Youth Goals

EUYD9

RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION PHASE

Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe

Under the Trio Presidency France - Czech Republic - Sweden

Table of contents

Summary

Full results

Summary of the final report on the national consultations under The 9th Cycle Of The EU Youth Dialogue

The consultation phase of the 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (EUYD9) ran from January 2022 to August 2022. This summary of the EUYD9 results covers consultation activities conducted by National Working Groups, the input from International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations participating in EUYD9, and the outcomes of the EUYD9 Youth Conference in Prague, Czech Republic[1]. The results of the mid-term collection of good practices[2] are also incorporated.

Results of sub-theme 1: 'Information and education'

According to the young people who participated in the consultations, sources of information and opportunities to learn about climate change should:

- be youth-friendly, accessible, and available in a range of formats and languages.

- show the relevance of climate change to the lives of a diverse range of young people.

- be comprehensive, trustworthy and informed by science, covering a range of environmental topics and show political processes and developments related to sustainability.

- highlight links between climate change and inequality, of which many young people were unaware of in the consultations.

- go beyond information sharing and aim to motivate and empower young people to act in favour of sustainability, including through political action and by making sustainable lifestyle choices.

- avoid 'apocalyptic messages' which create feelings of hopelessness, and impact on young people's mental health.

To increase learning opportunities about sustainability, it was suggested that schools should be better used, and the topic included in their curricula. Though schools were the most widely suggested forum for these opportunities, civil society, youth clubs, youth organisations, digital tools and peer-to-peer programmes were also among the beneficial learning environments identified. The need for funding for youth work and youth organisations in order to expand learning opportunities relating to sustainability was raised.

Results of sub-theme 2: 'Action and empowerment'

A common opinion amongst consultation participants was that policy makers and politicians have shown a lack of action on sustainability and environment issues, and young people have very limited ways to hold decision-makers to account on these topics. There were

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[1] EUYD9 EU Youth Conference in Prague, Czech Republic. Final Conference Report: Deliberations on Sustainability and Inclusion, 25 July 2022

[2] EUYD9 Mid-Term Report. Good Practices and Consultation Processes, 30 June 2022.

feelings of mistrust and discontent towards politicians. Many, but not all, young people were able to identify a variety of available participatory mechanisms, (e.g., protests, petitions, civil society organisations). In general, however, these mechanisms were all said to be failing to bring about change on sustainability, due to inaction from the relevant policy makers. No specific types of mechanism were widely identified as more effective. Young people involved in formal structures, (e.g., youth councils, advisory boards) said that these structures did have some impact when embedded in policy-making. However, many young people were not aware of these structures. Opportunities to hold decision makers to account for were said to be improved by:

- policy-makers committing to more extensive action based on outcomes of participation mechanisms.

- improving the accessibility of participation mechanisms, ensuring that they focus on the concerns of marginalised groups as well as majority issues and enable marginalised young people to take leadership roles.

- increasing the number of opportunities for participation on sustainability, especially with informal and regular dialogue with elected representatives.

- Promoting and protecting youth councils with increased resources, establishing more local youth councils and ensuring legislative backing.

Results of sub-theme 3: 'Governance'

The EUYD9 Youth Conferences in France and in the Czech Republic and the informal ministerial meeting of 22 January 2022 in Strasbourg identified concerns from young people about youth washing. The young people that participated in the consultation phase were less familiar with the concept but often able to recognise it. Youth washing was said to be an engagement between politicians or policy-makers and young people, which has no genuine possibility of creating political change, despite expectations to do so. The consultations identified that participatory mechanisms can reduce youth washing by:

- increasing transparency and visibility by giving young people clear information on the feasibility of implementing their demands and ensuring policy-makers' commitments are publicly recorded and promoted.

- providing follow up and feedback to young people on the actions taken by policy-makers after participation activities with policy makers publicly reporting on changes achieved or justifying the lack of changes by given deadlines, as well as engaging in ongoing dialogue with young people.

- developing more consistent and stronger links between participation mechanisms and policy sectors linked to sustainability.

Results of sub-theme 4: 'Mobility and solidarity'

In the consultation, young people from a diverse range of marginalised backgrounds were asked what could enable them to take advantage of EU-wide mobility opportunities related to the environment. Financial barriers or perceived financial barriers were a major issue. These included direct costs, being unable to take a break from employment, or risking losing social welfare assistance. Language barriers and a lack of accessible information about opportunities also played a role. Some young people perceived EU mobility opportunities as not intended for young people from their backgrounds. The tendency to focus on immediate life needs or local issues rather than environmental topics was also a factor. The young people consulted identified a need to:

- lower the threshold for accessing opportunities by removing costs, offering short term (2-3 day) opportunities, simplifying administrative procedures, and connecting directly via school or local projects.

- increase funding and support to the organisations which promote mobility and solidarity projects

- focus on local environmental initiatives that are connected to and affect marginalised young people's own communities.

- Increase publicity and outreach, including delivering mobility opportunities connected to schools as well as by working with organisations, professionals, and previous participants, who have "bonds of trust" with young people in marginalised circumstances.

- emphasise the personal benefits of taking part, especially with regard to impact on employability and employment skills, and make opportunities more attractive.

- provide flexible, high quality and professional support that is able to meet a variety of different accessibility needs including resourcing organisations working with young people in marginalised circumstances to support environmental mobility opportunities.

Results of sub theme 5: 'Access to infrastructure'

Financial limitations were identified as one of the key factors preventing young people from making more sustainable living choices. The participants consulted called for the development of sustainable infrastructure that is affordable for young people. The general lack of infrastructure in rural areas was also highlighted. The types of infrastructure requested included:

- affordable and improved public transport along with safer and more widespread facilities for cycling, becoming viable options compared to cars.

- financially accessible housing options, as young people said that financial barriers were a major factor for them in making it difficult to consider sustainability when choosing housing.

- more green, open public spaces and promotion of renewable energy.

- affordable sustainable food and consumption options, including recycling and reuse. This was important to many young people but not as high a priority as other suggestions.

The EU Youth Conference in Prague identified a role for youth policy, and the youth sector in supporting young people's participation within the policy areas more directly related to infrastructure, such as transport, housing, urban planning, energy and agriculture

Results of cross-cutting theme: 'Intergenerational dialogue'

The EU Youth Conference in Prague identified that sustainability and inclusion are not 'youth issues', but rather issues that affect all of society. Therefore, it was said that good practice in policy-making required intergenerational dialogue between all generations. There were no strong demands for intergenerational dialogue in the EUYD9 consultations, but there was a degree of support when the topic was introduced to the young people participating. Intergenerational dialogue was said to have potential to:

- legitimise and build recognition for young peoples' concerns and efforts on sustainability issues.

- build mutual solidarity and support between generations.

- promote intergenerational learning and enable young people to influence older generations' views on sustainability.

It was said that intergenerational dialogue should not replace existing youth participation mechanisms or direct dialogue between young people and policy-makers but should take place alongside these activities.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND
METHODOLOGY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Introduction

EUYD9 theme and background

'The consultation phase' of the 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (EUYD9) ran from January 2022 to August 2022, under the TRIO Presidency of France - Czech Republic - Sweden. This document summarises results of consultation activities conducted by National Working Groups (NWGs). Input from International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations participating in the cycle, as well as the outcomes of the EUYD9 Youth Conference in Prague, Czech Republic and Mid-term collection of good practices are also incorporated.

The thematic framework of the 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue is Youth Goal #10 Sustainable Green Europe and Youth Goal #3 Inclusive Societies under the title "Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe". The two chosen European Youth Goals aim at "Achieving a society in which all young people are environmentally active, educated and able to make a difference in their everyday lives" and "Enabling and ensuring the inclusion of all young people in society". Sustainable development and social inclusion goes hand in hand and if we do not enable and ensure the inclusion of all young people in society, we cannot achieve a society in which all young people are environmentally active, educated and able to make a difference in their everyday lives. The TRIO considers intergenerational dialogue to be a tool that facilitates not only the involvement of young people in decision-making and policy-making and thus strengthens their participation in democratic processes, but also meaningful and facilitated sharing of views between young people and other generations. This goes in line with Youth Goal #3 that states that society needs to provide more spaces, opportunities, resources and programmes to foster dialogue and social cohesion, and combat discrimination and segregation. In a concrete form, the 9th cycle aims at contributing to the outcomes of the 8th cycle of EU Youth Dialogue under DE-PT-SI TRIO regarding the topic of participation by organizing discussions, debates, meetings and other events for different cohort groups within the topics selected for this cycle. Climate change and the environment remain at the top on the list of priorities for young people in Europe, recent polls show

For the last years, global, European, national and local youth organisations and movements have been alerting the public and policy makers on the climate emergency and its consequences, and calling for action to prevent climate disaster as well as to move forward with the overall implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, major European programmes have been launched recently to tackle the climate change and environmental degradation (such as the European Green Deal, the new European Bauhaus, Horizon Europe). It is important to reflect on how young people could be involved into these programmes.

Society needs to act against climate change and the growing environmental threats. But our society cannot solve a problem that it is not willing to fully acknowledge. During the global pandemic, climate research has noted a drop in CO_2 emissions related to the slowing down of global economic activities, emphasising the direct link between human activities and the environment. In order to raise collective awareness of climate change and environmental degradation and their impact, it is timely and important for the future of young people and our

society that one of the focus areas of the 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue is the Youth Goal #10 Sustainable Green Europe. The emphasis on this Youth Goal aims to encourage further discussion on how to tackle the climate emergency, to implement sustainable development goals and to further ensure that everyone starts taking responsibility for their actions and the impact they have on our planet and on the lives of current and future generations. Becoming sustainable is not a choice, it is an obligation. However, to approach sustainable development only by looking at the environmental dimension without taking into account other dimensions of sustainability, notably economic and social dimensions and more specifically focusing on inclusion and intergenerational justice, is to empty sustainable development of its political meaning and its social project. Intergenerational dialogue, as a method of ensuring the inclusion of all young people in society, can strengthen young people's participation in democratic processes, but also improve meaningful and facilitated sharing of views between young people and other generations. Therefore, the TRIO decided in this cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue to also partially focus on the Youth Goal #3 Inclusive Societies. Environment degradation and climate change are deeply intertwined with global patterns of inequality.

The most vulnerable people bear the brunt of environment degradation and climate change impacts, yet they have contributed the least to the crisis and are not sufficiently involved in decision making processes to address it. As the impacts of environment degradation and climate change mount, and even have been enhanced by the global pandemic, millions of vulnerable people face greater challenges in terms of e.g. extreme nature events, health effects, food security, livelihood security, water security, and cultural identity. These impacts have a direct impact on social cohesion. The actions call for intergenerational solidarity and justice so that the benefits for present generations would not stand in conflict with the rights of future generations. Decisions made now in the Green Deal will have long-lasting implications for future generations and must reflect the interests and views of younger citizens. Despite the increased consensus around the need to address intergenerational equity, policy responses have so far been inadequate. Many young people have the impression that they are not really 'spoken with' but rather 'spoken to'. They feel their participation serves the purpose of 'youth washing' of certain policies or decisions, rather than being a genuine exercise in consultation and inclusion. Successful engagement and appropriate inclusion require a level of trust and open communication. Young people should be considered and involved as equal partners in a continuous intergenerational dialogue (as opposed to one-off meetings) on policy development and processes, to which they can provide valuable contributions.

This joint approach of the TRIO is key during the 9th cycle and will be collectively addressed within the 18 months period, even though each member of the TRIO may give a specific focus during its presidency on some aspects of this overall issue. Young people are one of the most vulnerable groups that have to face these challenges. In addition, one third of young people in Europe are at risk of poverty and social exclusion

Many do not have access to their social, economic and political rights. Many continue to face multiple forms of discrimination, experience prejudice and hate crimes. Increased migration, especially from developing and war-torn countries, also brought several social and inclusion challenges. Therefore, it is crucial to work towards the fulfilment of the rights of all young people in Europe, including the most marginalised and excluded. As mentioned above, many young people are already a leading force of proposition and action to build a sustainable

world. It's important that all of them, even the ones with less opportunities are empowered to develop their full potential as actors of change. Sustainable development goals cannot be achieved without involving every young person and realising their rights. By putting together the European Youth Goal #10 and its main targets together with the Youth Goal #3 and combining them with the most pressing current issues, it will be up to young people to choose from the set of targets, the targets that they think are important to be addressed during the cycle.

The **results of the consultations** can be found in the following chapters of this document. They are organised according to the five sub-themes of the cycle:

1. Information and Education
2. Action and Empowerment
3. Governance
4. Mobility and Solidarity
5. Access to Infrastructure

The results of the cross-cutting theme on *"intergenerational dialogue"* are also included as a dedicated chapter. The results of the cross cutting theme on the sub-target of Youth goal #3 *("Ensure that marginalised young people are participating in all decision-making processes and are key players, particularly in processes concerning their own rights, wellbeing and interest")* are incorporated across all results chapters.

The reporting of the results aims to highlight major topics in discussions during the consultation including and areas of commonality and key areas of difference. They also seek to identify suggestions for measures and actions proposed through the consultation. The scale of EUYD9 means it is impossible to completely capture the detail of every recommendation made. Instead, the focus is on identifying the common ideas and broad underlying messages.

Consultation phase methodology

The EUYD9 consultation phase ran from January 2022 to August 2022. During this time NWGs in the member states of the European Union and INGYOs conducted consultation activities with young people on the themes of the cycle.

