental leaders, ready to lead the change towards a more sustainable and inclusive future for all.



Tips for future implementations

For future implementations, we recommend the implementation of incentive programs, which can help increase young people's active participation in activities, such as prizes, rewards, or points that can be converted into benefits.

It is important to establish a more robust follow-up program to measure the impact of activities, especially to assess their long-term impact, such as post-event follow-up surveys to assess behavioral change and ongoing impact on the community.

During the implementation of the different activities, a significant aspect emerged regarding the different perceptions between the youth workers and the young participants. The youth workers could perceive that they were providing concrete and meaningful help to the young people through the proposed activities. However, it was noted that not all young participants had the same perception of receiving tangible help.

This difference in perception may be due to several reasons, such as differences in expectations, unmet needs, or a lack of understanding of how activities can influence young people's lives.

It is, therefore, crucial to recognize and address this perception gap to ensure that activities are truly effective in achieving their objectives. For this reason, it is essential that thorough evaluations and regular monitoring of the project are carried out. These tools allow us to collect the views of the young participants, assess the real impact of the activities on their lives, and identify possible areas for improvement or adaptation of the project.

Furthermore, it is important to actively involve young people in the evaluation and monitoring of the project, allowing them to openly express their opinions, needs, and concerns. This participatory approach encourages greater involvement of young people in the decision-making process and ensures that activities are truly geared to their needs and wishes.

Continuous evaluation and close monitoring of the project allow activities to be adapted according to the feedback received and ensure a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the participants.

A key aspect to consider when implementing youth projects is accessibility. Accessibility refers to the ability to ensure that activities are open and accessible to all, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or circumstances. Even if efforts have been made to make activities as inclusive as possible, there is always room for continuous improvement.

To improve accessibility, it is important to take a proactive and inclusive approach from the design phase, but it is essential to actively involve young people themselves in the process of assessing and improving accessibility and asking their views on barriers they might face in participating in activities and working with them to identify practical and effective solutions to address these challenges can lead to significant improvements. The use of innovative technologies and digital solutions can also contribute to improving acces-

sibility, for example by providing accessible online resources for young people with visual or hearing impairments, or by facilitating remote participation for those who may have difficulties in physically reaching activity venues.

The availability of information resources is a crucial element for the success of any initiative or program and one of the keys to improving project implementation is to ensure the availability of information resources and the constant updating of clear, comprehensive, and accessible information materials, such as guides, manuals, brochures, booklets, video tutorials, that are easily understandable and usable by people with different levels of digital literacy and skills.

In addition, it is important to use various communication channels to disseminate this information, especially social media. The constant use of social media as a main communication channel is especially relevant considering young people's relationship with these digital platforms. Nowadays, young people do not only use social media for entertainment, but also to get information and keep up to date with events and initiatives in their community, so the use of social media as a communication channel allows for reaching a wide young audience effectively and efficiently, ensuring a greater involvement thanks to the possibility to comment, share and interact directly with the shared contents and therefore also a long-term impact of the activities and no longer limited only to the project participants.

It is important that both during and at the end of each activity, debate and discussion among participants are encouraged to ensure more active participation and in-depth discussion on important topics such as sustainability, environment, or mental health.

Organizing moderated discussions during and after activities can be an effective way to encourage collaboration and active debate among participants, promoting deeper involvement and more active participation, both individually, as each participant will have more opportunities to express their views and contribute to the discussion, and collectively, as group discussions encourage collaboration and exchange of ideas among participants.

Working and reflecting together, and exploring complex issues to find creative and effective solutions can lead to a better understanding of the issues and a greater diversity of perspectives, stimulate creativity, and generate innovative ideas to address environmental and social challenges in a more optimized and adapted way to the needs of today's generation.

In addition, assisting young people during the discussions and moderating them during the activities allows the discussion to be integrated into the learning process and to engage participants more continuously and dynamically. Rather than treating the discussion as a separate and isolated activity, incorporating it into the overall experience of the activity keeps interest high and maximizes the effectiveness of participation.

As lead organizations, we have a responsibility and can use the feedback and ideas that emerge during the discussions to tailor future activities to the needs and interests of the participants, developing more comprehensive and innovative approaches to address environmental and social challenges and thus ensuring greater effectiveness of our work.

