



GreenScape

**UNLOCKING YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE - GREENSCAPE**

**TRANSNATIONAL REPORT OF THE
BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS (WP2)**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Greenscape project, *Unlocking Youth Civic Engagement for a Sustainable Future*, operates within the Erasmus+ framework, serving as a pivotal initiative to empower young individuals through innovative and experiential education. Composed of a consortium of six organizations from the Czech Republic, Greece, Finland, Bulgaria, and Spain, the project aspires to enhance youth participation in European Union governance, sustainability discourse, and climate justice advocacy. The employment of an innovative escape room allows Greenscape to bridge the divide between abstract policy frameworks and tangible experiential learning, enabling young participants to engage meaningfully with EU policies in an immersive and accessible manner.

Young adults aged 16 to 30 frequently encounter barriers to active participation in policy-making, particularly in domains as intricate as climate justice and environmental sustainability. Greenscape directly addresses this challenge by facilitating interactive, problem-solving experiences that align with the European Youth Goals. Through engagement in meticulously designed escape room challenges, participants acquire profound insights into EU policy mechanisms, legislative decision-making processes, and the far-reaching implications of sustainability initiatives.

As a central component of its commitment to inclusivity and participatory engagement, the Greenscape project has undertaken a series of structured focus groups across the partner countries. These focus groups were strategically designed to elicit qualitative insights from a demographically diverse cohort of young individuals, including those contending with geographical remoteness, economic hardship, and societal marginalization. The discussions yielded invaluable perspectives on sustainability, civic engagement, and the European Youth Goals, augmenting the project's comprehension of how young people conceptualize and interact with EU policies.

This transnational report synthesizes the findings from these focus groups, presenting a nuanced analysis of youth perspectives on climate justice, sustainability, and their potential contributions to shaping a more environmentally resilient Europe. The report serves as a foundational resource for advancing the project's objectives and informing policy recommendations through the delineation of recurring themes, identification of systemic challenges, and explanation of opportunities for engagement. Through this initiative, Greenscape reaffirms its unwavering commitment to cultivating an informed, proactive, and environmentally conscientious generation poised to influence EU policy discourse and advocate for transformative sustainable solutions.

2. METHODOLOGY

To ensure a rigorous and standardized research process, the GreenScape focus groups adhered to a structured methodology provided by Fifty fifty through a manual and therefore the same methodologies, tools, timing and structure were consistently implemented across all partner organizations. This methodological framework, developed to maintain coherence and reliability, encompassed detailed guidelines concerning participant selection, data collection instruments, ethical considerations, and analytical approaches. The principal objective of these focus groups was to gather qualitative insights into participants' perceptions of sustainability, awareness of EU environmental policies, and motivations



for civic engagement. The findings from these discussions were intended to refine the GreenScape project's strategies for fostering youth involvement in sustainability advocacy within the European Union framework.

2. 1. Qualitative Research

The primary research instrument employed in this study was a series of structured focus groups, designed to elicit nuanced perspectives from a diverse participant pool. These focus groups aimed to:

- **Examine perceptions of sustainability** by exploring how individuals conceptualize environmental issues and their relevance to personal and community life.
- **Assess awareness and expectations regarding EU environmental policies**, identifying gaps in knowledge and areas where enhanced engagement is needed.
- **Analyze key motivational factors** driving youth participation in civic and environmental advocacy.
- **Obtain direct feedback** on the GreenScape project's proposed activities, ensuring alignment with participants' needs and expectations.

The qualitative research component consisted of in-depth discussions with key stakeholders, including youth (16–30) interested in sustainability and EU policy making, local community representatives, educators, youth organization leaders, and policymakers. This diverse representation facilitated a holistic analysis of civic engagement in sustainability initiatives, ensuring multiple perspectives were integrated into the research findings.

A total of 112 participants were engaged across five partner countries, with each focus group session comprising five individuals to encourage in-depth discussion. Sessions were conducted in accessible community centers or institutional venues, with virtual options available to accommodate participants unable to attend in person. All discussions were recorded, transcribed, and anonymized in accordance with GDPR regulations, ensuring strict confidentiality and ethical integrity. Participants provided informed consent before participation, with clear communication regarding their rights, voluntary involvement, and the anonymity of their responses.

2. 2. Quantitative Research

The quantitative research was conducted using questionnaires developed by IRR, designed to evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the focus groups while assessing pupils' understanding of key topics such as the European Youth Goals, active citizenship, and climate justice. These questionnaires aimed to capture participants' perspectives, experiences, and reflections on the discussions held within the focus groups.

To ensure accessibility and inclusivity, the questionnaire was made available in all partner national languages, both in printed form and online. However, priority was given to the online format to align with sustainability principles and reduce paper waste. The questionnaire was designed to be anonymous, allowing respondents to express their thoughts freely and honestly without concern for identification. The data collected provided valuable insights into young people's engagement with the discussed themes, helping to shape further initiatives and improve the project's impact on youth awareness and participation in sustainability and civic action. The questionnaire is available at the following link: [Google Form Link](#).



After completing the country research, each partner compiled and summarized the qualitative and quantitative data from the questionnaires and focus groups into a national report.

3. BULGARIA

The GreenScape focus group in Sofia, Bulgaria, the 10th and 11th December 2024 aimed to engage 25 young people, educators, and community stakeholders in discussions about sustainability and civic engagement. The event provided a platform to exchange ideas, generate solutions, and explore interactive educational methods to enhance environmental awareness. The session began with an overview of the GreenScape Project, outlining its goals to develop an immersive Escape Room experience that educates young people on sustainability, EU policies, and civic involvement. The focus group covered five key themes:

- **Sustainability and Community Impact:** Participants' perspectives on sustainability challenges and their impact on local communities.
- **EU Policies and Environmental Awareness:** Exploration of participants' knowledge and perceptions of EU environmental initiatives.
- **Civic Engagement and Youth Motivation:** Identifying factors that drive or hinder youth involvement in environmental advocacy.
- **Feedback on GreenScape Activities:** Insights into how to enhance project engagement and effectiveness.
- **Future Collaboration and Implementation:** Discussions on integrating the Escape Room into broader sustainability initiatives.

3. 1. Sustainability and Community Impact

Participants identified key sustainability challenges, including waste management, pollution, deforestation, and the need for better recycling infrastructure. Many stressed the importance of integrating sustainability into daily life through community-driven projects such as urban gardening, waste sorting initiatives, and educational campaigns in schools. The discussion also highlighted the disparity in sustainability practices between urban and rural areas, where resource limitations often hinder progress. Participants advocated for stronger local government involvement and financial support to ensure equitable access to sustainability programs.

3. 2. EU Policies and Environmental Awareness

Awareness of EU environmental policies varied among participants. Some were familiar with major initiatives like the European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan, while others felt disconnected from EU decision-making processes. Many participants expressed frustration with the bureaucratic nature of EU policies, arguing that complex language and distant policymaking structures made it difficult for young people to engage. Suggestions for improvement included simplifying communication strategies, creating youth-friendly informational materials, and fostering direct collaboration between EU institutions and grassroots organizations. Participants also called for more localized implementation of EU environmental initiatives to address country-specific sustainability challenges.



3. 3. Civic Engagement and Youth Motivation

The discussion on civic engagement revealed both enthusiasm and disillusionment among young people. While many participants were eager to contribute to sustainability efforts, they faced significant barriers, including a lack of institutional support, limited funding opportunities, and feelings of disempowerment. Some participants noted that youth-led environmental movements in Bulgaria often struggle with visibility and long-term sustainability. To overcome these obstacles, attendees recommended enhancing mentorship programs, providing financial incentives for youth projects, and creating official youth advisory councils to influence policy decisions at local and national levels.

3. 4. Feedback on GreenScape Activities

Participants responded positively to the GreenScape initiative, particularly its use of experiential learning through an Escape Room format. They suggested incorporating real-life case studies from Bulgaria into the scenarios to make the experience more relatable. Additionally, they recommended including elements of gamification beyond the Escape Room, such as sustainability challenges, digital storytelling, and interactive mobile applications to reinforce learning outcomes. Accessibility was also a key concern, with participants advocating for multi-language support and inclusive design to accommodate diverse learning needs. To ensure the successful implementation of the GreenScape project in Bulgaria, participants emphasized the need for long-term partnerships with schools, universities, NGOs, and local government agencies. They proposed integrating the Escape Room activity into formal and non-formal education settings, such as extracurricular programs and environmental summer camps. Strengthening cooperation between youth organizations and policymakers was seen as essential in bridging the gap between grassroots initiatives and institutional support.

3. 5. Analysis of the Questionnaire Responses

To complement the focus group discussions, participants in Bulgaria responded to a structured questionnaire assessing their prior engagement in EU and civic initiatives, perceived barriers to participation, and their satisfaction with the focus group experience. The responses provide critical insights into the challenges and opportunities for youth engagement in sustainability and climate justice within the Bulgarian context.

3. 5. 1. Prior Engagement in EU and Civic Activities

A striking 92% of participants had prior experience in EU or civic engagement programs, demonstrating a high level of past involvement compared to other focus groups. This suggests a well-established culture of participation among the respondents, potentially linked to strong networks, active youth organizations, or prior access to EU-funded initiatives. However, despite this high level of engagement, barriers to participation remain a pressing issue, as indicated in the following section.