To inform the consultation activities a thematic framework and methodological guidance was created by the researchers supporting the cycle, under the guidance of the ESG. The thematic framework was based on the outcomes of the EU Youth Conference in France. It was linked to the 5 sub-themes of the cycle set by the ESG. Guiding questions were developed for each sub-theme (see findings chapters). The methodological guidance produced for the previous cycles. NWGs were asked to use a variety of methods with an emphasis on qualitative meaningful participation. Full details of NWG plans for their consultation activities can be found in the EUYD9 Mid Term report "Good Practices and Consultation Processes"[3]. INGYOs chose to facilitate an online event with their representatives.

Each NWG was asked to produce a report of its consultation findings. In total there were 27 NWG reports received. Romania and Slovenia were the only EU-27 countries which did not submit a report. Belgium submitted three reports, one for each of the Belgian communities. The INGYOs provided a video recording of their online event.

This data was thematically analysed by the researchers supporting EUYD9 to produce this consultation phase reports. The findings of the EUYUD9 Mid-Term Report on collection of good practices and the outcomes of the EU Youth Conference In Prague[4] were also used to inform this analysis.

Participant details

The numbers reached are more than ample to conduct high quality consultation. However, like all Youth Dialogue cycles, they are a very small proportion of the entire EU-27 youth population. This means EUYD is unlikely to have a substantial impact on raising awareness of EU institutions amongst young people as a whole population.

Overall, 22,719 young people were engaged in the consultation phase by NWGs. 35.7% (n=8132) took part in meaningful participation activities such as events and discussion groups. A further 64.3% (n=14659) gave feedback through other means such as surveys and online polls. On average NWGs engaged with 911 young people each[5]. See the appendix for a full breakdown of participant numbers and backgrounds by working group.

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[3] https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6860715

[4] https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6901343

[5] Counting the three Belgian working groups as one national group.

Backgrounds of participants

The NWGs provided partial data on the background of participants from which estimates of participant backgrounds across the entire process can be made[6].

Age of participants

Age of participants is shown in the graph below. The proportion of EUYD9 participants who are 18 or under (26.7%) has fallen substantially compared to EUYD9 (53.9%).
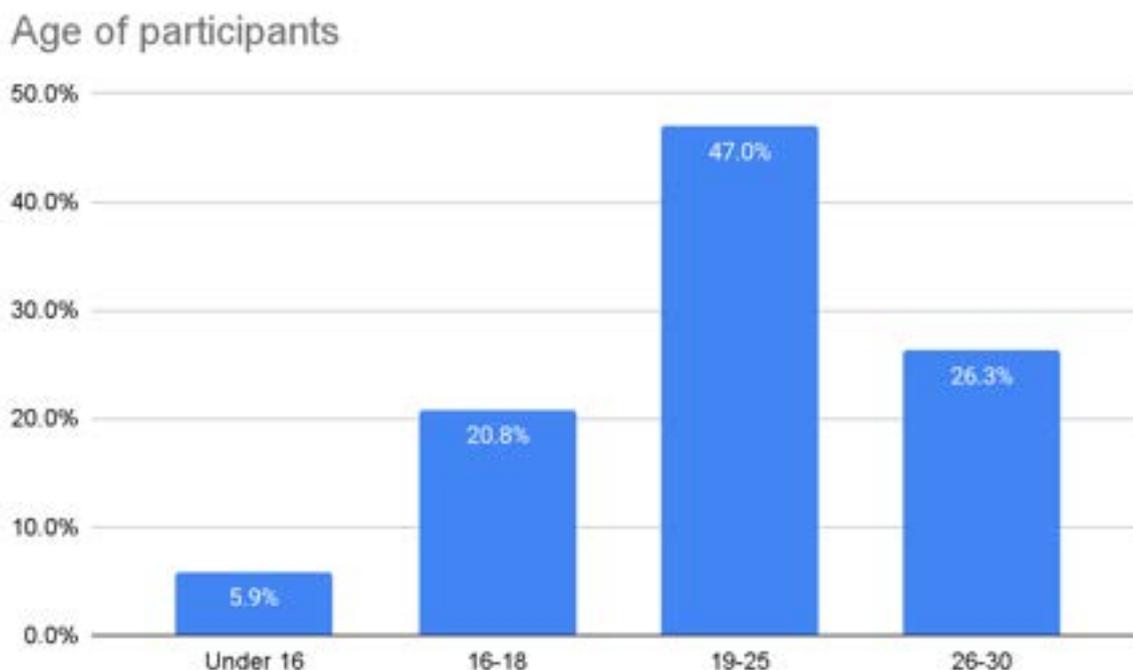
Marginalised groups and gender

Overall, the EUYD9 consultation phase activities were well accessed by young people from marginalised backgrounds. In most aspects there was an increase in the proportion of young people from marginalised backgrounds compared to previous cycles. This may be due to the specific targeted work undertaken, in which NWGs conducted consultation activities specifically with marginalised groups of young people (see the chapter on "Mobility and Solidarity" for details of these groups)

The proportion of young people identifying as disabled, part of an ethnic minority group, part of religious minority group, or LGBTQIA+ has increased since both EUYD8 and EUYD7. These groups are now well represented with EUYD. Though a more detailed analysis is required, it is likely that the proportion of young people from these groups within EUYD is at least the same as the proportion of young Europeans who identify as being from these

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[6] Background of participants was only monitored for 43.3% of NWG participants. This gap in data reflects national sensitivities around diversity monitoring, or methods where diversity monitoring would create a barrier to participation. This figure is consistent with previous cycles. INGYO participants data is not included in this estimation, but the likely impact of this is inconsequential. Overall, the figures in this section should be treated as estimates.

backgrounds in general. In the case of LGBTQIA+ young people there may be an overrepresentation of young people from this background in EUYD.

The proportion of young people from rural backgrounds has fallen since EUYD7. However, this may still be in line with the general proportion of young people from rural backgrounds in Europe. Rurality is a complex area to track accurately. The proportion of young people who are not in education employment or training (NEET) has increased since EUYD8 but is lower than Eurostat's data for EU-27 NEET rate in Q2-2022 (11.7%) . This group of young people is likely to be underrepresented in EUYD9.

As with the previous two cycles, there is still a substantial overrepresentation of young women compared to young men, with almost two thirds of participants identifying as female. The reason for this is not clear and worthy of further investigation. The proportion of participants identifying as 'other gender' has also grown notably since the past two cycles.

Table 1: Marginalised groups and gender			
	EUYD7** (Qualitative methods + Pan-European survey)	**EUYD8*** (Qualitative methods + national quantitative methods)	**EUYD9** (Qualitative methods + national quantitative methods)
Gender	Female = 60.3% Male = 38.9% Other gender = 0.8%	Female = 60.9% Male = 38.6% Other gender = 0.5%	Female = 63.7% Male = 34.3% Other gender = 1.9%
% of participants identifying as having a disability	4.8%	3.7%	19.2%
% of participants identify as being part of a religious minority group	13.4%	8.0%	20.8%
% of participants identify as being part of an ethnic minority group	13.3%	11.7%	20.3%
% of participants identifying as LGB or sexuality other than heterosexual	9.7%	8.2%	28.0%
% of participants who are Not in education employment or training (NEET)	13.9%	5.8%	9.6%
% of participants who are living in rural areas	36.3%	34.4%	26.3%

*EUYD8 consultations took place during COVID-19 social distancing restrictions
** EUYD7 took place with the EU-28.

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The Hungarian National Working Group	Luca Bártol – National Youth Council of Hungary
The Irish National Working Group	
The Italian National Working Group	
The Latvian National Working Group	
The Lithuanian National Working Group	
The Luxembourg National Working Group	NWG Luxembourg, coordinated by the National Youth Council of Luxembourg (de Jugendrot/CGJL) EU Youth Delegates 2021-2022 (Niels Huberty, Rachel Youseef, Harry Lamamra) Jugendparlament Luxembourg CNEL – Conférence Nationale des Elèves du Luxembourg DLJ – Daachverband vun de Lëtzebuerger Jugendstrukturen ANIJ – Agence Nationale d'Information pour Jeunes MENJE – Ministère de l'Education Nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse
The Maltese National Working Group	
The Portuguese National Working Group	
The Slovakian National Working Group	
The Spanish National Working Group	Tamar Lavado: Youth National Agency Spain Xabier Triana: Spanish National Youth Council Margarita Guerrero: Spanish National Youth Council Jorge Moral: NWG youth representative Claudia Lera: NWG youth representative Ángel Pérez: NWG youth representative Sonia Gil: NWG youth representative Miguel Lucea: NWG youth representative Ramón Sánchez: NWG youth representative Paula Nieto: EUYD Officer
The Swedish National Working Group	LSU - Landsrådet för Sveriges Ungdomsorganisationer
The Netherlands National Working Group National Working Group	
The International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INYGOs) who presented in their webinar	WAGGGS - World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts WOSM - World Organisation of the Scout MovementWOSM YEN - Youth of European Nationalities ESN - Erasmus Student Network Alliance - Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations EUJS - European Union of Jewish Students RYE - Rural Youth Europe AEGEE - European Students' Forum

Youth Goals

INFORMATION & EDUCATION

RESULTS OF SUB-THEME 1

Information and Education

This chapter is a summary of National Working Group (NWG) and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYO) consultations with young people on the sub-theme of "Information and Education" during the EUYD9 consultation phase. These consultations were based around the key question:

What are the key features of youth friendly information sources and learning opportunities for young people, on the topic of climate change and the link between climate change and social inequalities? If no such information sources and learning opportunities exist in your country, what should they look like?

Elements of the EUYD9 Mid-term report collection of good practices, and outcomes of the EU Youth Conference in Prague on 11-13th of July 2022 are also included.

What is the current situation?

How much access do young people have to information on sustainability topics?

According to the NWG consultations with young people, **there is a mixed picture with regard to young people's access to information on sustainability issues**. A minority of NWGs reported that young people had excellent access to information. However, others described that access was only reasonable, poor, or dependent on circumstances. Most NWGs reported that young people felt there was a need to increase youth information and education sustainability topics.

Some NWGS identified that young people from marginalised backgrounds were less aware of issues relating to sustainability. However, a small number of working groups also identified the opposite.

"Less young people from ethnic minorities reported to know about the link between climate change and social inequalities than the average."

Finnish NWG Report

"Young Roma from rural or disadvantaged/marginalised backgrounds were practically unable to answer this question or to take a position. The reason for this is the absence of the topic in the life perspectives of these young people. Their families are unaware of the importance of environmental protection, the climate crisis, and the importance of education and training on these topics"

Slovakian NWG Report

Age and living in a rural area seemed to be a factor. Some NWGS identified that under 18s, ethnic minority groups and young people in rural areas said they had less youth information than other young people.

"Schools teach about climate change, so that many young people living in urban areas have at least minimal access to information, whereas such lessons and information are rare in rural schools."

<div align="right">Lithuanian NWG Report</div>

Where do young people get information on sustainability?

Social media was reported to be the main source of information on sustainability issues for many young people. A distinction was drawn between media organisations who use social media, and influencers or public figures who use social media. Both sources were important to young people however, media organisations using social media were said to be an example of high-quality youth information. (e.g., The Netherlands Working Group highlighted [NOS Stories](#)) Formal education, non-formal education, traditional media and conversation with peers or family also played a role in how information on sustainability was accessed.

"Today, a significant part of young people get information mainly from social media, but also from the channels of various environmental organisations and from the university (mainly those who study environment-related topics or take electives)".

<div align="right">Estonian NWG report</div>

Lack of information on the link between sustainability and inclusion

Both the EU Youth Conference in Paris and in Prague identified the need for youth information to highlight the link between sustainability and inequality. However, many NWGs reported the young people they engaged with were **not often aware of the link between climate change and inclusion or social inequality**. In many countries, there was said to be a lack of access to information about this issue and young people were not aware of sources of information or learning opportunities to explore it further.

"As a result of the lack of information, it is often not clear to young people what the link is between climate change and social inequalities. In this context, youth from the mainstream population defines the problem of insufficient information on climate change for marginalised youth"

<div align="right">Slovakian NWG report</div>

This was not the case for all working groups. For example, the Spanish NWG Report identified that "*Young people are concerned about how climate change can cause a massive migration from the southern regions to the northern ones. They are also concerned about inequalities regarding how climate change affects young people from lower incomes within our country."* The Belgian Flemish Community Working Group identified that young people from ethnic minority backgrounds saw a *"strong connection between climate change and racism, colonialism and poverty"*. The Danish NWG identified concerns from young people about unequal distribution of resources between rich and poor social groups, and the way that climate change may impact those who are already most affected by social inequality.

Concerns about fake news

Many young people in the consultations had concerns about "fake news" (information disorder) relating to climate change and sustainability issues. This included **misleading or inaccurate information** about the topic online, and an overload of information in general.

"[Young people] stressed that the overload of information on the internet makes it difficult to identify the relevant information."

Hungarian National Working Group.

"The members of the Sustainability Working Group are showered with information on the topic of sustainability on all social media platforms. Very few of them consciously inform themselves about it. They hear and learn about it by scrolling through. The difficulty here is, of course, to verify the information that has been read."

Belgian German-speaking Community Working Group Report

Some young people identified that what the specific sustainability topics the media chose to report on (or not) was a significant factor affecting their access to information on topics within the general theme of sustainability. The need for access to trustworthy information both about sustainability and political decision making related to sustainability was identified in the consultation. This supports the findings of the EU youth conference in Prague that *"Good practices should enable [access to trustworthy information] in order to ensure young people have a full understanding of how political decisions are made, and to be able to engage in scientifically based facts around sustainability and climate agendas"*.

Results from simple opinion polls

18 working groups used simple opinion polls questions[7] to gather the views of young people on this sub-theme. The polls were distributed through surveys, social media and in person events. The combined results of all NWGs are shown in the graph below. The results support the messages from the NWG reports that there is a mixed picture with regard to young people's access to information on sustainability issues.