The biggest challenge to be faced during the planning and implementation of activities is to ensure an impact that is not limited to the moment of the activity but is long-lasting. From the moment of planning to the moment of implementation, it is important to develop a methodology that can promote continuous and meaningful stakeholder participation. Therefore, this part is crucial. Encouraging debate and active discussion not only enriches the experience of participants but also provides NGOs with valuable information and ideas to guide the future implementation of activities, ensuring that they are relevant, effective, and sustainable in the long term.

This process of adaptation and continuous improvement allows us to remain aligned with the needs of the community, maximize the impact of our initiatives work more efficiently and effectively to achieve our sustainability and social change goals, and, most importantly, maintain an open and constructive dialogue with participants and stakeholders, strengthening trust and collaboration within the community and contributing to creating a positive and lasting impact on the environmental and social issues addressed.

Another important aspect to keep in mind is to emphasize the importance of behavioral change to inspire concrete actions and foster a permanent commitment to sustainability. Reminding participants of the importance of adopting more sustainable habits in their daily lives is an essential first step in transforming the knowledge gained during the activities into meaningful action, and emphasizing how even small changes in individual behavior can have a significant impact on the environment in the long term is key to showing participants that their every action matters and contributes to creating a more sustainable future.

Importantly, the promotion of behavior change is not limited to the duration of the activities but extends into the participants' daily lives. This means that the experience lived during the activities does not end with the conclusion of the program, but continues to influence participants' choices and actions in the long term, and keeping this awareness and commitment alive after participation in the activities is key to ensuring a real and lasting impact on the daily practices of participants, who in turn can become ambassadors of change within their communities and beyond. This virtuous cycle of awareness, action, and spreading the sustainability message is essential to create a lasting impact and spread awareness of environmental and social issues beyond the boundaries of the activities.

Conclusions and reflections

During the development and implementation of this project and related activities, we observed how it is possible to inspire significant changes in behaviors and attitudes towards sustainability and the environment. The active participation of young people, together with a focus on education, awareness raising, and practical action, proved to be a powerful combination to promote greater engagement with these critical and timely issues.

Collaboration between different organizations and social partners is crucial to the success of such initiatives. By working together we have been able to maximize our resources, share knowledge and experience, and reach a wider and more diverse audience. In addition, the inclusion of young people at all stages of the process, from planning to implementation and evaluation, ensured that their voices were heard and that they felt truly empowered to bring about positive change in their communities.

It is important to underline that these activities will not be one-off events, but part of a continuous process of learning and action. The real impact is achieved when the lessons learned are applied in daily life and become long-term sustainable habits, so it is crucial to emphasize that we will continue to support and encourage participants' engagement even after the activities have ended.

The adjustments made in the implementation of these activities proved crucial to the success and positive impact of the initiatives. The introduction of incentive systems, follow-up programs, and personalized feedback sessions encouraged more active participation and deeper engagement of the young participants. These measures not only increased the effectiveness of the activities but also allowed for a more thorough evaluation of their environmental and social impact.

Furthermore, the inclusion of additional assessment criteria, online resources, and real case studies enriched the learning experience for participants, providing them with valuable information and stimulating a more informed and meaningful debate on key issues such as sustainability and climate justice.

It is important to highlight the emphasis on accessibility and inclusion at all stages of the process. Ensuring that activities were accessible to all young people, regardless of their physical abilities or cultural backgrounds, helped to create an environment of mutual respect and diversity, thus promoting more equitable and representative participation.

In terms of results, these activities succeeded in raising community awareness of environmental and social issues, promoting more sustainable practices, and greater participation in environmental actions. In addition, they generated a real change in individual and collective behavior, as well as a greater awareness of the negative impact of fast fashion and the promotion of more sustainable alternatives in fashion, more conscious use of natural resources, such as water, and more responsible consumption practices. In addition, environmental issues such as the importance of sustainable water management, the reduction of energy consumption, and the protection of biodiversity were addressed during the activities, encouraging a broader reflection on environmental challenges and possible solutions.

These experiences and the methodology used have taught us the importance of adapting our methodologies and approaches to maximize the impact of our initiatives and to prioritize active participation, inclusion, and lifelong learning.