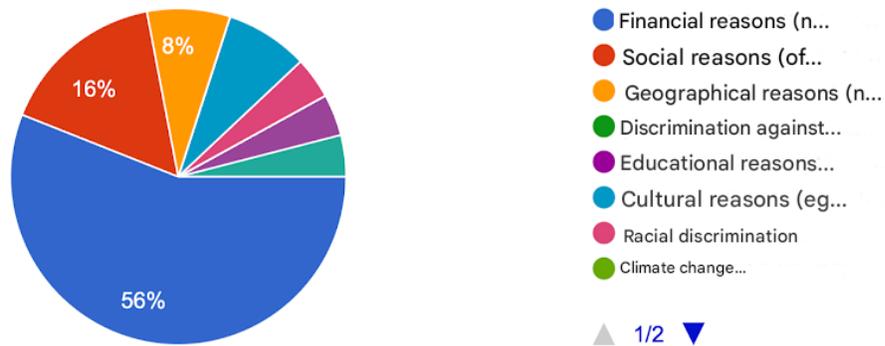
3. 5. 2. Barriers to Participation

A significant 84% of participants reported facing obstacles that limited their involvement in youth and civic engagement activities. Among those who identified specific challenges:

- 56% cited financial barriers, reinforcing the notion that economic constraints remain a primary limiting factor for youth participation.



- 16% identified social barriers, which may relate to a lack of support networks or exclusion from participation opportunities.
- 8% cited geographical barriers, pointing to difficulties in accessing events or programs due to location.
- 8% mentioned cultural barriers, such as language difficulties or integration challenges.
- 4% indicated racial discrimination as a barrier to participation.



These findings highlight the significant role of financial limitations in preventing full youth engagement, underscoring the need for increased funding opportunities, travel support, and digital accessibility initiatives to address these structural challenges.

3. 5. 3. Satisfaction with the Focus Group Experience

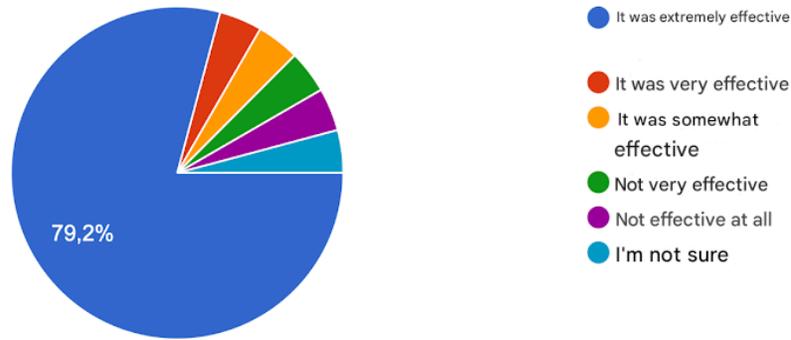
Participants expressed polarized views regarding their satisfaction with the focus group:

- 58.3% rated their experience as “very satisfied” (5/5).
- 37.5% rated their experience as “not satisfied at all” (1/5).
- A minor percentage included unclear responses.

Additionally, when assessing the quality and structure of the session, a notable 64% of participants rated it as “poor quality”, indicating dissatisfaction with the session's format, content delivery, or organization.

Despite these critical evaluations, the facilitation of discussions was perceived more favorably:

- 79.2% found the facilitation “extremely effective.”
- 4.2% found it “very effective.”
- 4.2% found it “somewhat effective.”
- 4.2% found it “not very effective” or “not effective at all.”



These contrasting responses suggest that while the content and structure of the session may require improvement, the facilitation was well-received, with the majority of participants appreciating the efforts made to encourage open discussion.

3. 5. 4. Awareness and Understanding of European Youth Goals

Before attending the session, participants demonstrated a strong familiarity with the European Youth Goals, particularly Goal #10 on youth inclusion:

- 64% rated their prior knowledge as “excellent.”
- 24% as “sufficient.”
- 4% as “to some extent.”
- 8% as “not very familiar.”

Following the session, participants were asked whether their understanding of the European Youth Goals improved:

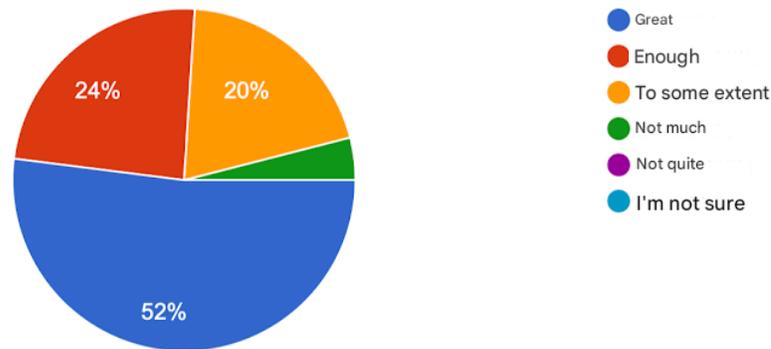
- 68% found the session “extremely effective.”
- 12% found it “very effective.”
- 8% found it “somewhat effective.”
- 4% found it “not very effective” or “not effective at all.”

These results indicate that, while the majority of participants already had substantial prior knowledge, the session was still able to reinforce and deepen their understanding of EU youth policies.

3. 5. 5. Understanding of Sustainability and Climate Justice

Participants’ prior knowledge of sustainability and climate justice was relatively high:

- 52% rated themselves as “excellent” in their understanding.
- 24% as “sufficient.”
- 20% as “to some extent.”
- 4% as “not very informed.”



Following the session, when asked if it helped them understand how to engage in EU decision-making and civic participation:

- 80% found it “very helpful.”
- 4% found it “helpful.”
- 12% did not find it very helpful.
- 4% found it not helpful at all.

While most participants benefited from the session, a small proportion did not perceive it as significantly impactful. This suggests that tailoring future discussions to **provide more actionable and practical engagement strategies** could enhance their effectiveness.

3. 5. 6. Willingness to Engage in EU Decision-Making

After the session, participants’ likelihood of engaging in EU decision-making and civic activities was as follows:

- 76% stated they were “very likely” to seek engagement opportunities.
- 8% were “somewhat likely.”
- 8% were “unlikely.”
- 8% were unsure.

Despite some critical assessments of the session’s structure, these results indicate that a strong majority of participants felt motivated to become more involved in EU civic initiatives after attending.

3. 5. 7. Results

The Bulgarian focus group provided valuable insights into youth perspectives on civic engagement, sustainability, and EU policies. Participants demonstrated a high level of prior experience in EU-funded programs but still reported significant barriers to participation, primarily financial in nature. The session successfully reinforced participants’ understanding of European Youth Goals, although its structure and content received mixed reviews, suggesting room for improvement in delivery methods.



A key takeaway from the results is the disparity between participant satisfaction with the facilitation (which was highly rated) and their dissatisfaction with the overall session quality. This indicates that while discussions were well-led, the format, materials, or structure may not have met participants' expectations.

3. 6. Conclusion

The Bulgarian focus group provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for engaging young people in sustainability and civic action. Key recommendations included simplifying EU policy communication, increasing institutional support for youth-led initiatives, and expanding interactive educational approaches. The feedback gathered will play a crucial role in shaping the GreenScape project's development, ensuring that it remains responsive to the needs and aspirations of young people in Bulgaria and beyond.

4. CZECH REPUBLIC

The GreenScape focus group in the Czech Republic took place on January 29th and 30th, 2025, at Gymnázium Elišky Krásnohorské, a high school in Prague. The session was attended by 25 participants aged 16/17, ensuring a diverse representation of youth perspectives. The facilitators, composed of educators and representatives from the GreenScape project, designed the sessions to encourage open dialogue and engagement with sustainability, climate justice, and active citizenship. The methodology combined interactive discussions, brainstorming activities, and participatory learning techniques, fostering a dynamic environment for youth engagement.

4. 1. Sustainability and Climate Justice Awareness

Participants displayed varying levels of awareness and engagement with sustainability and climate justice. While many associated sustainability with individual actions like recycling and public transportation use, discussions revealed a growing understanding of the need for systemic change, particularly in holding corporations and policymakers accountable. Concerns about environmental degradation in the Czech Republic, including rising temperatures, pollution, and increased climate-related disasters, highlighted the urgency of sustainable policy measures. Despite broad recognition of climate issues, participants were initially unfamiliar with the term "climate justice." The facilitators introduced the concept through case studies, such as the disproportionate effects of climate change on vulnerable regions like the Pacific Islands. This helped participants grasp the intersection of environmental and social justice, encouraging them to consider fairness and equity in climate action.

4. 2. The Role of the EU in Climate Justice

While participants had limited initial knowledge of the EU's role in climate justice, discussions highlighted various EU-led initiatives, including international climate agreements, binding targets, investment in sustainable technologies, and educational campaigns. This provided a clearer framework for understanding how EU policies influence local and global sustainability efforts. Additionally, the facilitators encouraged personal and community-level engagement, reinforcing the idea that individual actions—such as advocacy, participation in protests, and policy engagement—play a critical role in driving climate justice.



4. 3. Active Citizenship and Youth Engagement

A core discussion theme was active citizenship, emphasizing the need for young people to engage in their communities. Participants explored various forms of active engagement, from volunteering and advocacy to political participation. The facilitators highlighted how young people can influence policies through civic action, further encouraging proactive engagement in shaping sustainability policies at the local and EU levels.