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[7]The simple opinion poll tool was designed to provide a simple youth friendly data collection, analysis, and reporting processes. It does not meet common scientific standards for quantitative research surveys, (e.g. data is not weighted by country) and results should be treated with caution. The results provide supporting data to the NWG qualitative reporting only.

Simple Opinion Polls: Information and Education

Legend: Yes (%) ■ No (%) ■

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)
Do you know enough about climate change? (n=12013)	67.2%	32.8%
Do you know any youth-friendly information sources on climate change? (n=11749)	45.6%	54.4%
Do you know any learning opportunities for young people focusing on climate change? (n=11091)	37.1%	62.9%
Do you have enough information about the link between climate change and social inequalities? (n=11755)	43.6%	56.4%
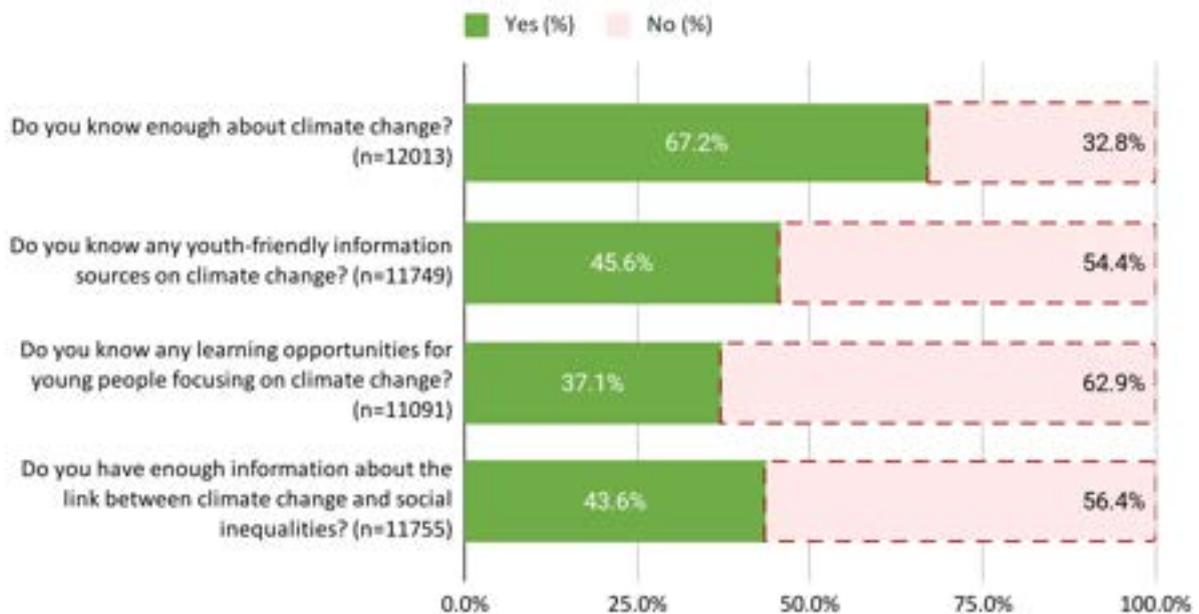
What do young people say is needed?

The feedback from young people during the consultation focused on youth information more than learning opportunities. However, the two topics have considerable overlap. Suggestions and recommendations from young people on the topic of your information can also be applied within learning opportunities. Themes within the various recommendations and suggestions are highlighted below.

Youth information and learning opportunities on sustainability need to cover a wide range of different topics

Within the consultation, there were calls for information and learning opportunities which:

- **Gave a more comprehensive insight into environmental issues overall** - on areas such as climate change, global warming, weather fluctuations, extreme heats, melting glaciers, collapse of biodiversity and pollution. Explaining what this means for society and a person's everyday life was said to be important.

- Highlighted the impacts of climate change at the global and/or local level and **the importance of social justice** in relation to climate change.

- **Identify solutions** to environmental crises, both individual and collective such as:

  - Raising awareness of overconsumption and providing information on how to reduce personal consumption or live more sustainably. (e.g., digital sobriety, reduction of meat consumption, recycling, reusing, labelling of products origins, production chains and lifespans of products)
  - Information on how to engage in political systems on the topic of sustainability issues or take part in existing environmental initiatives.

Some NWGs also highlighted a need for education and information which **addresses the mental health issues linked to climate change** (eco-anxiety).

"Support and guidance should be provided in schools and institutions as many young people need it. The topic also triggers worries and fears about the future in many young people, as well as feelings of powerlessness. From the point of view of young people, it would be important for these emotions to be addressed in the classroom."

<div align="right">Austrian NWG Report</div>

Youth information on sustainability needs to be more motivating and relevant to the lives of young people.

The need for youth information on sustainability and climate change to be empowering and to **motivate young people to take action** was emphasised:

"Young people also insisted that just "Information sharing" is not enough, but that it needs to be coupled with calls for actions, behaviour change and personal engagement/motivation of each person to act in favour of sustainability."

<div align="right">Luxembourg NWG Report</div>

"[Information sources] should not only convey information, but also be inspiring, and thereby make young people involved and committed."

<div align="right">Swedish NWG Report</div>

There was concern that too much focus on "apocalyptic messages" had a negative emotional impact on young people and prevented them from engaging in action.

"Many young people find [current] reporting on climate and sustainability issues depressing, tiring and disappointing as it is often communicated only with negative facts on an emotional level"

<div align="right">Austrian NWG Report</div>

"When it comes to youth information a number of young people and youth organisations emphasised a need to change the narrative when it comes to climate change. Rather than having doom and gloom campaigns that show that it is almost over, and that there is nothing much to do, they argued that information should focus on the positive. Information should actually show that young people can do something and can bring about change. Information should focus on what works. Information needs to portray successes, it needs to put forward the notion that although the situation needs immediate attention, all of us together as individuals, can bring about change"

<div align="right">Maltese NWG report</div>

The need to make **climate change information more relevant to young peoples' lives** was also raised by young people in the consultations. Making a direct connection with concrete examples that related to young people's reality was said to be more motivating and easier to understand.

"Young people living in France do not see the direct impact of climate change on their lives. They feel very far away from the climate change illustrated in the media by the melting of ice flows, endangered animals, etc which does not necessarily encourage them to act for the climate. "

French NWG Report.

Some young people from marginalised backgrounds highlighted that youth information on sustainability needed to be meaningful to the population as a whole. For example, messages about reducing air travel when going on holiday were not relevant for young people who could not afford to travel. It was emphasised that linking information to young peoples' concrete life experiences was needed.

Youth information on sustainability needs to be more accessible and youth friendly

There was agreement across the working group reports that **youth information on sustainability needed to be much more understandable, simple, and appealing**. It was said that information should be based on scientifically reliable sources but broken down in a way that is lively and accessible. This meant adapting content and language to the target audience and to different needs of young people including those of different ages.

"Another trend in the answers was the mention of there being a lot of types of facts and information, which are difficult to navigate. For example, it was mentioned that there is enough information out there, but what is shared in the public debate is not enough, compared to what they considered necessary to know. It was mentioned that information on climate change needs to be communicated in a more accessible way, where for example this is made more relatable, where people can better engage with the topics"

Danish NWG Report

Language and accessibility were also important. Lack of access to information in native language, as well as use of foreign words within native language content was a barrier to some young people.

Considering the formats for youth information on sustainability there was emphasis on **diverse use of media and tech friendly content**. Suggestions included podcasts, narrations, illustrations, graphics, and informative videos as well as traditional text. There was emphasis on playful, casual, or interactive forms of knowledge transfer. This included apps and gamification methods, art-based methods such as theatre, gamification, memes and other "fun" content. Some NWGs also highlighted the importance of **young people being involved in the production of youth information**:

"Young people should also be included in the design and creation of the information material both interactively and at school. The youth perspective should be present throughout the entirety of this process, and not only, for example, at the beginning of it in the form of an initial consultation. In that way, young people are included and involved both in the description of the problems and in the formulation of the solutions. Young people are sometimes consulted initially, but rarely later on, and are rarely given feedback on how decision-makers took (or did not take) their inputs into account when legislating."

<div align="right">Swedish National Working Group</div>

Learning opportunities on sustainability should be increased especially within formal education

Within the consultation feedback, it was clear that **school was the main way through which young people wanted to access learning opportunities related to sustainability**. It was noted that teachers are regarded as a trustworthy source of information. There was said to be a need to **update school curricula, textbooks, and teaching practices** to include content on sustainability, even as a core topic. It was said that the issue currently is addressed but not in a substantial way. Access to learning opportunities on sustainability in schools was often felt to be dependent on the type of school or the commitment of teachers.

"Young people would like to receive more information about climate change in school but they do not feel it is happening now on such a large scale. The school curriculum should be brought up to date in terms of information and education around climate change. Youngsters considered teachers who teach about climate change and sustainability generally as reliable and therefore the information they provide on this topic is seen by the consulted youngsters as reliable information."

<div align="right">The Czech Republic NWG Report</div>

"Participants agree that, when it comes to formal education (elementary and high school), there is no established curricula dealing with the topic of climate change and social inequalities - this topic is instead sometimes vaguely touched upon in different subjects (e.g., geography or chemistry). Participants point out that, with climate change being an important issue in the modern world, the subject should be more addressed in more detail in subjects like Civic Education, or maybe even in a standalone subject that would address climate change, ecology, sustainable living, etc."

<div align="right">Croatian NWG report</div>

This supports the mid-term collection of good practices which highlighted the need to *"utilise the potential of formal education - Civic and political education in formal schooling need to be strengthened as both constitute support mechanisms which enable good practices to occur."*

The value of using non-formal methods to deliver learning opportunities on sustainability was discussed in the consultation. This included both the use of non-formal methods within school and non-formal methods outside of school.

"Main key features of youth learning opportunities are the following: Avoid theoretical approaches. Prefer interactive approaches (learning by doing) ...involve young into development initiatives where they can implement their own ideas."

<div align="right">Greek NWG report</div>

"Schools should also be places that teach and embody education for sustainable development. School education should be stronger connected with active action, e.g., biodiversity in biology classes, school gardens or urban gardening projects in the community…The learning experience itself should be interactive and participatory so that young people can share their perspectives and experiences on the topics."

<div align="right">German NWG report</div>

Specific models of non-formal learning opportunities suggested included:

- **Exchanges between schools** to build communities that share similar interests or life situations and inspire each other to live more sustainably.
- **Peer-to-peer learning**, as messaging from peers might be more likely to lead to change in perception and influence young people's behaviour.
- Opportunities to **design and lead sustainability initiatives and projects.**
- **Project days and practical workshops** based on experiential learning.
- Inputs from **Environmental NGOs** into schools.

The potential for civil society, youth clubs, youth organisations and similar actors to deliver learning opportunities on sustainability was highlighted. Some young people identified that these had been the main sources of education and information for them on sustainability. INGYOs emphasised the role that they played providing learning opportunities to young people on sustainability, such as through the initiative "Scouts for Sustainable Development Goals."

In line with this NWGs identified various calls for **youth work and youth organisations to receive adequate funding to be able to continue and expand their learning opportunities on sustainability for young people**. This is further supported by the outcomes of EU Youth conference in Prague which identified the need to "**strengthen youth work** - Increasing the number of youth workers, access to funding, training levels, and general ability and capacity of the youth workers to support young people to engage in sustainability and inclusion agendas"

Digital approaches and tools to deliver learning opportunities were mentioned by some young people within the consultation but were not widely discussed. However, as social media was identified as one of the main sources of information for young people on sustainability, it can be assumed that many of the suggestions for improving youth information were made on the basis that social media would play a central role. Ideas for specific digital tools included applications or websites where youth can take quizzes, play orienteering games, while simultaneously learning new facts about climate change and social inequality.

Summary on Information and Education

There is a mixed picture with regards to young peoples' access to information on sustainability issues. Some report having good access to information sources on, though there are others, especially those from marginalised backgrounds whose report their access was more limited. However, few young people in the EUYD9 consultation reported having access to information and understanding of the link between sustainability and inequality. Social media and the media in general are the main source of information for young people on the topic of sustainability. Connected to this, young people in the consultation reported concerns about fake news (information disorder) and overload of information on environmental topics.

Through the EUYD9 consultation, young people identified that youth information on sustainability should:

- **Be relevant to the lives of young people -** enabling them to understand the direct link between climate change and their lives and showing relevance to young people from a diverse range of social backgrounds.

- **Be comprehensive and trustworthy** - covering a range of environmental topics led by science and information on how to engage in civic and political processes action to sustainability.

- **Be youth friendly and accessible** - being available in a variety of languages and formats, appealing and simple to understand. Information should cater to the different needs and ages of young people.

- **Highlight the link between climate change and inequality**

- **Go beyond information sharing and aim to motivate and empower young people to act in favour of sustainability -** demonstrating how to both take political action and making sustainable lifestyle choices.

- **Avoid "apocalyptic messages'" -** which can remove hope for change, and impact on young people's mental health.

The consultation also identified that **the formal education system should be better used** to give young people access to information on climate change and sustainability issues. Incorporating sustainability topics into the curricula is needed. Teachers provide a reliable and trustworthy source of information and there is currently said to be too little focus on sustainability within schools. Schools were identified as the main focus for delivering education on sustainability to young people however, **civil society, youth clubs, youth organisations, digital tools and peer to peer techniques** may also be used to deliver education on sustainability to young people. It was said that youth work and youth organisations need to receive adequate funding to be able to continue and expand their learning opportunities on sustainability for young people.