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estimonials from participants

Participants of High on Life (Italy)

“Participating in this project has been an opportunity to grow and learn, not only about environmental issues and the problems faced but also about myself. I have discovered the strength that comes from uniting for a common goal and the importance of taking concrete action to make a difference. I feel very motivated and inspired. I now know that each of us can do our part to protect the planet and I am ready to put everything I have learned into practice.”

Valentina

Samuel

“The project activities opened my eyes to many environmental issues that I was unaware of. It was an experience that made me grow and made me more aware of my role in respecting the planet. The project allowed us to participate in different activities, all focused on the importance of living more sustainably and we all learned many things. I learned a lot about the importance of separating waste correctly and how to do it correctly, and most of all, it was important to reflect on the negative impact the fashion industry has on the environment and how we can make more conscious choices when it comes to clothes and fashion. It was nice to see so many kids my age united for a common goal and it gave me a lot of hope for the future and made me realize that it's never too late to make a difference.”

“The event was very exciting and made me think about a lot of things I took for granted. I loved the variety of activities, from the beach clean-up to the sustainable fashion workshop. I am sure that from now on I will be more mindful of my daily choices and the impact they have on the environment.”

Erica

Participants of High on Life Spain

“Participating in the environmental youth project was a transformative experience. Through activities such as street and park clean-ups and craft and recycling workshops, among others, I learned the importance of taking care of our environment. Going through this project has made me feel part of a global movement towards sustainability and I now feel more committed to continue contributing to a greener future”.

Bruno Martínez

“Before being part of this project, I was not fully aware of the impact that our daily actions have on the environment. Thanks to the fast fashion industry and circular economy workshop I was able to understand how in the end “cheap” is expensive how this industry pollutes the environment and how we are unwitting drivers of this without realising it. I realized that every little effort counts and that doing something on an individual level is the first step everyone can take. Now I feel much more motivated to continue implementing sustainable actions that benefit the environment.”

Juan Carlos Morales

“I liked the project activities very much. In addition to the informative activities, there was also space for reflection and exchange and I personally had the opportunity to participate in a debate on fast fashion, where I was able to listen to different opinions and confront other participants. It was a very interesting moment that made me understand the complexity of this issue. I would like to encourage all my colleagues to participate in events like this, as it is an opportunity to learn more about the environment and how we can make a difference.”

Alejandra Molina

Youth for the Future participants (Portugal)

“Participating in this project has been very useful in forming alliances with other young people who have the same interest in caring for the environment. It was very enriching to see how collective work generates a great impact. We carried out joint activities such as a solidarity market, where it was very positive to see how people were willing to exchange and sell objects to maintain a sustainable and circular economy. This experience taught me the importance of collective action and encouraged me to continue collaborating on similar actions in my community.”

Francisco

“The youth project gave me the idea to foster my creativity and generate practical and sustainable solutions. From the workshop on waste-free cooking to the workshop on recycling and transforming objects, I have learned how small actions can have the biggest impact. Sometimes all it takes is a little creativity to get the right result. Looking at the results of the activities, I am convinced that young people are the future and that they can make a difference in the fight against climate change”

Paula

“Participating in this project allowed me to reflect on my relationship with the planet and how I can make a difference and the opportunity to talk to other participants and peers and share ideas and opinions with them made the experience even richer and more stimulating. I would like to thank the organizers for designing and delivering the activities and for encouraging us to implement small everyday gestures to contribute to the protection of the environment.”

Camila

Overall assessment of the experience

At the end of the test phase, during which all the activities were carried out by the partners, we can make a very positive overall assessment. Although there were some difficulties that had to be solved during the development, the experience was very useful for all parties. It has become an example to be developed in the daily work of the partner organisations and to be shared with the rest of the entities that will benefit from the global experience.

The youth workers involved have improved their knowledge and skills, which has allowed them to establish themselves as a reference within the youth communities. They have had a significant impact on the environmental attitudes of the young people around them, raising awareness and sharing examples of how to contribute to the fight against climate change and environmental justice.

Overall, there is great satisfaction with the experience, which involved hundreds of young people and groups of youth workers from the participating organisations. It has had an impact on the way we work and on raising awareness.