4. 4. Analysis of the Questionnaire Responses

To complement the focus group discussions, participants responded to a structured questionnaire assessing their prior engagement with EU and civic initiatives, their perceived barriers, and their satisfaction with the focus group experience. The findings offer valuable insights into youth engagement in sustainability and climate justice.

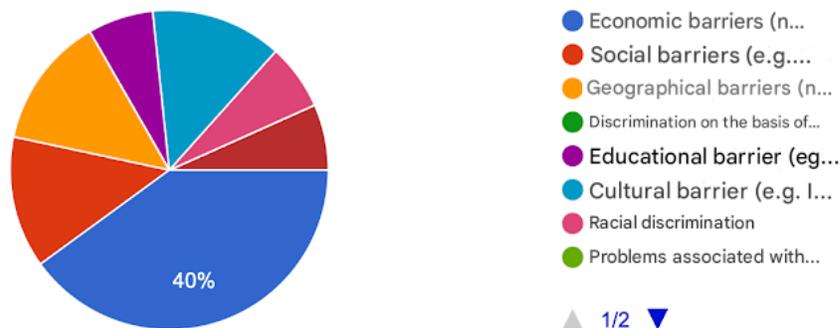
4. 4. 1. Prior Engagement in EU and Civic Activities:

- 57.1% of participants had not engaged in EU or civic participation before.
- 60% reported facing barriers limiting their participation in youth activities.

These findings indicate a significant gap in youth engagement, underscoring the need for more accessible and inclusive initiatives.

4. 4. 2. Barriers to Participation:

- 40% identified economic barriers.
- 13.3% cited social barriers.
- 13.3% noted geographical barriers.
- 13.3% mentioned cultural barriers.
- The remaining responses highlighted educational, disability-related, and other social factors.



Economic limitations were the most commonly cited barrier, suggesting that financial constraints significantly hinder youth participation. Addressing this requires increased accessibility through scholarships, funding opportunities, and digital resources.



4. 4. 3. Satisfaction with the Focus Group Experience:

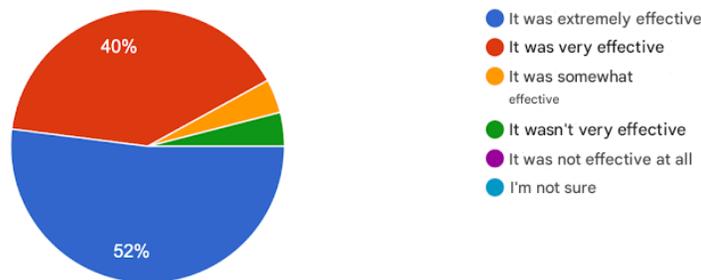
- 52% were extremely satisfied with the focus group experience.
- 40% were satisfied.
- 4% remained neutral, while another 4% expressed dissatisfaction.

Regarding the quality of the session:

- 56% rated it as excellent.
- 36% rated it as good.
- 8% remained neutral.

Additionally, the facilitation of open discussion was highly rated:

- 52% found it extremely effective.
- 40% found it very effective.



These positive responses suggest that the format and approach of the focus group were well received, creating an engaging and effective learning environment.

4. 4. 4. Awareness and Understanding of European Youth Goals:

- 48% of participants were very familiar with European Youth Goals before attending.
- 24% were somewhat familiar.
- 20% were extremely familiar.

Following the session:

- 56% stated their understanding of EU Youth Goals significantly improved.
- 48% found the goals very relevant to their future, while 36% considered them extremely relevant.

This suggests that the focus group successfully enhanced participants' knowledge of EU Youth Goals, highlighting their practical relevance.

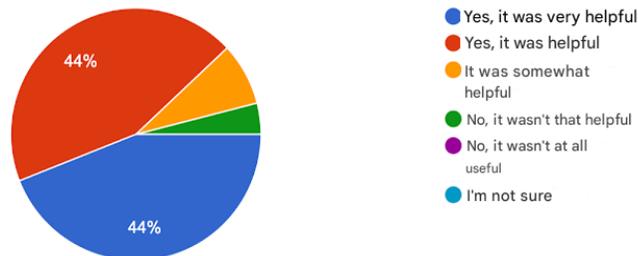


4. 4. 5. Understanding of Sustainability and Climate Justice:

- 48% were very informed on sustainability and climate justice before attending.
- 24% were somewhat informed.

The session's impact:

- 44% found it extremely helpful in understanding EU decision-making and civic engagement.
- 44% found it very helpful.
- 8% found it somewhat helpful



These findings highlight the effectiveness of the focus group in bridging knowledge gaps and empowering participants to engage with sustainability policies.

4. 4. 6. Willingness to Engage in EU Decision-Making:

- After the session, 56% were very likely to seek opportunities to engage in EU decision-making activities.
- 20% were extremely likely.
- 24% were somewhat likely.

This suggests a notable shift in participants' interest in civic engagement, demonstrating the potential of well-structured educational initiatives to inspire action.

4. 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The Czech Republic focus group for the GreenScape project provided critical insights into young people's perceptions of sustainability, climate justice, and civic engagement. While participants demonstrated a foundational awareness of these issues, discussions and questionnaire responses revealed key challenges, including limited prior engagement, economic barriers, and gaps in understanding EU climate policies.

Recommendations for Future Initiatives:

1. **Expand Outreach and Accessibility** – Address economic and geographical barriers by offering online participation options, travel grants, and digital resources.



2. **Enhance Practical Engagement** – Incorporate more interactive activities, such as policy simulations, advocacy training, and direct involvement with decision-makers.
3. **Strengthen Localized Approaches** – Tailor initiatives to reflect national and regional environmental concerns, fostering a sense of direct impact.
4. **Increase Awareness of EU Youth Goals and Climate Justice** – Continue educational initiatives that demystify EU policies and empower youth to engage in policy discussions.
5. **Sustain Engagement Beyond Events** – Establish follow-up mechanisms, such as online communities or mentoring programs, to ensure long-term involvement.

GreenScape aims at bridging the gap between policy and practice, young people to become active agents of change in sustainability and climate justice.

5. FINLAND

The GreenScape focus group session in Turku the 14th and 15th of December 2024 brought together 12 young participants to explore sustainability, EU environmental policies, and civic engagement. Facilitated by Veli Elyak and Anna Vehanen, the session aimed to assess youth perspectives, identify key challenges, and gather recommendations to enhance the impact of the GreenScape project. The session commenced with an arrival period and ice-breaking activities designed to foster an open and collaborative environment. Facilitators introduced the objectives of GreenScape, emphasizing the project's role in encouraging youth engagement with sustainability and European environmental policies. Participants were encouraged to share their views and contribute actively to discussions that would shape the project's direction.

5. 1. Sustainability and Community Impact

Participants offered diverse interpretations of sustainability, with some focusing on environmental conservation and others emphasizing social responsibility and economic sustainability. Many viewed sustainability as a key tool for addressing climate change and safeguarding future generations. Discussions highlighted the importance of local sustainability efforts, with participants citing examples such as waste recycling programs, urban gardening initiatives, and community-led clean-up campaigns. While some attendees were already engaged in these initiatives, others expressed a desire to participate but felt that opportunities were not always accessible.

5. 2. EU Policies and Environmental Awareness

The conversation revealed a disparity in awareness of EU environmental policies. While some participants were familiar with initiatives such as the European Green Deal and the EU Climate Action Plan, others admitted to having limited knowledge. A recurring concern was the complexity of policy language, which many felt made engagement challenging for young people. Participants suggested that EU policies should be communicated in a clearer, more relatable manner to ensure broader youth participation. They emphasized the need for EU institutions to support grassroots sustainability projects and create more opportunities for youth-led initiatives at the local level.



5. 3. Civic Engagement and Youth Motivation

Motivations for youth engagement in environmental advocacy varied, with participants citing personal responsibility, peer influence, and community pride as key drivers. Many expressed a strong desire to contribute to a sustainable future but noted that barriers such as lack of information, limited access to resources, and the complexity of sustainability issues often discouraged active participation. A significant challenge identified was the sense of disempowerment—many young people felt that their individual efforts would not lead to meaningful change. To address these concerns, participants recommended increasing visibility for sustainability efforts, providing recognition for contributions, and creating structured leadership opportunities to encourage youth involvement.

5. 4. Feedback on GreenScape Project Activities

Participants responded positively to GreenScape’s proposed activities, particularly its experiential and interactive approach to sustainability education. Suggestions for improvement included expanding the scope of activities to include hands-on workshops, community events, and sustainability campaigns led by young people. Many emphasized the importance of making project resources more accessible by offering materials in multiple languages and formats suited to different age groups. Strengthening partnerships with local organizations was also highlighted as a way to enhance outreach and impact.

5. 5. Analysis of the Questionnaire Responses

To complement the focus group discussions, participants in Finland responded to a structured questionnaire assessing their prior engagement in EU and civic initiatives, perceived barriers to participation, and their satisfaction with the focus group experience. The responses provide key insights into the challenges and opportunities for youth engagement in sustainability and climate justice within the Finnish context.

5. 5. 1. Prior Engagement in EU and Civic Activities

A significant 83.3% of participants had not previously participated in EU or civic engagement programs, indicating a limited level of prior involvement in structured youth participation initiatives. This lack of engagement suggests potential gaps in outreach, accessibility, or awareness of available opportunities. Given the EU’s ongoing efforts to involve young people in policymaking and sustainability initiatives, these findings emphasize the need to strengthen communication channels and reduce barriers that may hinder participation.