Youth Goals

ACTION & EMPOWERMENT

RESULTS OF
SUB-THEME 2

Action and Empowerment

This chapter is a summary of National Working Group (NWG) and International Non-governmental Youth Organisations (INGYO) consultations with young people on the sub-theme of "Action and Empowerment'' during the EUYD9 consultation phase. These consultations were based around the key question:

What successful mechanisms and methods are young people aware of that ensure the needs of their generation are taken into account in decision-making processes affecting their current life and future? If no such mechanisms exist, what should they look like or what examples from other contexts do you find useful and successful?

NWG consultations on the sub-theme of "Action and Empowerment" overlapped considerably with the sub-theme on "Governance". The summary within this report on "Action and Empowerment" focuses on young people's experiences of involvement in decision making, the summary on "Governance" focuses on accountability. Responses from NWGs under both sub themes were used in each summary. Elements of the EUYD9 Mid-term report collection of good practices, and outcomes of the EU Youth Conference in Prague on 11-13th of July 2022 are also included.

What is the current situation?

Young people do not feel listened to on sustainability and inclusion issues

The overall tone within the consultations was that **young people do not feel listened to on sustainability and inclusion issues**. It was reported that policy makers are not responding sufficiently to young people, whatever approaches are used to hold decision makers to account. As a result, **participation mechanisms in general were not believed to be particularly successful on the topics of sustainability and inclusion**.

"It is believed that politicians and policy-makers do not look to the future, but focus on solving today's problems, and decisions are made rather based on what the elderly electorate likes and brings votes (there are fewer young voters)."

Estonian NWG Report

This belief was said to create a barrier and **sense of resignation which makes some young people more reluctant to engage in actions or initiatives relating to sustainability and inclusion**. Many young people reported they would be more likely to engage in an initiative when they felt their voices would be heard.

"Some young people started not to use participatory mechanisms because they feel that it does not make a difference. There are mixed opinions on the subject of demonstrations and protests: many young people like to demonstrate for causes that are important to them. Others are afraid of joining demonstrations or don't even know about them. Overall, many doubt that the demands they express in this way will be taken seriously and heard by politicians. They want more space and more institutionalised opportunities for participation."

<div align="right">Austrian NWG Report</div>

Political events and media coverage of climate change protests seemed to play a factor in how young people perceived their possibilities to influence political agendas. This could be both positive and negative. Some working groups identified that the high visibility of the climate protests had inspired many young people to become involved in sustainability actions. By contrast, others identified that support for this movement was falling after a lack of impact. For instance, the Slovakian NWG stated a recent unsuccessful petition on climate issues *"may have partly influenced this unfavourable atmosphere and the disappearance of the Fridays for Future initiative in Slovakia"* and led young people to be *"sceptical about the effectiveness of instruments of civil pressure (protest, demonstration, petition)"*.

Discontent with policy makers

There was **widespread criticism from young people that policy makers and politicians were not taking enough action on climate change and sustainability issues**. This was strongly connected to the belief that politicians and the political system do not adequately respond to the views of young people. Some NWGs reported this created young people's lack of trust in the formal political system and their disengagement from participation mechanisms.

"No-one in the consultation discussions had participated in any participatory activities because they were not aware of such. Most had trouble trying to imagine how these could be successful. Many participants felt that politicians do not keep their promises at all, so why would they do so with young people either."

<div align="right">Finnish NWG Report</div>

"[Young people have] a crisis of trust with policy-makers and what they embody, i.e., decision-making power. They do not trust the political system that is too low and take too little decisions. Therefore, for them, there is no point in participating through formal mechanisms of participation such as the right to vote."

<div align="right">Slovakian NWG Report</div>

"Parts of the young people who were consulted criticised politicians very clearly for the long decision-making processes and accused them of not taking adequate measures. It was stated that the lack of action towards climate change is not due to too little conscience of young people but the willingness to act of people in political power positions."

<div align="right">German NWG report</div>

Results from simple opinion polls

17 working groups used simple opinion poll[8] questions to gather the views of young people on this sub-theme. The polls were distributed through surveys, social media and in person events. The combined results of all NWGs are shown in the graph below. The results support the main messages from NWGs and show that over two thirds of young people do not feel the needs of their generation are taking into account environmental policy making and do not know any mechanisms that would ensure this.

Simple Opinion Polls: Action and Empowerment

Legend: Yes (%) (green), No (%) (pink)

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)
Do you feel the needs of your generation are taken into account in environmental policymaking? (n=11149)	32.6%	67.4%
Do you know about any mechanisms which would ensure that the needs of future generations are taken into account in environmental policymaking? n=11043)	33.0%	67.0%

Axis: 0.0%, 25.0%, 50.0%, 75.0%, 100.0%
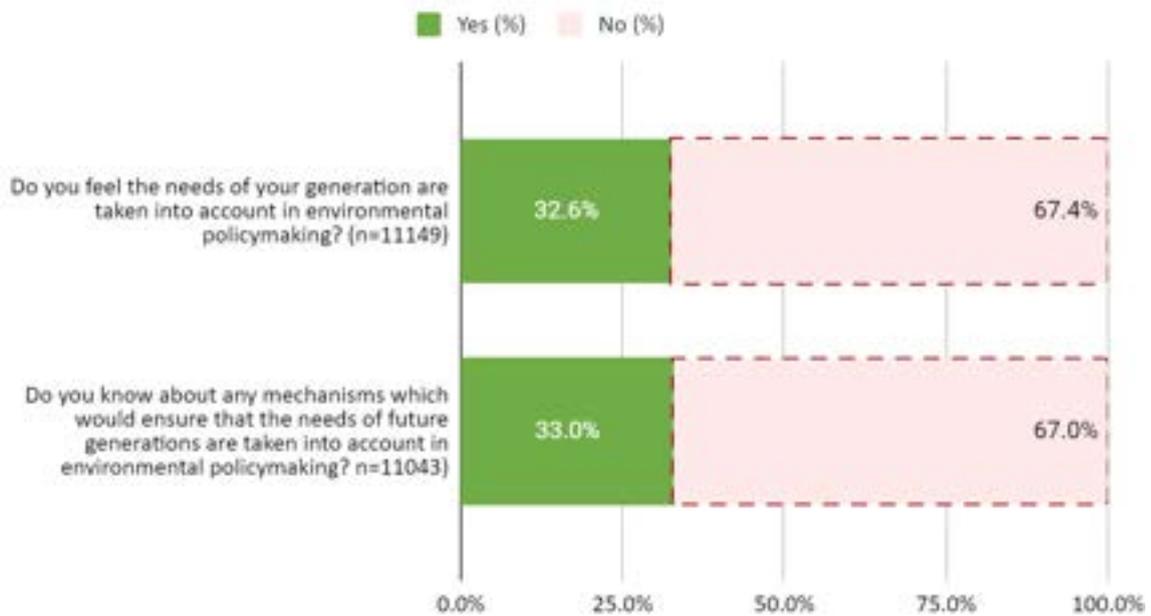
How effective are current mechanisms at holding decision makers to account?

A range of different mechanisms for holding decision makers to account were identified by young people through the consultations. Though **some young people reported not being aware of any mechanisms at all** and **lack of awareness about many existing mechanisms was widely highlighted.** Some NWGs also reported that there was inconsistency in access to participation mechanisms across their country, especially in rural areas.

"Around 60% of young people stated that they are not aware of any mechanisms that ensure the needs of their generation are taken into account in decision-making processes."

Cyprus NWG report

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[8]The simple opinion poll tool was designed to provide a simple youth friendly data collection, analysis, and reporting process. It does not meet common scientific standards for quantitative research surveys, (e.g. data is not weighted by country) and results should be treated with caution. The results provide supporting data to the NWG qualitative reporting only

"Decision-making processes of this type are not easy to map as they vary very much from region to region, city to city and so on. What the general situation is, it confirms that the youth of our country are having drastic and sometimes very opposite experiences: it may happen that in our Region they can be different active levels in different cities/towns."

<div align="right">Italian NWG report</div>

In general, existing participatory mechanisms were said to be **not effective** at holding decision makers to account. **No specific type of mechanism was widely identified as being more effective than others**. However, mechanisms that were linked more closely to policy making institutions and formal structures (e.g., youth councils, youth advisory boards) were sometimes identified as being able to have an impact on decision making, by the young people who were involved in them.

Activism and protest

Activism and protest relating to environmental issues was a more widely known mechanism amongst young people and one of the more discussed methods in the EUYD9 consultation. There were concerns expressed that activism and protest was not effective enough. The desire to engage with the youth environmental movement amongst young people was not always as strong as might have been expected. However, it remains a mechanism through which many young people wish to participate.

"Activism in one way or another felt like an accessible and easy method to participate in decision-making to many participants. Social media activism was mentioned multiple times, but some thought it does not have any concrete influence on politics. Extinction Rebellion came up in all consultation discussions as the only youth-led initiative to take control in climate politics. Many felt, however, that it is not accessible to all youth if they are not comfortable to be activists, and that it is at the most successful in getting media attention. Some participants mentioned consumer behaviour as a method, [of activism] but were worried it does not have any real influence on politics"

<div align="right">Finnish NWG Report</div>

"Strikes, protests: Younger participants believe that these type of protests are ineffective and the youth of their age do not actively take part in them anyway. The participants seemed to be seeking an incentive to go on such protests."

<div align="right">Latvian NWG Report</div>

Online tools and petitions

The value of petitions, signing citizens initiatives, or youth referenda was identified. There was general support for official online tools which enabled young people to express support comments, thoughts, proposals, etc. via the internet. Young people in the consultation valued these tools because they could be easy to access and required little effort to engage with.

"In contrast, the majority of respondents have used less effort-intensive tools such as online petition signing at least once in their lives. The petition is seen as a good mechanism because it can reach a large number of people in a small amount of time."

Hungarian NWG Report

"Online consultative tools could constitute a new way to give your opinion that is fairly accessible to young people. Certain conditions must be met, such as accessibility of information, dissemination of information campaigns and consideration of recommendations (results) or justification. An offline alternative must be proposed for young people suffering from digital divide"

Belgian French Community Working Group Report

Being able to express your views on social media was mentioned within the consultation. However, this was not generally seen as a mechanism through which young people could hold policy makers to account.

Direct dialogue and informal interaction with politicians

The role of dialogue with politicians was raised in multiple ways by young people. There were calls for increased discussion-based events between politicians and young people (e.g. youth assemblies, citizens assemblies, structured dialogue). Some working groups highlighted the value of existing mechanisms such as the Belgian the Mixed Deliberative Commissions (Brussels Region), or called for the embedding of youth dialogue style processes within existing policy making.

"Structured dialogue between decision makers and youth should be included in the agenda as a periodic duty, involving young people in all phases of the processes: not only consulting beforehand, but also during the design and implementation of the idea, as well as during the evaluation part to ensure that objectives have been accomplished following people's starting demands (accountability) and avoiding youth washing. "

Spanish NWG Report

Many young people stressed the need for **informal and regular dialogue with elected representatives**. Young people highlighted the desire to increase the amount of contact they had with politicians representing their community. There was said to be a lack of spaces for direct communication and interaction between politicians and young people, and many young people were not aware of how they could engage with their representative. There was a preference for informal, regular activities that were easy to engage with.

"Young people do not know city/county MPs and their activities, it is necessary to establish mutual contact between politicians and young people, so that there are platforms, meetings (including at places where young people gather), discussions, cooperation and events where these two sides will be brought together. At the moment, politicians are not associated with anything good for young people, if closer contact were established, then the situation could change"

Latvian NWG Report

"During the consultations, many young people voiced that listening to young people and actually speaking to them on a regular basis and not only during elections is of crucial importance. Quote from one of the youngsters: 'Youth participation is not only about knowing where you can go, but also about the people representing them to reach out to youngsters' "

The Netherlands NWG Report

The value of this style of engagement with decision making seemed to be about building and increasing interaction with elected representatives. Practical examples included Participation Cafes in Estonian and Latvian "Coffee with Politicians".

It was also suggested that **political decision makers could use youth-appropriate channels/methods to interact with young people**, such as SnapChat, Interactive Workshops (where young people can be active participants), creative projects (using Art for example) rather than just discussion groups.

Civil society initiatives on sustainability

The role of **environmental Non-Governmental Organisations** (NGOs) and **Youth NGOs addressing sustainability issues** was discussed by young people. Some young people identified them as one of the more successful mechanisms through which young people can engage with decision making. Some NWGs reported that involvement with youth participation processes through an NGO, Youth organisation, Youth Council or similar led the young people involved feeling more able to influence decision making.

Involvement with established NGOs was said to lead to better recognition and visibility for sustainability campaigns - both through public relations campaigns and formal recognition for NGOs from Governments. The INGYOs in the consultation also said they were advanced at making detailed policy recommendations in the field of sustainability and inclusion compared to the public sector. They identified that some of the work they do generating and advocating for policy positions can help influence and push policy making with innovative ideas.

"[Young people] think that better chances to influence decision-making processes have very well established NGOs that are visible and have a good PR. It is the same with activism - they see it as a working mechanism when it has good marketing and is visible enough. Also, it works when there are more people who cooperate - more people means bigger impact and chances to succeed are higher."

The Czech Republic NWG report

However, the limited influence of NGOs on policy making was identified by some young people, and for others having to join an NGO was a barrier to participation.

"It was still made clear [by young people] that they do not find youth NGOs very effective and believed that the youth have a minimal influence on governing decision-making"

<div align="right">Latvian NWG Report</div>

"You shouldn't have to be involved in a big organisation or a climate organisation to do something"

<div align="right">Irish NWG Report</div>

Youth councils, student councils and environmental youth advisory bodies

The role that **youth councils**, student councils, youth parliaments and similar structures can play to influence sustainability and inclusion agendas was discussed. Alongside this **Youth Advisory Bodies** with environmental themes were also highlighted.

For young people involved in them, the value of these mechanisms was said to be their strong connection to policy making and public institutions. These strong formal links to institutions identified that this increased the possibility of these mechanisms engaging with policy makers on environmental issues and having an impact on policy. However, it was still said that for many the impact on decision making was not sufficient.

"For the 'younger' young people, the National Youth Parliament, that is organised by the National Youth Council, was mentioned a number of times. It was argued that through this mechanism, which is held annually, young people are free to participate in civic life and it supports young people into starting to really develop their sense of active citizenship. Young participants have the opportunity to propose a set of resolutions that are then put forward and presented to the Prime Minister, the President, and the Leader of the Opposition and other Members of Parliament. Young people who participate in these events can make their voices heard regarding environmental issues or any other matters."

<div align="right">Maltese NWG Report</div>

"Thanks to well-established consultative and advisory bodies, such as … The Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation and the Youth Council to the President of the Republic of Poland, they have the feeling that their voice which their colleagues represent is heard and taken into account in the decision-making process."

<div align="right">Polish NWG Report</div>

However, many young people reported not being aware of youth councils, advisory bodies, and similar structures.

"When it comes to specifically youth participation, many of the participants were not even aware of the existence of Youth Councils, Youth Advisory Boards or various NGOs dealing with youth activism, whose goals are to make the needs of the youth heard and taken care of."

<div align="right">Croatian NWG Report</div>

Some young people identified the need for **further participation mechanisms at EU level**. This was on the basis that sustainability issues are cross border problems and require EU interventional along with international solutions. EUYD received positive feedback as an example of this type of initiative, along with the Council of Europe's co-management structure.

Many young people identified **voting as one of the most important mechanisms** for holding young people to account. It was raised that, in most countries, young people under 18 are not entitled to vote. Several NWGs reported calls for votes at 16 from young people, though others reported that this was not supported by consultation participants. Some young people also discussed the importance of increasing the number of young people voting to enable them to hold politicians to account more effectively.

There were comments calling for more **diverse age representation amongst politicians and in political structures,** though this was not a main feature of many NWGs discussions. Three NWGs identified the need for **age-based quotas** in environmental decision making bodies and a further two identified the need for this in Parliaments.

Other proposals and innovations

Several other less common mechanisms discussed by young people included:

- Public funds to support environment and sustainability initiatives that are directly controlled by young people or linked to the results of government consultation with young people.
- Use of legal proceedings by young people, such as the Belgian Klimaatzaak, a lawsuit that led to Belgium being judged for violation of human rights in which many young people were co-claimants in this case.
- A direct telephone connection to the national parliament to receive phone calls from young people.
- An ombudsman for unborn future generations.
- Youth tests such as the German "youth check" which is a regulatory impact assessment tool to analyse the impact of federal legislation on young people aged between 12 and 27 years.

What do young people say is needed?

Increasing the impact that participation mechanisms had on sustainability policy, and the level of action taken by decision makers following as a result of participation mechanisms was the **main improvement identified as needed**. This is discussed in full in the report chapter on "Governance". The other areas identified for improvement are below.

Increase opportunities for participation and informal dialogue on sustainability

Some NWGs identified a general need to create further spaces and forums where young people can participate in social and democratic life, exchange ideas and know each other's opinions.

"Overall, young people want more opportunities and spaces to participate. Young people find that groups of people who are more affected by decisions should also be more involved in decisions (e.g., young people in climate and environmental politics, politics concerning people with disabilities). In general, young people (and especially young people with disabilities) want more opportunities to bring the realities of life closer to decision-makers."

Austrian NWG Report

As well as being a general call for increased participation opportunities, this connects to the calls for more opportunities to engage regularly with politicians on an informal basis discussed above. The importance of decision makers *actively* approaching young people and engaging regularly within these contexts was emphasised.

"Since young people may not know who to talk to about various questions, decision-makers should actively approach young people, and talk to them, and ask them questions…Continuity is crucial. For example, young people should be invited to meetings with decision-makers continuously, and not only once a year."

Swedish NWG Report

Promote and protect youth councils

Some young people in the consultation expressed the need for better promotion and protection of youth councils. This included increasing resources, links to policy makers and formal recognition or legislative protection. The need to develop local youth councils consistently in all municipalities was also raised, to ensure that there was a consistent network of youth councils in each country.

This builds on the outcomes of the EU Youth Conference in Prague that *"participation mechanisms that operate on an ongoing basis with legal backing are necessary to enable young people to fully influence the sustainability and inclusion agendas"*

Support participation mechanisms with information and education on sustainability

To raise awareness of existing mechanisms of participation it was identified that **supporting education and information on participation and sustainability topics was needed.** Improving civic education links to sustainability issues was also said to be key (see also the summary on "Information and Education")

"Information and education is key - young people need to be taught (in schools) the relevance of voicing their concerns, of voting and how the voting system actually works. This should start from a young age. Many youngsters in the consultations believe that teachers can make the difference when it comes to how a topic is discussed (or whether a topic is discussed at all)."

The Netherlands NWG Report

"Participants agree that the level of knowledge on participation is very low and are emphasising the need of including Civic Education in elementary schools and high schools"

<div align="right">Croatian NWG Report</div>

"A "democratic confidence" (self-confidence regarding one's right to exercise an influence) must be fostered at school early. Not everyone knows how to exercise an influence. By means of educational efforts, young people must be trained in democratic work, so that they achieve the same level of information and influence as adults."

<div align="right">Swedish NWG Report</div>

Ensure mechanisms for participation are accessible to all and focus on the experience of marginalised groups

The need for participation mechanisms to be accessible and inclusive to all was identified by young people within the consultation. This was about,

- Ensuring participation mechanisms are accessible to join and become a participant within. This means **meeting access needs** and making it simple and easy to become a participant.

- Ensuring participation mechanisms enabled **people from marginalised backgrounds to take leadership roles**, and

- Ensuring that the findings and outcomes of participation mechanisms do not **overlook the concerns of marginalised groups** by focusing on the majority.

"All these should be accessible to all young people, focusing on minorities and young people with fewer opportunities, with special actions to actively engage them. There is no real participation without the representation of all minorities living in the same society"

<div align="right">Spanish NWG Report</div>

Across the NWG reports concerns were shared about lack of inclusion in participatory mechanisms for women, LGBTQIA+ young people, ethnic minorities, young migrants, young people in low economic circumstances and young people in rural areas. However, it is not clear if these are consistent patterns across Europe or across all participation mechanisms.

"Many young people are excluded from their communities because of their backgrounds or different views. During the consultations, the youth unanimously agreed that this was a priority topic, as every person deserves respect and free expression of their views."

<div align="right">Polish NWG Report</div>

"Those whose gender identity is 'other', LGBT [or] NEET youth felt that their generations' needs are not taken into account in environmental policymaking more strongly than the overall trend … In the consultation discussions, rural youth felt that young people in bigger towns and cities have more possibilities to have an effect on policy making."

Finnish NWG Report

"The mechanisms mentioned above each require a strong degree of commitment to participation, whereby young people who are affected or threatened by structural disadvantage often have fragmented life histories, which at the very least make binding participation difficult if the opportunities for participation are not designed inclusively."

German NWG Report

Summary on Action and Empowerment

A key message from the EUYD9 consultation phase is that **young people do not feel there are mechanisms and methods available to them which can effectively hold decision makers to account on sustainability and inclusion issues**. This is due to a belief that policy makers and politicians have shown a lack of action on sustainability and environment issues, and in response to young people's views generally. Those young people involved in participation mechanisms commonly report a lack of impact in these and **many young people are not aware of existing mechanisms**.

This feeling of not being listened to creates discontent and even distrust of politicians for many young people. There is also a sense of resignation towards participatory mechanisms and a general belief that all mechanisms are not effective enough at creating change on sustainability and inclusion issues.

In general, no specific type of mechanism was widely identified as being substantially more effective than others. However, formal structured mechanisms, such as youth councils, advisory boards, and environmental NGOs were sometimes said to be able to have more impact on decision making by the young people who were involved in them. This was the case when these initiatives were directly or strongly connected to policy making bodies

The range of different mechanisms commonly identified by young people through the consultation were:

- **Environmental protest and activism -** where the youth climate change movement is widely known, but young people are increasingly frustrated with the lack of changes to environmental policy from policy makers.

- **Online tools and petitions** - which may provide value as "low" effort forms of engagement to express comment or support for a proposal.

- **Dialogue events with politicians** and **informal regular interaction with politicians** - which may help increase the connection between young people and political representatives of their communities.

- **Civil society initiatives on sustainability** - where the publicity mechanisms and recognition of NGOs may increase impact. However, needing to be involved with NGOs may also be a barrier to some young people's participation.

- **Youth Councils, student Councils and environmental youth advisory bodies -** which have the potential to impact on policy making when well linked to government bodies but lack visibility amongst many young people.

- **Voting** - where there is said to be a need for more young political candidates and some young people called for votes at 16.

To develop young peoples' ability to hold decision makers to account on sustainability and inclusion agendas, young people feel there is **a strong need to ensure that the mechanisms above have more impact on policy making** (see also the summary on "Governance"). Alongside this, it is said that mechanisms can be improved by:

- **Ensure participation mechanisms are accessible** and **focus on the experiences of marginalised** groups rather than only majority issues and enable **young people from marginalised backgrounds to take leadership roles** in participation mechanisms.

- **Increasing opportunities for participation and informal dialogue on sustainability topics.** This includes regular ongoing contact between young people and their elected representatives and structured discussion-based events.

- **Promoting and protecting youth councils**. By increasing resources, developing more local youth councils, and providing legislative backing.

- Support youth participation with **information and education on sustainability.**

GOVERNANCE

Governance

This chapter is a summary of National Working Group (NWG) and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYO) consultations with young people on the sub-theme of "Governance" during the EUYD9 consultation phase. These consultations were based around the key question:

How can youthwashing be avoided in youth participation mechanisms, holding decision-makers accountable to what was agreed upon as a result of different participatory activities? If no such accountability mechanisms exist, what should they look like to be successful?

NWG consultations on the sub-theme of "Action and Empowerment" overlapped considerably with the sub-theme on "Governance". The summary within this report on "Action and Empowerment" focuses on young people's experiences of involvement in decision making, the summary on "Governance" focuses on accountability. Responses from NWGs under both sub themes were used in each summary. Elements of the EUYD9 Mid-term report on collection of good practices, and outcomes of the EU Youth Conference in Prague on 11-13th of July 2022 are also included.

What is the current situation?

Not all young people in the consultation had heard of the term "Youth Washing" or were familiar with the concept. However, some, especially those that had been involved in participatory mechanisms were able to identify with it and describe their experiences of it.

Youth washing was described as *"The use of young people to falsely legitimise the action of policy makers"* (French NWG Report). It was said to relate to young people being frustrated by hierarchies and power structures, and not feeling listened to within them. This is related to the idea that "*Young people ask for actions, not for words."* (Greek NWG Report) and a lack of political outcomes and actions after youth participatory mechanisms (See "Action and Empowerment" chapter for more detail on this). Some young people also identified connections between youth washing and misleading information through social networks and the media.

It was said that youth washing can occur not just within formal political processes but also within schools, youth organisations, youth councils and other contexts. Direct experiences of youth washing described by consultation participants included:

- Politicians who only engage with young people during election times, and then ceased engagement following the election

- Politicians and policy makers who engage with young people with no meaningful intention to act on the issues that young people raise.

- Youth consultations or participatory mechanisms where no feedback was given on the outcomes and changes made afterwards, or change was limited.

- Initiatives by political parties or politicians designed to engage with young people that are primarily intended to create media and visibility.

"Participants agree that youth washing is present in Croatian society, and they mention some of the young sportspersons, or ex-sports persons that were 'hired' for promotion of certain political party, or were hired by certain political party as a way of "ensuring the voices of young people will be heard", but that action was mainly cosmetics, and the actions of mentioned sports persons were mainly for their own self-promotion."

Croatian NWG Report

"This theme seems to bring up a lot of frustration from young people as they see themselves as active participants in civil society, providing feedback and solutions for their struggles as generations, however, nothing seems to be done effectively"

Portuguese NWG Report

The discussion on Youthwashing is part of wider feedback from young people that they do not feel listened to by policy makers and political structures on sustainability issues (See the report on "Action and Empowerment").

Results from simple opinion polls

17 working groups used simple opinion poll[9] questions to gather the views of young people on this sub-theme. The polls were distributed through surveys, social media and in person events. The combined results of all NWGs are shown in the graph below. The results illustrate that over three quarters of young people do not know any mechanism through which they can hold policy makers to account. Over one third of young people have taken part in an environmental event that felt like youth washing.