5. 5. 2. Barriers to Participation

Half of the participants (50%) reported facing barriers that limited their involvement in youth and civic engagement activities. Among those who identified obstacles:

- 55.6% cited economic barriers, indicating financial constraints as the most prominent challenge.
- 22.2% identified social barriers, suggesting that personal networks, societal norms, or lack of community support may impact engagement.



- 11.1% reported geographical obstacles, which could point to limited access to relevant programs in certain regions.
- 11.1% mentioned health-related barriers, highlighting concerns related to well-being and accessibility.

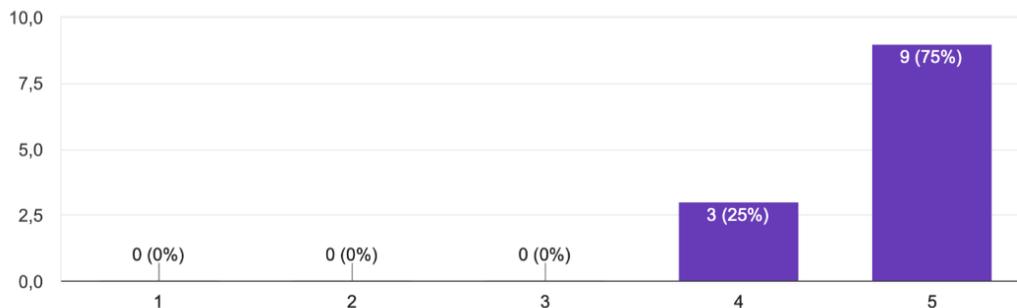
The predominance of economic barriers is particularly notable, as financial constraints can significantly limit young people’s ability to travel, attend events, or engage in voluntary initiatives. Addressing these challenges through increased funding opportunities, scholarships, and digital access to civic engagement programs may help bridge this gap.

5. 5. 3. Satisfaction with the Focus Group Experience

The overall reception of the focus group was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of participants rating their experience as “extremely satisfied” (5/5).

When asked about the quality and structure of the session:

- 75% rated it as “excellent” (5/5)
- 25% rated it as “good” (4/5)



Furthermore, the facilitation of discussions was highly regarded:

- 75% of participants found the facilitation “very effective.”
- 25% found it “extremely effective.”

These results suggest that the session successfully fostered an engaging and structured learning environment, ensuring that participants felt actively involved in discussions. The effectiveness of facilitation also highlights the importance of well-designed dialogue formats in civic education initiatives.

5. 5. 4. Awareness and Understanding of European Youth Goals

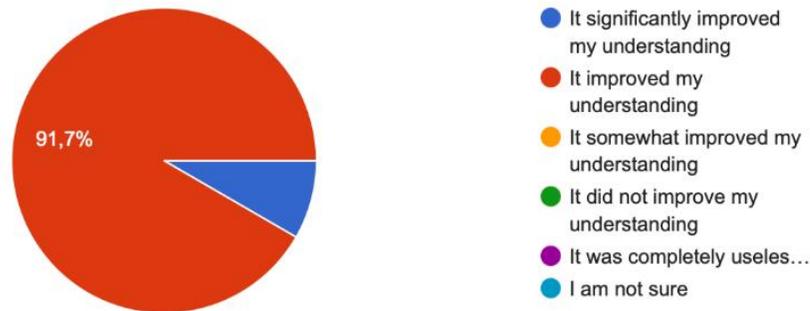
Before attending the session, familiarity with the European Youth Goals, particularly Goal #10 on youth inclusion, was varied among participants:



- 50% were “somewhat familiar.”
- 16.7% were “very familiar.”
- 25% were “not so familiar.”
- 8.3% were “not at all familiar.”

Following the session, there was a clear improvement in understanding:

- 91.7% stated that their understanding improved.
- 8.3% reported that their understanding significantly improved



This demonstrates the effectiveness of the session in increasing awareness of EU Youth Goals and their relevance to policymaking. Given that a substantial proportion of participants had limited prior knowledge, these findings underscore the importance of integrating more educational initiatives to enhance youth awareness of European-level policies.

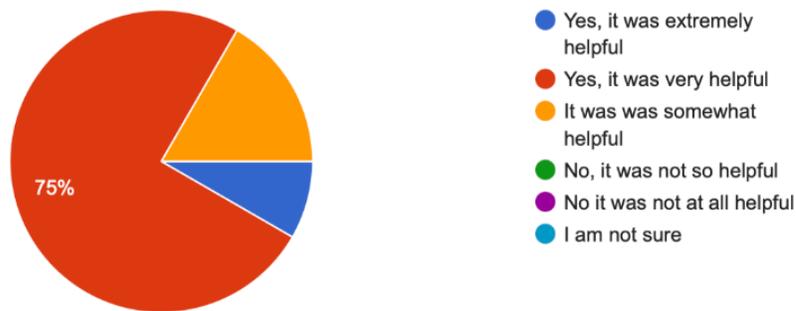
5. 5. 5. Understanding of Sustainability and Climate Justice

Prior to attending the session, participants’ awareness of sustainability and climate justice was relatively high, though some knowledge gaps persisted:

- 58.3% considered themselves “very informed.”
- 33.3% were “somewhat informed.”
- 8.3% were “not so informed.”

When evaluating the impact of the session:

- 75% found it “very helpful” in understanding EU decision-making and civic participation.
- 8.3% found it “extremely helpful.”
- 16.7% found it “somewhat helpful.”



These responses indicate that while most participants had a foundational understanding of sustainability and climate justice, the session played a role in deepening their knowledge—particularly in relation to the EU’s role in shaping environmental policies.

5. 5. 6. Willingness to Engage in EU Decision-Making

One of the key objectives of the focus group was to assess whether the session encouraged participants to seek further opportunities for engagement. After attending:

- 58.3% stated they were “very likely” to pursue engagement opportunities.
- 8.3% were “extremely likely.”
- 33.3% were “somewhat likely.”

These findings suggest that the session had a meaningful impact on participants’ motivation to become more involved in EU decision-making and civic activities. While the majority expressed a strong likelihood of future engagement, further support mechanisms—such as follow-up programs and mentorship opportunities—could sustain and enhance this momentum.

5. 5. 7. Results

The Finnish focus group provided valuable insights into young people’s perspectives on sustainability, climate justice, and civic engagement. The key findings suggest that while participants generally had limited prior involvement in EU and civic initiatives, the session effectively increased their understanding of EU Youth Goals and sustainability-related policies. The overwhelmingly positive reception of the session further highlights the importance of structured, well-facilitated discussions in fostering youth engagement.

A key challenge identified was **economic barriers**, which remain the most significant obstacle to participation. Addressing this issue through increased financial support mechanisms could improve accessibility and inclusivity. Additionally, while participants demonstrated a relatively high level of awareness regarding sustainability, their familiarity with EU Youth Goals was more limited, underscoring the need for targeted educational efforts in this area.

5. 5. 8. Recommendations for Future Initiatives



1. **Increase Accessibility to Civic Engagement Opportunities** – Address economic barriers by offering financial support, scholarships, and virtual engagement options to ensure wider participation.
2. **Enhance Awareness of EU Youth Goals** – Develop educational campaigns and integrate EU policy discussions into youth programs to improve understanding and relevance.
3. **Strengthen Facilitation Strategies** – Maintain and expand structured discussion formats that encourage meaningful participation and knowledge exchange.
4. **Encourage Long-Term Civic Engagement** – Establish follow-up programs, mentorship opportunities, and online platforms to sustain youth involvement beyond initial participation.

5. 6. Conclusion

As the session concluded, participants reflected on their discussions and reiterated the importance of ongoing engagement opportunities. They expressed enthusiasm for staying involved in the GreenScape project and emphasized the need for continuous dialogue between young people and decision-makers. Facilitators thanked participants for their valuable insights and outlined the next steps, including integrating the focus group findings into the project's development and inviting attendees to contribute to future activities.

The focus group provided critical insights into the perspectives of young people regarding sustainability, EU policies, and civic engagement. Key themes that emerged included the need for more accessible and relatable policy communication, increased opportunities for hands-on engagement, and structured support for youth-led sustainability initiatives. These findings will inform GreenScape's future strategies, ensuring that the project remains responsive to the needs and aspirations of young people in fostering a more sustainable future.

6. GREECE

The Greek focus group for the GreenScape project took place in Thessaloniki on December 12-13, 2024. The session was facilitated by Maria Evaggelidou (PYLON ONE) and Alkistis Carmen Margka (Fifty-Fifty), bringing together 25 young participants to explore themes of sustainability, civic engagement, and European environmental policies. This qualitative inquiry aimed to capture their perceptions, challenges, and aspirations regarding sustainability and youth participation in EU decision-making.

6. 1. Perspectives on Sustainability

The discussions illuminated diverse conceptual understandings of sustainability. Participants articulated sustainability as an intergenerational responsibility, emphasizing the need to balance environmental conservation, economic stability, and social equity. Several contributors underscored the tangible impacts of environmental degradation in their communities, citing rising pollution levels, biodiversity loss, and extreme weather events as pressing concerns.