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[9]The simple opinion poll tool was designed to provide a simple youth friendly data collection, analysis, and reporting process. It does not meet common scientific standards for quantitative research surveys, (e.g. data is not weighted by country) and results should be treated with caution. The results provide supporting data to the NWG qualitative reporting only

Simple Opinion Polls: Governance

Yes (%) ■ **No (%)** ■

Have you ever taken part in a youth participation event which felt like a youthwashing event instead? (n=10645)
38.4% | **61.6%**

Do you know of any mechanisms which would make the policymakers stick to promises made to young people? (n=11031)
23.5% | **76.5%**

0.00% 25.00% 50.00% 75.00%
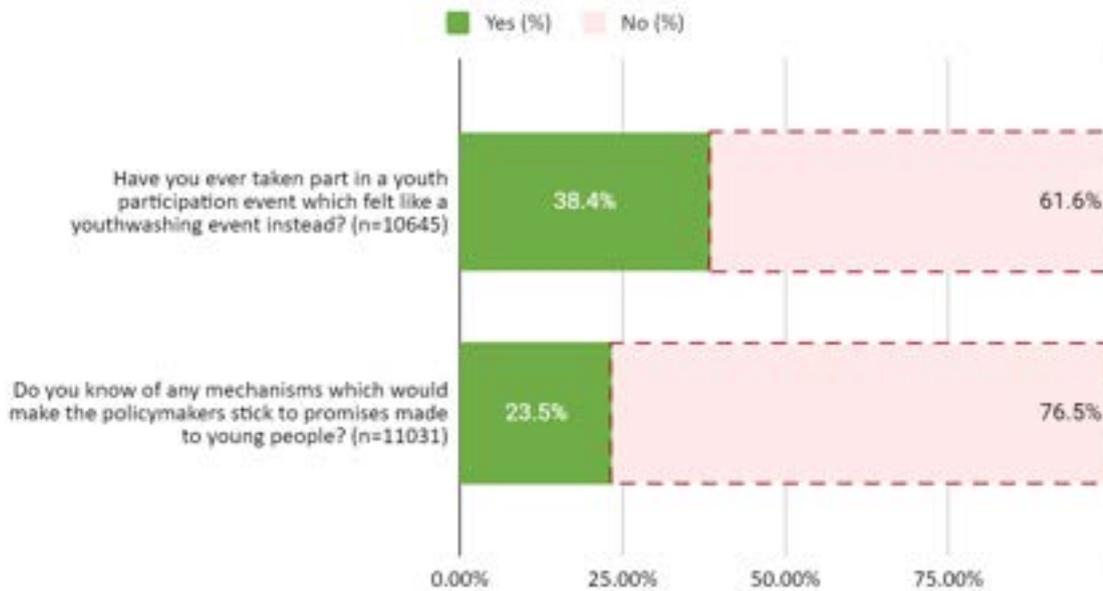
What do young people say is needed?

The EU Youth Conference in Prague outcomes identified the need to promote *"transparency and accountability of youth participation through the creation of feedback loops"* and that for participation to be meaningful it should *"ensure that decision makers act on the messages from young people."* The conference and the collection of good practices also identified a connection to visibility.

*"**Publicity, visibility, and transparency** are crucial for the good practices to be successful. Good practices that happen without public knowledge risk to stay isolated and limited in scope. On the other hand, good practices with good visibility have potential to create multiplication effect by inspiring others to implement similar practices, or even to implement policy changes that would make the practice more anchored and sustainable, widening its impacts significantly. Publicity and visibility go hand in hand with transparency. Transparency is crucial not only for the sake of effective visibility strategies, but also to ensure young people are aware of what is happening, how their contributions to various processes have been utilised, and what other processes are potentially also connected to the initiatives in the future. Transparency is especially key in political participation practices as these tend to be multi-layered, complex, and long-term, and young people need to be aware of what already happened, what is planned for the near future, and what is expected to happen long-term."*

EUYD9 Mid-term Report

During the NWG consultations the feedback from young people on how youth washing can be avoided supported these ideas. **There was a clear desire for participation mechanisms to lead to a greater level of policy changes and to result in decision makers committing to a higher degree of action on sustainability**. Considering how policy makers and politicians might be made, or required, to do this was a challenging area for many young people. Many reported that the only real way to hold politicians to account was through voting.

"Even after giving it considerable thought, the majority of respondents could not give a confident answer to the question."

<div align="right">Hungarian NWG report</div>

"Create punishment law for politicians, if they do not do what they promised, apply real punishment measures."

<div align="right">Latvian NWG Report</div>

"Binding politicians' salary to upheld promises or giving a bonus to politicians who keep their promises, public humiliation, fining, and a list of politicians who have kept their promise to young people."

<div align="right">Finnish NWG Report</div>

Despite these challenges, NWGs suggested a variety of ideas, based on their discussions with young people. These are described below.

Increasing transparency and visibility of participation mechanisms

"The procedure and framework conditions of participation processes must be communicated transparently to all those involved right from the start."

<div align="right">Austrian NWG Report</div>

"A successful model is generally based on transparency, (real/mutual) cooperation between youth and stakeholders, a good relation of listening/actively communicating, pro-active attitude in finding solutions jointly and consequent actions for operating changes in the sense of empowerment and action."

<div align="right">Italian NWG Report</div>

Various comments from young people emphasised the importance of having **clearly communicated goals within participation mechanisms** that were well communicated to young people from the start of their involvement. This meant clarity over how feasible it was for young people's demands or recommendations to be implemented by policy makers. For instance, being clear if results of the discussions are intended to be concretely implemented or whether they are intended to simply feed into the reflections by policy makers.

Another important element was the need for publications or **public records of the commitments** made by policy makers during participatory processes. This was to support the follow up

Providing follow up and feedback after participation activities

The importance of policy makers providing follow up and feedback to young people after participation activities was emphasised. Several NWGS suggested the need for **a deadline by which policy makers** were expected to act or give feedback.

There was emphasis on the idea of this feedback being public. Some young people described a high visibility process through which policy makers should publicly justify or explain their action (or inaction)

"[Create a] 'Justification moment.' Youngsters in the focus group discussed the idea to organise press conferences for (local) decision-makers/policymakers, accessible for young people. This moment might serve to explain publicly why certain compromises had to be made for example on the city council level, or what the policymakers / decision makers (e.g., city council) is doing with the feedback/input that young people provide"

<div align="right">The Netherlands NWG Report</div>

"Young people must be given feedback not only in the form of minutes of meetings, but also in the form of concrete evidence of the impact of their ideas and opinions on what happened."

<div align="right">Swedish NWG Report</div>

Other NWGs emphasised the importance of **building long term processes with policy makers with repeated feedback and ongoing dialogue**.

"Follow up activities after consultations should be held. Through such initiatives young people can meet up on a regular basis with decision makers and keep updated on what would be happening with the proposal that they would have made or initiatives that the decision makers would have said that would be implemented."

<div align="right">Maltese NWG Report</div>

Some NWGS stressed that whilst it was more common for young people to be engaged at the start of the process, it was less common for them to be involved on an ongoing basis. It was also suggested that young people needed to be involved in all stages of the policy making process, and particularly **evaluation of public policies**. This was said to enable young people to see how effective the actions of policy makers were.

Develop stronger, more consistent links between youth participation and sustainability policy making

Several NWGs reported the need for stronger links between participation mechanisms and policy making. There was said to be a need to both **strengthen participation mechanisms as whole, and also expand them cross sectorially** - particularly into the areas of policy dealing directly with sustainability issues.

"On local level there is certainly a lack of recognition of climate change and sustainability, and therefore almost no inclusion of young people in policy mechanisms related to the topics."

<div align="right">Bulgarian NWG Report</div>

The Mid-term report on collection of good practices identified that a *"direct link between the bodies implementing the good practice and policy stakeholders is one of key success factors. This link can have many forms, from official endorsement of a given process by a certain policymaker or policy body (e.g., by a Department at a City Hall, a given policymaker, etc.), through established and pre-negotiated ways in which the practice is connected to the policymaking processes (e.g., in the form of recommendations to a concrete body or policy process, etc.), all the way to utilising existing mechanisms of political participation (e.g., commenting on policymaking procedures via standard channels, if available, based on the good practice outcomes, for example)"*

Several examples of this were reported through the NWG consultation reports. Young people involved with participation mechanisms identified the need for **national participation plans, legislative support for participation mechanisms,** and overall stronger links to policy making.

"Ireland is in the positive position of having a dedicated structure which facilitates consultation with children and young people on behalf of government departments or other large organisations who are interested in hearing the voice of young people and including it in decision-making. This structure is called hub na nóg"

<div align="right">Irish NWG Report</div>

"Another good example that has been noticed among young people are the activities of the Youth Climate Council under the Minister of Climate and Environment thanks to which a Team for environmental education, including climate education, and promotion of ecological living conditions was established. The purpose of the Team's work is to prepare 40 lesson plans on issues in the area of climate protection (There is no subject on climate education in Poland). The problems reported by young people were taken into account, in addition, they were involved in the work of a special team, which developed solutions that were implemented in Polish schools."

<div align="right">Polish NWG Report</div>

Summary on Governance

Young people in the EUYD9 consultation identified youthwashing as the use of young people to falsely legitimise the action of policy makers. It relates to engagement between politics or policy makers and young people, which has no genuine intention or possibility to create policy or political change, and is portrayed to young people or the public as doing so.

Youthwashing was said to be experienced by many young people involved in participatory mechanisms especially on sustainability and environmental issues. Young people in the consultation identified the need for politicians and policy makers to commit to greater action on sustainability and environmental issues, and on young peoples' views in general. This means acting directly on the outcomes of the various participation mechanisms used by young people to express their views (See chapter on "Action and Empowerment" for details on these mechanisms).

The consultation phase identified that **preventing Youth washing, first and foremost requires policy makers to take more action** as a result of the demands and recommendations made through participation mechanisms. To encourage this participation mechanisms can:

- **Increase transparency and visibility within participation mechanisms -** Giving young people involved clearer understanding of how feasible it is that their demands and recommendations will be realised. Ensuring commitments made by policy makers are publicly recorded and promoted.

- **Provide follow up and feedback after participation activities** - Providing feedback to young people on what actions have been taken by policy makers after participation activities. Policy makers should publicly report on changes, or justify the lack of changes, by given deadlines. There is also a need to engage in *ongoing* dialogue with young people. Young people can also be involved in evaluating the effectiveness of policies and policy changes.

- **Develop stronger, more consistent links between youth participation and policy making in the field of sustainability.** Ensuring participation mechanisms are more directly connected to policy makers responsible for sustainability issues, and other related policy areas. Strengthening the link between participation mechanisms and policy through tools such as national plans and legislative support.

MOBILITY & SOLIDARITY

Mobility and Solidarity

This chapter is a summary of National Working Group (NWG) and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYO) consultations with young people on the sub-theme of "Mobility and Solidarity" during the EUYD9 consultation phase. These consultations were based around the key question:

"What helps different groups of marginalised young people to take part in different EU-wide mobility opportunities related to the environment?"

The NWGs were asked to conduct consultations on this sub-theme with young people from marginalised backgrounds. Consultations were conducted with:

- Young jobseekers and young people not in employment education or training (NEET),
- Young people with low educational attainment,
- Young refugees,
- Young people accessing social welfare institutions,
- Young people from migrant backgrounds,
- Young people who identify as LGBTQIA+,
- Young people in overseas territories,
- Young people from rural areas,
- Young people identifying as disabled,
- Young people from religious minority groups,
- Young people from ethnic minority groups,
- Young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds or facing economic disadvantage,
- Young Roma,
- Young people accessing "low threshold" youth services intended for young people in challenging circumstances,
- Young parents.

Elements of the EUYD9 Mid-term report collection of good practices, and outcomes of the EU Youth Conference in Prague on 11-13th of July 2022 are also included.

What is the current situation?

Through the consultation, young people from marginalised backgrounds reported facing a variety of barriers when accessing mobility opportunities relating to the environment.

Financial barriers were one of the most widely reported barriers, these included:

- Lack of money to take part in opportunities which required an element of funding from the individual (e.g., meeting a proportion of travel costs).
- Perception that there are no fully funded opportunities.
- Inability to take a break from employment to participate in opportunities, due to the loss of income this would create. This was particularly important for young parents or for young people whose income supported their household.

- Concerns that taking part in opportunities would lead to a loss of social benefits (such as unemployment assistance).
- Lack of financial stability in general.

Alongside this, **several practical barriers** were identified including:

- Lack of access to information about opportunities (widely reported).
- Length of programmes required taking a break from education or employment.
- Travel restrictions due to citizenship status.
- Language barriers relating both to opportunities not using native languages and complexity of the way programmes and opportunities are described.

Barriers specifically connected to the theme of the environment were:

- Lack of environmentally friendly transport options for international opportunities. Using plane travel for an environmental project was not desirable for some young people.
- Mobility opportunities which were designed to be accessible or inclusive did not focus on environmental topics.
- Lack of environmental opportunities taking place locally.

It was also identified that some young people preferred to focus on their immediate life challenges or issues in their local community.

"For these young people, in their opinion, taking care of their well-being is more important, they are not guided and motivated to take care of the environment and protect it. A good way to motivate these young people to take an interest in environmental protection is to organise events focused on local problems, on the problems of their community, or their immediate surroundings, such as school and club. The global level is too far for them"

The Czech Republic NWG Report

A perception that mobility opportunities linked to the **environment or international projects were not intended or welcoming for young people from their community** seemed to play a role for some young people. This included:

- Fear or lack of confidence to take part.
- Belief that they will not be allowed to take part, or that their school will prevent them (young people with disabilities).
- Concerns the young person would face racism, prejudice, xenophobia and related issues.
- Family and social pressures not to take part.
- Concerns about being stigmatised by their own community or peers for taking part.
- Lack of visible peers or role models who had previously participated.

"Worth mentioning is that according to participants in one of the consultations youngsters from minority groups tend to neglect volunteering and mobility activities and even stigmatise young people participating in such. The same group proves to be quite interested in such activities if the "barrier is breached" and they are convinced to try for example participating in non-formal workshop or attending a youth space for the first time."

What do young people say is needed?

Lowering the threshold to access opportunities

The EU Youth Conference in Prague outcomes highlighted the need for *"Low thresholds for participation within projects and initiatives - In order to be accessible and inclusive to a diverse range of young people, good practices need to have minimum barriers to entry. It should be simple and easy for any young person to begin taking part."*

The feedback from young people from marginalised backgrounds during the consultations supported this. It was suggested that there was a need to:

- **Simplify administrative processes** for applying to ensure they are simple and easy to understand.