The focus group highlighted an acute awareness of localized ecological challenges. Urban participants pointed to ineffective waste management, air pollution, and inadequate green spaces, while those from rural backgrounds expressed frustration over land degradation and insufficient infrastructural support for sustainable agricultural practices. The consensus was that sustainability must be approached



holistically, integrating economic incentives, environmental stewardship, and public engagement. Participants shared their involvement in local sustainability efforts, including waste reduction campaigns, reforestation projects, and environmental education initiatives. Many underscored the importance of community-led action, yet they also expressed concerns over the longevity and scalability of such efforts, often constrained by limited funding, bureaucratic inertia, and a lack of public awareness.

A recurrent theme was the necessity of fostering stronger collaborations between grassroots movements, municipal authorities, and environmental NGOs. Several attendees advocated for sustainability curricula in schools, increased financial support for youth-led green projects, and heightened visibility for community initiatives to inspire broader participation. The discussions pointed to a strong willingness to engage, but also underscored the structural barriers that impede sustained activism.

6. 2. Knowledge of EU Sustainability Frameworks

Participants demonstrated varying degrees of familiarity with EU sustainability policies. While some were well-versed in overarching frameworks such as the European Green Deal, others had only a superficial understanding of EU climate objectives. A critical challenge identified was the inaccessibility of policy information, with many stating that EU environmental directives often remain abstract and detached from their lived realities.

Those with greater awareness highlighted EU efforts in promoting circular economies, carbon neutrality, and renewable energy transitions. However, they also voiced skepticism regarding the effectiveness of policy implementation at the local level, particularly in peripheral and rural regions. Many expressed a desire for clearer, more youth-oriented communication from EU institutions and suggested the development of interactive educational platforms to bridge this knowledge gap.

6. 3. Expectations for the EU's Role in Sustainability

The discussion reflected high expectations for the EU to play a more interventionist role in advancing sustainability. Participants called for increased financial investments in sustainable innovation, stricter regulatory enforcement against corporate polluters, and more inclusive participatory mechanisms that amplify youth voices in environmental decision-making.

Several attendees advocated for policy frameworks that go beyond broad directives and instead offer concrete, region-specific solutions. They proposed that the EU facilitate local sustainability incubators, where young people could access mentorship, funding, and institutional support to develop and scale environmental projects. The overall sentiment suggested that while the EU's climate ambitions were acknowledged, their execution required greater localization and engagement with young stakeholders.

6. 3. 1. Youth Engagement

The participants articulated a strong intrinsic motivation for engaging in environmental advocacy. Many cited a personal commitment to protecting nature, a sense of social responsibility, and the desire to be part of a larger collective movement addressing climate challenges. The visibility of local environmental



degradation further reinforced their determination to act, with several individuals expressing frustration over governmental inaction and institutional inertia.

Additionally, community-based activism was identified as a key driver of engagement. Many reported that participation in local sustainability projects fostered a sense of belonging and purpose. Hands-on initiatives, such as urban gardening, river clean-ups, and public awareness campaigns, were seen as particularly effective in sustaining long-term youth involvement.

6. 3. 2. Structural Barriers to Youth Participation

Despite their enthusiasm, participants outlined several structural impediments that limit their ability to engage in sustainability advocacy. Time constraints, economic precarity, and a lack of institutional support were the most frequently cited barriers. Many young people struggle to balance activism with academic, professional, or familial obligations, leading to inconsistent engagement.

Another major obstacle was the perceived inaccessibility of civic participation channels. Several attendees expressed frustration at the bureaucratic complexity of EU programs and policy dialogues, which they felt were dominated by experts and policymakers rather than grassroots voices. They called for more accessible and youth-friendly pathways to civic engagement, such as digital platforms that simplify participation in EU climate initiatives.

Moreover, participants identified financial and logistical constraints as additional barriers. Limited funding for youth-led sustainability projects, a lack of transportation to engagement opportunities, and insufficient institutional backing for grassroots initiatives all contributed to feelings of disempowerment. To address these challenges, participants proposed targeted youth grants, travel stipends for civic engagement events, and capacity-building programs that equip young people with the skills to navigate policy frameworks effectively.

6. 4. Feedback and Evaluation

The proposed GreenScape activities—ranging from sustainability workshops to networking events with policymakers—were well-received by the participants. Many appreciated the hands-on approach of community-driven environmental initiatives and expressed enthusiasm for engaging in structured capacity-building programs. However, accessibility concerns were raised, particularly regarding geographical and socio-economic inclusivity.

Several attendees suggested incorporating hybrid (online and offline) engagement methods to ensure that those unable to travel could still benefit from GreenScape's educational and networking opportunities. Others recommended offering certification for participation in sustainability workshops, emphasizing that formal recognition could serve as an incentive for youth engagement while enhancing their employability. Participants stressed the importance of aligning GreenScape's activities with the lived realities of young people in Greece. They emphasized the need for increased mentorship opportunities, funding for grassroots sustainability initiatives, and policy literacy training to enhance their capacity for civic engagement. A recurring recommendation was the establishment of youth-led advisory boards within the GreenScape framework, allowing young environmental advocates to co-design project activities and directly influence decision-making processes. The sentiment expressed



was that sustainable engagement requires both structured institutional support and genuine youth ownership over initiatives.

The Greek focus group provided valuable insights into the aspirations, challenges, and expectations of young people regarding sustainability and civic engagement. While participants exhibited strong commitment and enthusiasm for environmental advocacy, systemic barriers—such as economic constraints, bureaucratic complexities, and limited access to participatory mechanisms—continue to hinder broader youth involvement. The discussions underscored the necessity of making EU sustainability policies more accessible, localized, and youth-oriented. The recommendations put forth—ranging from enhanced educational outreach to targeted funding and mentorship programs—highlight practical steps toward fostering deeper and more effective youth engagement in environmental advocacy. As the GreenScape project moves forward, integrating these perspectives will be crucial in ensuring its long-term impact and relevance within the Greek context.

6. 5. Analysis of the Questionnaire Responses

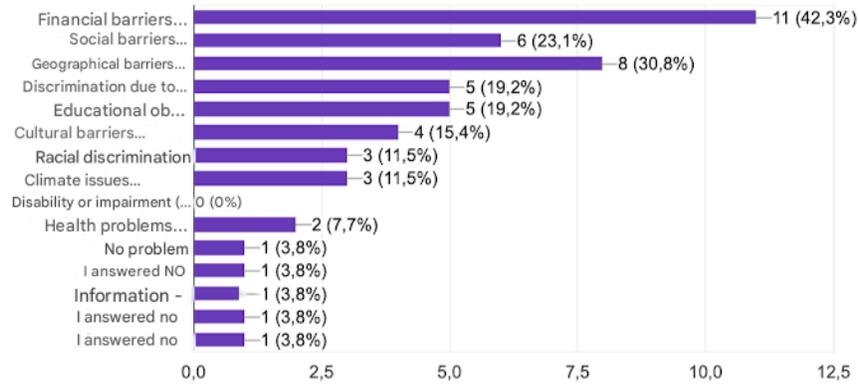
To complement the insights derived from the focus group discussions, participants in Greece completed a structured questionnaire aimed at evaluating their prior engagement with EU and civic initiatives, the barriers they faced, and their overall experience with the focus group. The responses provide valuable perspectives on youth engagement in sustainability and climate justice within the Greek context.

6. 5. 1. Prior Engagement in EU and Civic Activities:

A significant proportion of participants (73.1%) had previously engaged in EU or civic participation programs, while 26.9% had not. This suggests that the majority of respondents were already somewhat familiar with European governance mechanisms and sustainability-related civic initiatives, yet a considerable portion of youth remains disengaged from such opportunities.

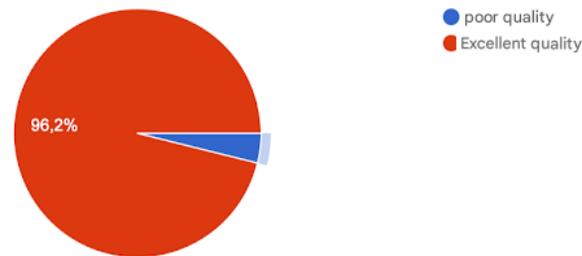
6. 5. 2. Barriers to Participation

When asked whether they faced obstacles limiting their participation in youth and civic engagement events, 73.1% of respondents indicated that they encountered barriers, whereas 26.9% did not. Among those who reported difficulties, economic barriers were the most frequently cited challenge (42.3%), followed by geographical constraints (30.8%) and social barriers (23.1%). Other identified challenges included discrimination based on identity (19.2%), educational obstacles (19.2%), cultural barriers (15.4%), and racial discrimination (11.5%). A small percentage (7.7%) cited health-related issues, while no participants reported disabilities as a limiting factor. These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of barriers to youth engagement, reinforcing the need for more inclusive and accessible initiatives, particularly addressing economic and geographical constraints.



6. 5. 3. Satisfaction with the Focus Group Experience

The Greek focus group sessions were overwhelmingly well-received. Every participant (100%) rated their overall experience with the focus group as highly satisfactory, assigning the highest possible score (5). Additionally, 96.2% rated the quality and structure of the session as excellent, with only 3.8% expressing dissatisfaction. The effectiveness of the session’s facilitation was also highly regarded, with 73.8% finding it extremely effective in fostering open discussion and 26.9% considering it very effective. These positive evaluations affirm the success of the focus group structure in creating a meaningful and engaging dialogue.



6. 5. 4. Awareness and Understanding of European Youth Goals

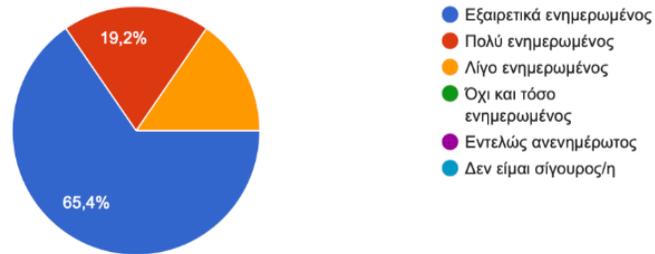
Prior to participating in the focus group, 50% of respondents reported having an in-depth understanding of the European Youth Goals, particularly Goal 10 concerning youth inclusion. A further 34.6% indicated they were very familiar with these objectives, while 15.4% had only a moderate level of awareness. Following the session, 80.8% stated that their understanding of the European Youth Goals significantly improved, while 11.5% reported moderate improvement and 7.7% experienced minor gains. These findings suggest that the focus group successfully enhanced participants’ comprehension of EU youth policies and their relevance to civic engagement.

6. 5. 5. Understanding of Sustainability and Climate Justice

A substantial proportion of respondents (65.4%) considered themselves extremely well-informed on sustainability and climate justice before attending the focus group, while 19.2% felt very informed and



15.4% had only a basic awareness of these issues. The focus group session effectively bridged existing knowledge gaps, as 88.5% of participants found it highly useful in understanding how they could actively engage in EU decision-making processes related to climate action. The remaining 11.5% found the session useful, though to a lesser extent. These results highlight the session's role in reinforcing youth awareness and engagement in environmental advocacy.



6. 5. 6. Willingness to Engage in EU Decision-Making

Following the focus group, 80.8% of participants expressed a strong likelihood of seeking opportunities to engage in EU decision-making processes, while 15.4% were moderately inclined to do so. Only 3.8% remained uncertain about their future involvement. This indicates a notable increase in interest and motivation among Greek youth to participate in policymaking activities, reinforcing the effectiveness of experiential learning approaches such as the escape room format utilized in the GreenScape project.

6. 5. 7. Key Takeaways from the Session

Participants highlighted various aspects as the most valuable lessons gained from the focus group. Recurring themes included the importance of exchanging ideas among peers, the role of collaboration in effective policymaking, and the significance of EU youth policies in shaping future initiatives. Several respondents emphasized how the session deepened their knowledge of sustainability and EU governance mechanisms, while others appreciated the opportunity to network with like-minded individuals. The gamification and interactive nature of the session were also recognized as effective tools for enhancing engagement and comprehension.

6. 5. 8. Recommendations for Future Initiatives

Although participants were overwhelmingly satisfied with the session, some suggestions for improvement emerged. The most common recommendations included:

- Increasing the duration of discussions to allow for deeper exploration of key topics.
- Enhancing outreach efforts to promote greater participation, particularly through social media campaigns.
- Expanding the visibility of such events to reach a wider audience.
- Providing more frequent opportunities for similar engagement activities.

6. 6. Conclusion and Recommendations



The findings from Greece's focus group underscore a strong interest in sustainability and civic engagement among young participants. Despite a high level of initial awareness, the focus group successfully enhanced their understanding of EU youth goals, climate justice, and decision-making processes. Economic and geographical barriers remain significant challenges to participation, necessitating targeted strategies to enhance accessibility.

Recommendations for Future Initiatives:

- **Address Economic and Geographic Barriers:** Introduce travel stipends, virtual engagement options, and scholarship opportunities for participation in EU programs.
- **Enhance Practical Engagement:** Provide hands-on activities such as policy simulations, advocacy workshops, and mentorship programs with policymakers.
- **Expand Outreach and Awareness:** Utilize digital platforms and social media to increase awareness of sustainability initiatives and civic engagement opportunities.
- **Sustain Engagement Beyond Events:** Establish follow-up initiatives such as online forums, networking events, and long-term projects to maintain youth participation and momentum.

The GreenScape project in Greece demonstrated a successful model of interactive education, fostering a more informed and proactive generation equipped to contribute to sustainability and EU policy discourse.

7. SPAIN

On January 15, 2025, a focus group discussion was held in Barcelona, Spain, bringing together 25 young participants from diverse academic and professional backgrounds. Facilitated by Bibiana Cunningham, the session aimed to explore youth perspectives on sustainability, EU policies, and civic engagement within the framework of the GreenScape project. Through an open and participatory dialogue, the discussion shed light on key concerns, barriers to engagement, and potential strategies for fostering more effective sustainability initiatives. Prior to the discussion, participants were briefed on confidentiality and consent procedures, ensuring a safe space where their insights could be shared openly.

7. 1. Understanding Sustainability and Community Impact

Participants expressed a broad and multi-dimensional understanding of sustainability, with perspectives ranging from ecological responsibility to economic and social equity. A recurring theme was the disproportionate impact of climate change on marginalized communities, particularly in the Global South. Some participants criticized the Western-centric approach to environmental solutions, advocating instead for decolonized, context-specific strategies that acknowledge the challenges faced by different regions. Locally, concerns were raised about erratic weather patterns, food security, and biodiversity loss, illustrating how climate change is perceived as both a global and immediate issue. While some participants actively engaged in grassroots sustainability initiatives such as waste reduction programs and urban gardening, others cited challenges related to funding, bureaucracy, and public disengagement. Financial barriers were particularly significant, as many felt that sustainability remains inaccessible due to the high cost of eco-friendly products and services. Participants emphasized the



necessity of systemic change, advocating for corporate and governmental responsibility alongside individual efforts.

7. 2. EU Environmental Policies: Awareness and Expectations

The discussion revealed a general lack of awareness regarding specific EU environmental policies. While many participants were familiar with broad initiatives such as the European Green Deal and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, they struggled to identify concrete policy measures and their impact on daily life. Urban participants acknowledged improvements in renewable energy policies and stricter waste management regulations, yet those from rural areas felt disconnected from EU-driven initiatives, highlighting the need for localized policy implementation.

Expectations for EU action were high, with participants calling for stricter regulations on polluting industries, greater investment in green technologies, and enhanced public transportation networks. They also stressed the importance of clear and engaging communication strategies, advocating for policies that are framed in a way that is accessible to young people. Many argued that sustainability should be integrated into mainstream culture through media, entertainment, and social networks to enhance public engagement.

7. 3. Civic Engagement and Youth Motivation

Young people expressed a strong desire to participate in environmental advocacy, but several barriers hindered their involvement. A major obstacle was the overwhelming scale of the climate crisis, which often led to feelings of powerlessness and inaction. Many noted that while awareness is essential, the way climate issues are framed—often as distant or overly technical—makes it difficult to grasp their urgency. To counteract this, participants suggested a shift toward localized, tangible actions that make sustainability feel personal and immediate. Other significant barriers included lack of clear information, economic constraints, and frustration with political inaction. Some felt that policymakers fail to meaningfully address climate concerns, while corporate greenwashing further erodes trust. Participants emphasized the need for more engaging learning experiences, such as gamified education and AI-driven tools, to make sustainability more interactive and compelling. The GreenScape escape room was viewed as a promising example of this approach.

7. 4. Feedback on the GreenScape Project

Overall, the GreenScape project was well received, with participants appreciating its immersive and hands-on approach to sustainability education. They noted that experiential learning fosters deeper engagement and can help combat the sense of detachment that many young people feel toward climate issues. However, they suggested several areas for improvement. Expanding the project's reach to rural areas was a key recommendation, as many felt that environmental education efforts are often concentrated in urban centers. The inclusion of mentorship programs connecting youth with sustainability professionals was also proposed to provide guidance and career pathways. Regarding the escape room, participants emphasized the need for activities that incorporate real-life decision-making scenarios, allowing players to see the direct consequences of their choices. They expressed particular interest in themes such as circular fashion, personal environmental impact, and systemic



accountability. Incentives such as certifications and financial compensation for participation were also suggested as ways to enhance engagement.

7. 5. Analysis of the Questionnaire Responses

To complement the focus group discussions, participants in Spain responded to a structured questionnaire assessing their prior engagement in EU and civic initiatives, perceived barriers to participation, and satisfaction with the focus group experience. The responses provide key insights into the challenges and opportunities for youth engagement in sustainability and climate justice within the Spanish context.

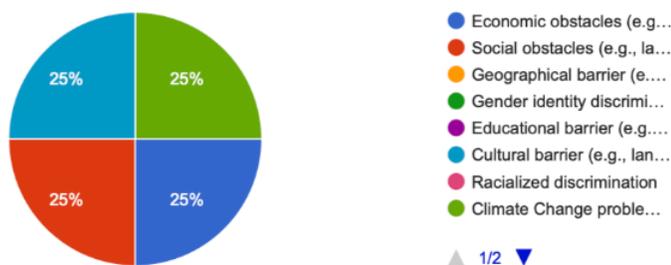
7. 5. 1. Prior Engagement in EU and Civic Activities

A notable 52.9% of participants had not previously participated in EU or civic engagement programs, indicating that while a portion of young people have engaged with such initiatives, a significant number remain uninvolved. This suggests that outreach efforts need to be strengthened to increase participation, particularly among those unfamiliar with available opportunities.