- **Remove any financial costs** to the individual and ensure that programmes have sufficient funding to meet the needs of young people in more difficult financial circumstances.

- Ensure that **social welfare benefits** are not lost when participating.

- Ensure that there are a range **of different flexible opportunities**, which can adapt to meet unexpected circumstances and varying needs of young people.

"Youth organisations should provide full support to these marginalised groups by booking and covering their tickets, supporting them in the whole process, offering mentoring sessions, and avoiding asking for any financial contribution."

Specific formats that assisted with lowering the threshold suggested by young people were:

- **Volunteering through school.** It was said that this could be in or outside the school itself, giving the option of knowing other initiatives from their local environment and creating new solidarity networks.

- **Digital and online formats** - The INGYOs highlighted their work with digital podcasts, and digital formats were suggested by several NWGs. Although it was also highlighted that digital formats are not always accessible to young people with disabilities or those without digital connectivity.

- **Short-term mobility formats were widely suggested.** It was said to be desirable to provide opportunities that focus on smaller, practical environmental problems that are directly connected to the lives and communities of young people taking part.

"One of the most frequent answers [from young people] to increase the uptake of mobility opportunities related to the environment by vulnerable groups was the idea of having short term mobilities. In this regard they made it clear that they were referring to for instance 3-to-5-day mobilities. They emphasised that some young people with fewer opportunities might have never actually travelled so the prospect of travelling 'alone' to a foreign country with a different culture might not be that compelling or feasible, especially when the duration would be for months. However, if the mobilities would be shorter the most vulnerable ones might actually consider participation".

Maltese NWG Report

Increase publicity and outreach to marginalised groups and demonstrating personal benefits

The EU Youth Conference in Prague highlighted the need for accessible and attractive communication and outreach approaches. The report stated that *"good practices require such communication in order to widen the diversity of young people engaged."*

The need for **improved outreach and publicity** to young people from marginalised backgrounds was highlighted. It was suggested this should be conducted through:

- Schools and parts of the formal education system.
- Youth organisations and INGYOs.
- Direct mailings and street announcements.
- Social media and websites.
- Through Non-Governmental Youth Organisations, youth workers and social workers who directly worked with young people from marginalised backgrounds.

"Marginalised young people must be invited to various mobility opportunities. The organizers of such opportunities must find the young people in order to engage and involve them. Otherwise, the young people are not likely to find the opportunities in question"

Swedish NWG Report

The importance of **hearing about opportunities from someone you know, or trust** was identified:

"The most common way for marginalised young people to know about this type of programme is from people they know (through word of mouth), from someone they trust. There is therefore a need to inform these contact persons and youth organisations so that they can inform young people."

Belgian French Community Report

It was said that the **personal benefits of taking part** and **low cost / no cost mobility opportunities** should be highlighted during outreach. This included:

- Emphasising low / no costs within publicity.
- Offering incentives for volunteering such as access to public transport, discounts, and vouchers.
- Highlighting the soft skills that will be gained.
- Highlighting how volunteering can lead to increased employability.
- Highlighting the benefits of interacting with other cultures.

Connected to the idea of demonstrating personal benefit was the need for accreditation and recognition for taking part in volunteering opportunities, in order to enable participants to demonstrate experience to potential employers (e.g., through projects such as European AKI tool)

Themes of environmental projects

There was said to be a need to focus on localised issues that directly connected to young people's lives. However, outside of this, the specific environmental themes of the project did not seem to be a significant factor affecting young people's willingness to take part in mobility opportunities. Nevertheless, several types of environmental projects were proposed, including:

- Zero-waste camps,
- Trash collection campaigns and clean up days,
- Promotion of the rural world and rural values as a perfect space of collaboration and collective solidarity,
- Building of eco-villages,
- Exchanges to learn on alternative agricultural or permaculture techniques,
- Plantation forestry,
- Raising awareness campaign through bicycles long distance trips,
- Youth network to work on protection of biodiversity,
- Support for climate refugees,
- Time banking environmental credits.

Ensuring organisations supporting marginalised young people are resourced and able to provide professional support

During the consultations, young people from marginalised backgrounds highlighted the importance of **high-quality support** when taking part in environmental volunteering.

"Of equal importance, according to young people, was the support of professionals during the activity. Given that such groups might include persons with physical or mental disabilities, enrolling a number of professionals in projects could further facilitate their engagement. Young people singled out youth workers whom they said would have the skill to work with these young people to ensure that they would be given the necessary support to ensure that the mobility was both a pleasant and also a learning experience. They also mentioned other professionals including psychologists, counsellors and social workers. Such professionals however need to be trained to work in such contexts to ensure a positive outcome from such mobilities"

Maltese NWG Report

To provide this support NWGs said there was a need to ensure that **organisations working with marginalised groups around environmental opportunities were protected and resourced**. The importance of working with local partners who had **"bonds of trust" with young people** from marginalised backgrounds was emphasised. The need for funding or **financial resources targeted specifically at marginalised groups**, deployed at the local level was also raised.

INGYOs highlighted the role that they could play in terms of:

- Acting as infrastructure to support their member organisations on topics of sustainability and inclusions by providing toolkits, guidance, and training for their member organisations.
- Supporting their members to develop strategies on sustainability and inclusion
- Providing toolkits on inclusion such as the European Jewish Union of Students antisemitism toolkits.

The need for professional support builds on the findings of the EU Youth Conference in Prague which highlighted the need to strengthen youth work, by *"increasing the number of youth workers, access to funding, training levels, and general ability and capacity of the youth workers to support young people to engage in sustainability and inclusion agendas."*

It also supports the findings from the collection of good practices in the EUYD9 Mid-term report, which identified that. *"Funding of good practices requires continuity (day-to-day stability) in combination with effective utilisation of additional financial resources (e.g., project-based funds such as Erasmus+)."*

Part of this may also relate to the EU Youth Conference in Prague finding that there was a need to *"boost evidence-based approaches and research - Consistent, transparent, and systematic monitoring, evaluation, and assessment are key processes that help introduce good practices. This requires collaboration between youth workers, policymakers, and researchers and experts"*. The value of research within youth programmes was also highlighted during the INGYO webinar in the consultation phase.

Summary on Mobility and Solidarity

Financial barriers, or perceptions of financial barriers are said to be one of the main barriers preventing more young people from marginalised backgrounds taking part in EU-wide mobility opportunities related to the environment. This includes not being able to meet the individual costs of some opportunities, and, for some young people, not being able to take a break from employment, or risk losing social welfare assistance.

Practical barriers also play a role including **lack of access to simple information about opportunities** and **language barriers.**

Amongst some young people and communities there is also **a perception that EU mobilities are "not for them"** and not intended for young people from their backgrounds. Some young people also report **a preference to focus on local issues or their immediate needs rather than the environment.**

Young people identified a need to **lower the threshold to access** EU mobility opportunities on environmental themes. This includes

- Removing costs to participate.
- Offering short term (2-3 day) opportunities or opportunities connected directly to school.
- Simplifying administrative procedures.
- Focusing on localised environmental issues and opportunities.

There is a need to increase publicity and outreach to marginalised groups, to raise awareness of opportunities. **Working with trusted organisations, professionals and previous participants who have "bonds of trust"** with young people in marginalised circumstances may be an important approach to this. The **personal benefits and minimal / zero financial costs should be emphasised** within outreach and publicity.

Young people from marginalised backgrounds identified the need for **high quality, professional support when taking part**. There is a need for **resource organisations working with young people in marginalised circumstances** to provide environmental mobility opportunities. Ensuring that opportunities have dedicated funding to meet the support needs of young people in a flexible manner can play a role.

ACCESS TO INFRASTRUCTURE

Access to Infrastructure

This chapter is a summary of National Working Group (NWG) and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYO) consultations with young people on the sub-theme of "Access to Infrastructure" during the EUYD9 consultation phase. These consultations were based around the key question:

"What key elements of infrastructure (e.g., transportation, housing, services, etc) need to be accessible to young people in order to support them in living sustainably? How can these key elements of infrastructure work in synergy to support young people in living sustainably?"

Elements of the EUYD9 Mid-term report collection of good practices, and outcomes of the EU Youth Conference in Prague on 11-13th of July 2022 are also included.

What is the current situation?

The EU Youth Conference in Prague outcomes identified a need to *"create interconnected sustainable infrastructure"* and that *"to enable young people to make meaningful sustainable lifestyle choices, access to sustainable infrastructure is required"*. The consultation with young people supported this. They showed that **living sustainability is important for many young Europeans**, and that there is a desire to make sustainable choices.

"Overall, choosing sustainable options in all aspects of life is an important aspect of the lives of young Hungarians. They are planning for the long term with environmentally friendly alternatives and they are given a prominent place in their vision of the future"

<div align="right">Hungarian NWG Report</div>

However, **financial exclusion from sustainable choices was a limiting factor for many young people**. There was concern expressed that being able to choose sustainable options is more expensive. It was said to be a luxury for many young people, and a financially unrealistic option for many others.

"To encourage young people to live sustainably, they need to be able to afford sustainable services, which usually cost more. Policies should encourage more sustainable living by subsidising or lowering the price of environmentally friendly services. On the contrary, they can also tax products or services that do not respect the environment. Young people want to travel, eat or live in a more sustainable way, but this is often too expensive and they cannot afford these services. "

<div align="right">Belgian French Community Working Group Report</div>

"The major trends show that it is difficult for young people to think and live sustainably because of financial capability. At that period of life, many young people explain that it is difficult to even think about making sustainable choices."

<div align="right">French NWG Report</div>

"They consider the fact of a being ecological and sustainable as important, however the crucial factor when choosing the infrastructure is: financial cost, time efficiency, physical accessibility (proximity)"

<div align="right">Slovakian NWG Report</div>

"Sustainability should not be a fashion to pay for, but a cheaper alternative. The cheaper sustainable goods and transport are, the more likely it is that a young person will use sustainable methods, because at a young age, whatever one's values and principles, finances are the biggest factor in determining the choices between conventional and sustainable alternatives."

<div align="right">Lithuanian NWG Report</div>

There was concern that some groups of young people could be *"priced out of sustainability"* as well as a general recognition that the financial challenges faced by many young people made it more difficult for them to engage in action related to the environment.

"Some youngsters raised the issue that climate action (on the individual level) like protesting, adjusting lifestyle, etc. is also a luxury - in terms of financial capacity, as well as mental space capacity and time."

<div align="right">The Netherlands NWG Report</div>

There was also concern from some groups of young people that current sustainability initiatives can sometimes focus too much on the needs of people in more affluent city areas. The divide between rural and urban areas was highlighted.

"Young people living in rural areas have significantly less access to green infrastructure than young people living in big cities. They expressed that the lack of bus and train services at night is a barrier to them adopting an environmentally friendly lifestyle, as it often forces them to choose a car instead of public transport."

<div align="right">Hungarian NWG report</div>

Results from simple opinion polls

16 working groups used simple opinion poll[10] questions to gather the views of young people on this sub-theme. The polls were distributed through surveys, social media and in person events. The combined results of all NWGs are shown in the graph below. The results illustrate that around half to two thirds of young people believe they have access to infrastructure that supports them to make sustainable choices.

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[10]The simple opinion poll tool was designed to provide a simple youth friendly data collection, analysis, and reporting process. It does not meet common scientific standards for quantitative research surveys, (e.g. data is not weighted by country) and results should be treated with caution. The results provide supporting data to the NWG qualitative reporting only

Simple Opinion Polls: Access to Infrastructure

Legend: Yes (%) — green | No (%) — pink

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)
Does the infrastructure (e.g., transport, housing, services, etc.) where you live support you to make sustainable and environmentally friendly choices? (n=10836)	56.9%	43.1%
Do you have good access to sustainable and environmentally friendly housing (e.g., low energy houses, etc.)? (n=10350)	50.0%	50.0%
Do you have good access to sustainable and environmentally friendly transport (e.g., public transport, biking, etc.)? (n=11124)	61.5%	38.5%
Do you have good access to sustainable and environmentally friendly dining / eating options (e.g., restaurants with vegan options, etc.)? (n=10929)	64.3%	35.7%

What do young people say is needed?

Across the consultation the types of infrastrastructure requested were highly consistent. These are shown below.

Improved, cheaper, environmentally friendly transport options

Overall, it is clear that a large number of young people in the consultation want to make **sustainable, environmentally friendly choices for their personal transport.** They called for better access to transport infrastructure, and public transport to enable them to do this. A strong feature of this was **reducing the cost of using public transport** to make it financially accessible for young people, as an alternative to less environmentally friendly options such as cars. There was also said to be a need to **improve the quality** of public transport by:

- Increasing the number of routes and connections - especially to rural areas,
- Reducing delays, journey times and improving reliability,
- Linking transport timetables to school hours,
- Ensuring that international rail travel was a viable alternative to flights and making ticketing simpler and more affordable.

"The majority of young people expressed the view that they would use public transport more often if the routes were optimised, by minimising trip duration, deploying buses more wisely, reducing the number of stops on each route and adding more routes."

Cyprus NWG report

Many young people were keen to see **a reduction in car use**. The need for policies and approaches which encourage less car use was identified. However, encouraging the use of electric cars, and carpooling was also suggested.

There was a desire to **increase bicycle use** with a **focus on increasing safety**. Ideas to do this included:

- Provision of bike rental stations,
- Providing and improving cycle paths,
- Secure bike storage,
- Increased bicycle parking at trains and bus stations,
- Additional support for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to access cycling,

Some young people also mentioned **E-scooters**. It was said these could be promoted through many of the same measures that would promote bicycle use.