7. 5. 2. Barriers to Participation

Interestingly, a vast majority (87.5%) reported that they did not face significant barriers to participation in civic and youth engagement activities. However, among the 12.5% who did encounter obstacles, these barriers were distributed evenly:

- 25% cited cultural barriers.
- 25% identified climate change as a barrier.
- 25% reported economic obstacles.
- 25% mentioned social obstacles.



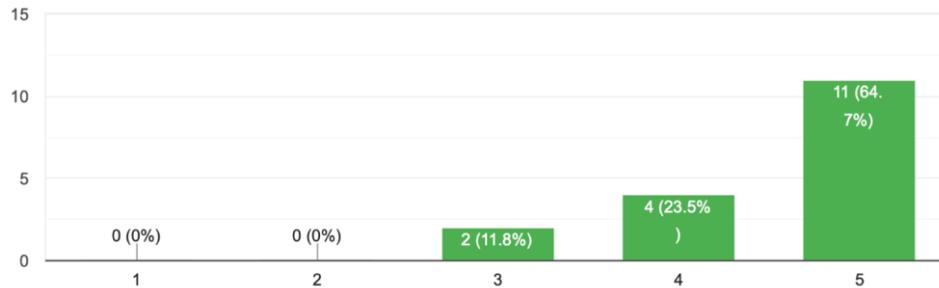
This relatively low reporting of barriers suggests that, in contrast to other contexts where economic or geographical obstacles are predominant, young people in Spain may have relatively accessible pathways to participation. However, for those who do experience challenges, cultural and social factors play a crucial role, highlighting the need for inclusive and diverse engagement strategies.

7. 5. 3. Satisfaction with the Focus Group Experience



Overall, the session was well received, with 94.1% of participants expressing satisfaction:

- 64.7% rated their experience as “extremely satisfied” (5/5).
- 29.4% rated it as “satisfied” (4/5).
- 5.9% remained neutral (3/5).



Similarly, when evaluating the quality and structure of the session:

- 64.7% rated it as “excellent” (5/5).
- 23.5% rated it as “good” (4/5).
- 11.8% remained neutral (3/5).

In terms of facilitation effectiveness, responses further confirmed the positive reception:

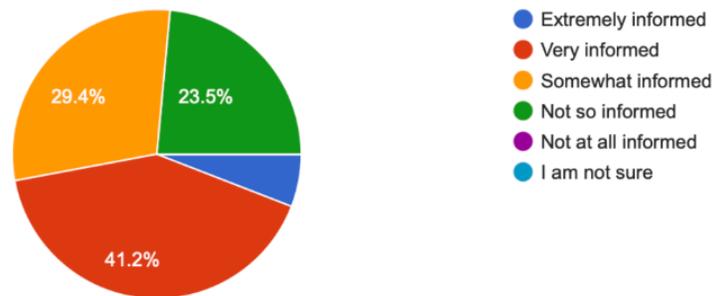
- 52.9% found it “extremely effective.”
- 29.4% found it “very effective.”
- 17.6% found it “somewhat effective.”

These results suggest that the session was generally successful in fostering an engaging and structured dialogue. However, a small percentage of participants remained neutral, which may indicate room for improvement in the session’s format or interactivity.

7. 5. 4. Awareness and Understanding of European Youth Goals

Before attending the session, familiarity with the European Youth Goals, particularly Goal #10 on youth inclusion, varied among participants:

- 23.5% were “very familiar.”
- 47.1% were “somewhat familiar.”
- 5.9% were “not so familiar.”
- 23.5% were “not at all familiar.”



Following the session, a clear improvement in understanding was observed:

- 47.1% stated that their understanding significantly improved.
- 47.1% reported that their understanding improved.
- 5.9% noted a slight improvement.

This data suggests that while many participants had some prior awareness of the EU Youth Goals, the session played a crucial role in deepening their knowledge. Given that nearly a quarter of participants had no prior familiarity, continued efforts to integrate EU Youth Goals into educational and civic initiatives could be beneficial.

7. 5. 5. Perceived Relevance of European Youth Goals

Participants were asked to assess the relevance of the European Youth Goals to their lives and aspirations:

- 29.4% found them “extremely relevant.”
- 47.1% found them “very relevant.”
- 17.6% found them “somewhat relevant.”
- 5.9% found them “not so relevant.”

These responses indicate that the majority of participants (76.5%) view the Youth Goals as highly applicable to their personal and professional futures, reinforcing their importance in shaping youth-oriented policies.

7. 5. 6. Understanding of Sustainability and Climate Justice

Prior to the session, participants’ self-reported knowledge levels on sustainability and climate justice varied:

- 41.2% considered themselves “very informed.”
- 5.9% considered themselves “extremely informed.”
- 29.4% were “somewhat informed.”
- 23.5% were “not so informed.”



Following the session, participants evaluated how helpful it was in improving their understanding of EU decision-making and civic engagement:

- 35.3% found it “very helpful.”
- 35.3% found it “extremely helpful.”
- 23.5% found it “somewhat helpful.”
- 5.9% found it “not so helpful.”

While a majority found the session beneficial in enhancing their knowledge, a small portion of participants did not find it particularly helpful. This suggests that while the focus group was generally effective, further refinement in content delivery may be needed to engage all participants fully.

7. 5. 7. Willingness to Engage in EU Decision-Making

A key objective of the session was to assess whether it motivated participants to pursue further opportunities in civic engagement. After attending:

- 29.4% stated they were “extremely likely” to engage in EU decision-making activities.
- 52.9% were “very likely.”
- 17.6% were “somewhat likely.”

These results indicate a strong increase in motivation among participants, suggesting that the session successfully encouraged greater interest in civic participation.

7. 5. 8. Key Takeaways and Insights

Participants identified several key insights gained from the session, including:

- The importance of taking initiative in climate action.
- The power of collaboration in tackling global issues.
- A heightened sense of urgency regarding climate change.
- Awareness of gender equality progress.
- Greater understanding of the environmental impact of daily choices.
- Recognition of the feasibility challenges associated with global sustainability goals.
- Learning about international perspectives on climate change.

7. 5. 9. Suggestions for Improvement

Participants provided a range of recommendations for enhancing future sessions, including:

1. More interactive workshops and team-based activities, particularly in real-world settings.
2. Improved marketing strategies to attract more participants and allow for better preparation.
3. More open discussion formats, allowing for organic conversations rather than structured questions.
4. Providing snacks or coffee to improve focus and engagement.
5. Facilitating more cross-national collaboration to include diverse perspectives.



6. Creating structured debate opportunities, allowing participants to explore differing viewpoints.
7. Prioritizing quality over quantity, ensuring that participants are genuinely engaged rather than merely fulfilling quotas.

7. 5. 10. Results

The Spanish focus group provided valuable insights into young people's perceptions of sustainability, climate justice, and civic engagement. The session was well received, with strong satisfaction rates and a demonstrated impact on participants' understanding of EU policies and climate issues. While the majority did not perceive significant barriers to civic participation, those who did identified cultural and economic challenges as key concerns.

A notable outcome was the increased motivation to engage in EU decision-making following the session, highlighting the potential of structured dialogues in fostering civic participation. However, feedback also indicated areas for improvement, particularly in terms of session structure, interactivity, and outreach strategies.

7. 6. Conclusion

The focus group in Barcelona underscored the need for systemic changes to complement individual environmental efforts. While young people are motivated to take action, structural barriers—including financial constraints, bureaucratic complexity, and limited access to resources—often hinder their participation. Participants called for clearer, more relatable communication from policymakers, increased investment in sustainability education, and greater integration of environmental narratives into everyday cultural experiences. The discussion reaffirmed the importance of projects like GreenScape in providing young people with interactive and engaging avenues to learn about sustainability. Moving forward, fostering genuine dialogue, offering tangible incentives, and ensuring that sustainability initiatives are accessible to diverse communities will be critical in strengthening youth involvement in climate action.

8. CROSS ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

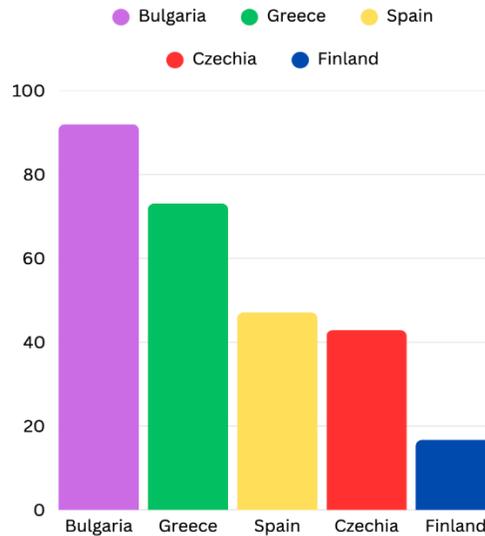
The transnational analysis of the focus group findings across the five participating countries reveals both shared patterns and country-specific divergences in youth perceptions of sustainability, civic engagement, and EU climate policies. Identifying common themes and highlighting differences makes this comparative analysis able to provide valuable insights into the structural barriers, motivations, and opportunities for fostering youth-led sustainability initiatives in the EU context.

Across all focus groups, young participants demonstrated a general awareness of sustainability but varying levels of engagement with the broader concept of climate justice. In the Czech Republic, Finland, and Bulgaria, sustainability was initially associated with individual actions such as recycling and reducing waste, with systemic change only emerging later in discussions. Conversely, in Greece and Spain, participants strongly emphasized sustainability as an intergenerational responsibility and linked it explicitly to issues of economic stability and social equity. Localized environmental challenges influenced perspectives significantly. Greek and Bulgarian participants highlighted urban pollution and



inadequate green spaces, while rural participants in Spain and Finland emphasized land degradation and biodiversity loss. These disparities underline the importance of tailoring sustainability education and advocacy to specific regional concerns.

PRIOR ENGAGEMENT IN EU AND CIVIC ACTIVITIES

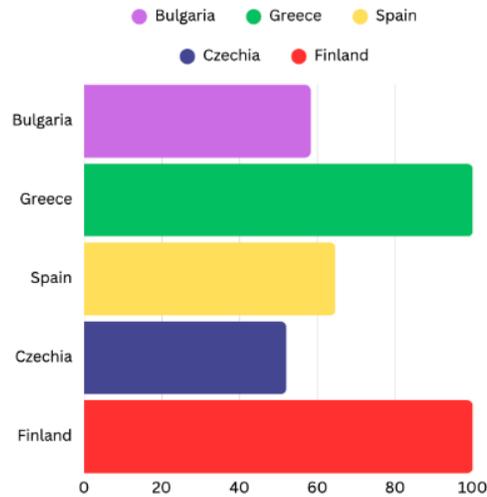


A recurrent challenge across all countries was the limited awareness of EU sustainability policies. While some participants in Greece and Spain demonstrated familiarity with overarching frameworks such as the European Green Deal, they struggled to identify concrete policy measures affecting their daily lives. Finnish and Czech participants noted the complexity of EU policy language as a major barrier to engagement, calling for more youth-friendly communication strategies. Similarly, Bulgarian youth expressed frustration over bureaucratic obstacles that made EU climate initiatives feel distant and inaccessible. Across all focus groups, there was a consensus on the need for localized policy implementation and direct engagement with young stakeholders. Participants advocated for clearer, region-specific solutions and interactive educational platforms to bridge the knowledge gap between EU climate strategies and grassroots activism.

The motivation for youth engagement in sustainability varied across the participating countries. In Spain and Greece, youth activism was strongly driven by a sense of social justice, with many participants involved in local sustainability initiatives such as waste reduction campaigns and reforestation projects. In contrast, Czech and Finnish participants, while supportive of environmental causes, expressed feelings of disempowerment and uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of individual efforts. Bulgaria presented a mixed picture, with young people eager to engage but facing significant institutional barriers, including a lack of financial support and limited visibility for youth-led environmental initiatives. Across all countries, a recurring theme was the need for mentorship programs, capacity-building workshops, and structured civic engagement opportunities to sustain long-term participation in climate action.

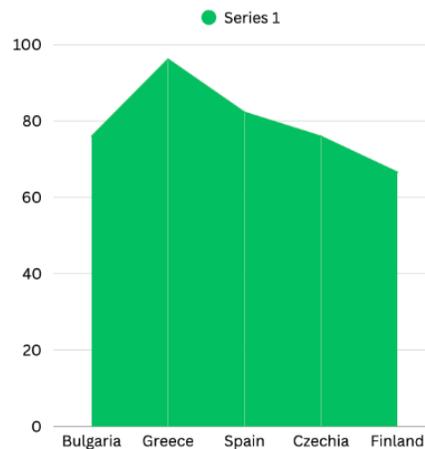


SATISFACTION WITH THE FOCUS GROUP EXPERIENCE



Despite the enthusiasm for sustainability advocacy, participants in all countries cited structural challenges that hinder their ability to engage fully. Economic constraints emerged as a key obstacle, particularly in the Czech Republic and Bulgaria, where financial limitations were the most commonly cited reason for disengagement. Spanish and Greek participants also highlighted the cost of sustainable living, arguing that eco-friendly choices are often financially inaccessible. Time constraints and competing obligations (academic, professional, familial) were frequently mentioned in Finland and Spain, where young people struggled to balance civic engagement with other responsibilities. Additionally, across all countries, there was a shared perception that EU decision-making remains overly complex and dominated by policymakers rather than grassroots voices, making it difficult for youth to contribute meaningfully.

WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN EU DECISION-MAKING



Based on the focus group findings, several transnational recommendations emerge to strengthen youth engagement in sustainability and climate justice:



1. **Increase Accessibility to EU Climate Policies:** Develop simplified, youth-oriented resources that explain EU sustainability frameworks in relatable and engaging formats, such as interactive digital platforms, infographics, and gamified learning experiences.
2. **Expand Financial Support and Incentives:** Address economic barriers by offering targeted grants, scholarships, and stipends for youth-led sustainability projects, particularly in countries where financial constraints limit participation.
3. **Foster Localized Policy Implementation:** Ensure that EU climate initiatives are adaptable to regional contexts by collaborating with local municipalities, NGOs, and youth organizations to design context-specific solutions.
4. **Strengthen Civic Education and Mentorship:** Introduce sustainability curricula in schools and establish mentorship programs that connect young advocates with professionals in the field to enhance knowledge-sharing and skill development.
5. **Enhance Participatory Mechanisms:** Simplify the process for youth to engage with EU climate policies by creating accessible channels for direct participation, such as advisory boards, digital forums, and hybrid engagement opportunities.

The findings underscore the transformative potential of initiatives like GreenScape, which bridge the gap between policy and practice through experiential education. By implementing the above recommendations, the project can play a pivotal role in empowering young people to become active agents of change in the fight for a sustainable and just future across Europe.



9. CONCLUSION

The Greenscape project has shed light on the diverse ways young people across Europe engage with sustainability, civic participation, and EU policy frameworks. The focus groups held in the Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Finland, and Bulgaria have revealed both a strong commitment to climate justice and the challenges that hinder deeper involvement. Participants consistently expressed a sense of urgency regarding environmental action, demonstrating enthusiasm for grassroots initiatives, advocacy efforts, and institutional engagement. However, structural obstacles such as economic constraints, bureaucratic complexities, and limited access to decision-making processes often prevent young people from fully participating in sustainability efforts.

A key finding across all countries is the gap between young people's aspirations and the accessibility of EU sustainability policies. While many participants recognized the significance of initiatives like the European Green Deal, they often found these policies abstract, distant, or difficult to navigate. There was a clear demand for more youth-friendly communication, localized policy implementation, and practical opportunities to engage with environmental governance. The interactive and experiential approach of the Greenscape project, particularly through its escape room methodology, was seen as an effective way to bridge this gap and make sustainability education more engaging and relevant.

The discussions also highlighted the need for stronger institutional support for youth engagement in sustainability. Participants emphasized the importance of long-term involvement opportunities that extend beyond one-time events, ensuring that their contributions lead to tangible outcomes. Many expressed the desire for mentorship programs, structured civic participation channels, and greater recognition of their efforts within both national and European frameworks. Accessibility and inclusivity emerged as crucial factors in sustaining engagement, with calls for financial support, digital resources, and hybrid participation models to ensure that young people from diverse backgrounds can contribute meaningfully to climate action.

The insights gathered through the Greenscape project underscore the potential of young people to drive transformative change in sustainability and climate justice. Their motivation and commitment are evident, but their effectiveness depends on the availability of structural support, clear pathways for involvement, and educational tools that empower them to take action. Moving forward, it will be essential to integrate these perspectives into policy recommendations and institutional strategies to ensure that youth civic engagement in sustainability is not only encouraged but actively sustained. Greenscape reaffirms its commitment to fostering a generation of informed, proactive, and empowered environmental advocates.



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10. PARTNERS

Greenscape is conducted by all six partners.



AIM is a newly established NGO in Sofia, Bulgaria that was established to empower children and youth while their search for a better world regarding of education, training, self-development and participation pursuits. AIM works with the local and European community to increase public awareness and advance, innovate and ultimately empower individuals.



Institut pro regionální rozvoj/Institute for Regional Development is non-profit organisation located in Prague, Czech Republic promoting the development of European regions. It does so mainly through international exchange of good practices and by educating key players in areas critical for regional and sustainable development.



Olemisen Balanssia ry is a research-based entity founded in year 2014 in Raisio, Southwest Finland. The main focus of their work is the definition of educational needs, with activities structured on data collection, evidence-based research, detecting right digital pedagogies and experimental assessment on results.



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PYLON ONE

PYLON ONE is an established NGO in Thessaloniki, Greece that was created to empower and support individuals, children, youth and adults, mainly regarding the improvement of social and economic life, the promotion of education, culture, the protection and development of the environment, the promotion of sport and well-being, the promotion of volunteerism and solidarity.



The Social Innovation and Cohesion Institute (Fifty-Fifty) is a Greek civil society organization (CSO) that aims to promote lifelong learning and transnational initiatives for young people, adult learners, and professionals through non-formal education. The organization's main vision is to develop innovation for implementation at the level of civil society and contribute to social cohesion.



Easypyme was born out of the necessity to connect expertise and skills from two different fields with a unified objective, to foster and support the productivity and competitiveness of small and medium sized businesses (SMB) in Spain. Easypyme.tech was formed under the legal form of Agrupación de Interés Económico (Economic Interest Group), uniting companies from two strategic Spanish regions: Madrid and Catalonia.