Affordable housing options

Access to sustainable housing was widely discussed in the consultation. Many young people identified that the **cost of housing strongly prevents young people making choices for more sustainable living**. For many, access to affordable housing was a pressing concern even before sustainability was considered. On the whole, the challenges with accessing housing prevented any real consideration of choosing a more sustainable housing option for many young people.

"When choosing a place to live, young people admit that they do not pay much attention to its sustainability, places to live are expensive, there are not many who are ready to rent to a young person, the main thing is that the home is comfortable, renovated and has everything necessary for living"

Latvian NWG Report

"Housing on the other hand, needs to be more accessible. Young people noted that moving out of one's own family home is one of the main transition steps that a young person would have needed to accomplish to move successfully into adulthood. However, getting a home loan to buy a house is getting more difficult since the price of housing keeps rising. Moreover renting an apartment is also out of reach for most young people."

Maltese NWG Report

Alongside financial support for young people to access housing, suggestions to improve to improve the sustainability of housing included:

- Better insulation and improved energy efficiency,
- Renewable energy in housing and more energy efficient housing,
- Reuse of abandoned buildings,
- Improvements to urban planning to reduce dormitory or commuter towns and urban sprawl.

Increasing access to green, open public spaces

The need for improving access to green, open, public spaces, particularly in cities was highlighted. There was a general desire for **clean, non-polluted open spaces** which young people could use for **leisure or social activities**. This included access to parks, community gardens where gardening projects could take place, outdoor gyms and sports fields. Suggestions were made for ensuring the quality of spaces which included, access to wi-fi, public toilets and good access by public transport. Access to community centres and cultural facilities was also identified.

Affordable sustainable food and consumption choices

Access to sustainable and environmentally friendly food sources was discussed during the consultation though did not seem to be as much of a priority to young people as other areas. **Cost of food was often said to be a more important factor than sustainability**. Distance to travel to purchase food along with quality were also part of young people's decision making choices. Some young people reported finding it **hard to identify which sources of food were more sustainable**.

"The price of food was mentioned frequently as an obstacle: young people cannot afford to buy locally produced or organic food. Some said that it is sometimes difficult to know what products are actually more sustainable"

Finnish NWG Report

"The young people also noted that the natural and first cost of living that they were trying to reduce was the cost of food, and despite their desire to choose organically produced products, these were unaffordable for them, so that despite their awareness of the negative impact of their actions on the planet and its environment as a whole, they could not make a different choice for economic reasons."

Polish NWG Report

Ideas for increasing access to sustainable food proposed included:

- Raising awareness of organic and eco-farming.
- Increasing vegan and vegetarian options available and raising understanding of these choices.
- Promoting seasonal, local and fair trade products.
- Reducing costs of sustainable food options.
- Increasing transparency in food production through better labelling.
- Reducing large scale farming and promoting community farming options.
- Increasing farmers income.

The desire to **make sustainable consumption choices** in general was expressed by many young people. This was seen as both environmentally important and also a **political choice in response to lack of action by decision makers** (See reports on "Governance" and "Action and Empowerment"). However, there was **concern that individual choices had very limited impact** compared to negative effects that large companies and systems of production are currently having.

"Specifically, regarding climate policy, youngsters argued that the focus is too much on the individual/consumer/younger generations, whereas governments and (multinational) corporations should take responsibility as they actually have the power to change the system - this was often mentioned in the dialogue activities. The little impact individuals can have versus the significant impact youngsters consider big companies and governments to have, demotivates many of the youngsters we spoke with to live sustainably."

<div align="right">The Netherlands NWG report</div>

Suggestions to promote more sustainable consumption and lifestyles included:

- Improvement in recycle and waste collection and waste sorting facilities.
- Information campaigns to raise awareness of over consumption.
- Taxes or fines for high polluting industries.
- Reducing packaging, promoting reusable packaging, and reducing plastic use.
- Promotion of re-use and repair, for example through clothes swaps, tool sharing schemes,.
- Promotion of sustainable tourism.
- Use of apps and individual campaigns which can help identify local producers.
- Markets or consumer groups where people can buy and sell their own local products.
- Exchange networks between young and elderly people and between rural people and urban people to know more about tradition, technology, skills, knowledge.

Renewable energy use

Through the consultation, some young people expressed the desire for Europe to focus more on clean and renewable energy production such as solar, wind and hydrogen sources. The need for public infrastructure such as street lighting and transport to use renewable energy was also expressed. It was suggested there was a need for subsidies and policies which encouraged renewable energy use. Through the German NWG young people also expressed the need for support packages to address the costs of energy use.

The role of the youth sector in sustainable infrastructure

The EUYD9 Mid-term report identified a number of good practice examples in relation to infrastructure. Some, but not all of these are directly connected to the youth sector. The examples included, *"sustainable youth centres, bike sharing systems, the Youth Leader Card in Germany, IT solutions (e.g., RuralCar [the carpooling for rural areas], TooGoodToGo [to avoid food wasting in supermarkets and restaurants], MarketPlace [Post services just for farmers], Tal Cual [to reduce food waste and improve healthy food access by buying "not perfect" fruits and vegetables rejected by supermarkets and big shops], Conscious Shoppers Association, ShareWaste, Mol Bubi), car-free streets, free or discounted public transport which also runs during night-time, package-free shops, the Rediscovery Centre (the National Centre for the Circular Economy in Ireland), revitalization of abandoned places, Renewable Energy System Scheme (to further encourage better use of the renewable energy being generated in Malta), participatory budgeting in schools in Portugal."*

In the consultations, the type of sustainable infrastructure called for by young people (transport, housing etc) was primarily **outside of the youth sector and youth policy**. However, the EU Youth Conference in Prague's outcomes identified that the youth sector might play a role in sustainable development through cross sectorial participatory mechanisms. The conference report highlighted the need for ***"Cross-sectoral advocacy for investment in sustainable infrastructure*** *- This recognises that youth policy makers have limited influence over economic and environment policy. Therefore, good practices need to be based on youth engagement mechanisms which work cross sectorially and give young people access to decision makers in these policy fields"*

Supporting this, in the consultation, some NWGs highlighted desires from young people to be more involved in urban planning and city planning through participatory processes:

"The needs of children and young people are hardly taken into account when setting the course for the future of the city. There is hardly any decision-relevant, direct participation in urban planning and development measures. Children and young people are neither allowed to vote for the politicians who decide on urban development, nor are they included in the few existing participation procedures as a group with special interests. But young people in particular will have to live for a long time in the cities that others are designing for them today. Children and young people want to have a say where their lives and their future are concerned; this was impressively demonstrated not least by last years' Fridays for Future protests."

German NWG Report

However, the youth sector may also play other roles in relation to sustainable infrastructure and lifestyles. The INYGOs highlighted they might play supporting their members to operate more sustainably. This included producing toolkits, guidance, and support (via events) for their member organisations to become more sustainable. The youth sector might play in relation to educating young people on sustainable lifestyle choices (see chapter on "Information and Education").

Summary on Access to Infrastructure

The EUYD9 consultation phase identified that there is a need to invest and **develop in sustainable infrastructure that is affordable to young people to access.** Living sustainability, and making sustainable living choices is important for many young Europeans. However, **financial barriers and limitations are one of the key things that prevent young people making more sustainable living choices**. Infrastructure to promote sustainable living choices needs to be affordable and accessible to young people. When developing sustainable infrastructure, there is a need to avoid "pricing young people out" of sustainable living, and ensure that sustainability does not become a luxury that is only accessible to some groups.

Considering the types of infrastructure needed, young people reported being in favour of:

- **Affordable and improved public transport.** This was one of the most widely called for developments, particularly from young people in rural areas. Improving public transport, along with safer and more widespread facilities for cycling, were said to be an important part of reducing car use. These transport options must become viable options compared to cars.

- **Financially accessible housing options** are an important issue for many young people. Financial barriers to accessing housing are highly challenging and strongly reduce young people's possibility to consider sustainability when choosing housing options.

- **Increased access to green, open, public spaces** for leisure and social activities are desired by many young people.

- **Promotion of renewable energy** use is supported.

- **Affordable sustainable food and consumption choices** are important to many young people but not as high priority as other areas. This includes using local produce, as well as increasing recycling and reuse. Cost of food is a concern for young people when making sustainable choices. There is also concern that the impact of personal choices is limited when compared to environmental action of large companies and structures.

- The role of youth policy and the youth sector within sustainable infrastructure may be to **support young people's participation within the policy areas that relate directly to infrastructure**, such as transport, housing, urban planning, energy, and agriculture.

INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

RESULTS OF CROSS CUTTING THEME

Intergenerational dialogue

Intergenerational dialogue was introduced as a concept for exploration within EUYD9 as part of the priorities of the Czech Presidency. The Mid-term report of the dialogue phase identified that *"intergenerational dialogue is one of the key mechanisms to ensure intergenerational justice in practices and policies"* and that intergenerational dialogue was *"visible in some of the [NWG EUYD] consultation plans (e.g., mixed deliberation platforms, etc.), and some good practices [submitted by NWGS] (e.g., Youth Tests and similar mechanisms ensuring impacts of policies are assessed towards the needs of future generations"*.

This chapter focuses on NWG findings about dialogue between young and old citizens, within a structured participation initiative; the term "intergenerational dialogue" is used to refer to this. This can be distinguished from dialogue between young people and policy makers, which is explored in the chapter on "Governance".[11]

There were not strong demands for intergenerational dialogue coming from young people through the EUYD9 consultations. However, the concept, and ideas linked to it, were explored by some NWGs and there was a level of support from young people when the topic was introduced. Based on the NWG consultation reports, it seems that most young people have not experienced civic or political participation activities that use intergenerational dialogue as a feature.

The relationship between older generations and younger generations

The general political relationship between older and younger generations provides important context for intergenerational dialogue. Through the EUYD9 consultations, several characteristics of this relationship can be identified. The first characteristic is **adultism - and the perception that young people's views are not valued by older generations**. This was well described in several NWG reports including the report from the Luxembourg NWG:

"Overall young people felt that:

- *Adults consider them as too young to voice their opinion.*
- *Older people, those in power, do not take their concerns about climate change, their futures and the fears that go with them, seriously.*
- *Adults do not think that they can take mature decisions or are committed enough.*
- *Adults do not think that young people can bring change in society.*
- *Adults think that young people see the world through rose-coloured glasses and do not understand complex topics and issues.*
- *[Young people's] specific needs are not recognised nor valued (…[12])*
- *That political decision makers are not interested in their opinion as they are not considered a target group for the elections (they cannot yet vote for them or support them in any way)."*

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[11] Arguably, dialogue with policy makers might also be considered a form of 'intergenerational dialogue', taking into account that most policy makers are from older generations.
[12] The full quotation also includes a point on the role of schools.

The second characteristic is **the belief amongst young people that current political systems represent the views and needs of older generations**, but not of young people. One participant of the EU Youth Conference in Prague described them as a "geron-tocracy". This feeling of lack of representation was well explored in EUYD8 and can be seen again in EUYD9. NWG reports included calls for votes at 16, youth quotas within decision making bodies and other reforms to political systems to include the voice of young people more (see the chapter on "Governance").

A third characteristic, linked directly to sustainability and inclusion, is **the perception that young people place greater priority on environmental issues than older generations**. This was reported in some NWG reports. Other reports highlighted that there was growing interest from older generations.

Policy making and intergenerational dialogue

The EU Youth Conference in Prague participants identified a connection between cross-sectorial policy making and intergenerational dialogue, according to the conference report *"sustainability and inclusion agendas are not 'youth issues', but rather issues that affect all of society. Therefore,* ***good practice requires intergenerational dialogue which engages with the views of all generations in relation to sustainability and inclusion."***

Intergenerational dialogue activities may play a role to enable young people to influence policy making in the areas of sustainability and inclusion. However, it is clear from NWG reports that there is still a strong desire from young people to engage directly with politicians and decision makers through youth specific participation activities. **Intergenerational dialogue should therefore not replace direct youth dialogue with policy-makers but happen alongside it.**

"Regarding potential solutions to obtain feedback and guarantees that young people are considered in political decisions would be the evaluation of environmental policies by young people. Young people are divided into two big majorities: A large proportion of young people are in favour of this, but another large proportion of young people think that all age groups and social classes should be involved. Everyone is legitimate to respond and any category should be excluded. What should be important according to them is to have trained and skilled people"

French NWG report

Goals of intergenerational dialogue

NWG consultations with young people indicated three potential goals for intergenerational dialogue initiatives. As the concept of structured activities based on intergenerational dialogue was not widely understood or experienced by young people, these goals are best thought of as suggested or implied by some groups, rather than widely shared demands made by young people in the consultations.

Goal 1: Legitimising and building recognition for young peoples' concerns about sustainability issues, as well as young peoples' efforts to influence the sustainability agenda.

Intergenerational dialogue can play a tool for empowerment and achieving recognition and support for young peoples' efforts to participate in decision making. Some young people argued that it was inevitable, and necessary that all generations needed to be involved in conversation about sustainability. The existing public debate on tackling climate change is being strongly driven by young people. Dialogue mechanisms which bring older generations into this debate help legitimate and recognise the genuine concerns that young people have been raising through their existing attempts to influence decision making. This may also help provide great support of the issue of sustainability overall and increase the possibility of identifying solutions.

"Young people perceive intergenerational dialogue as an important aspect concerning climate issues and the decisions that are being made about it. It is inevitable to involve all generations into the public discussion as well as to the decision-making about climate issues."

The Czech Republic NWG report

"Young people can find empowerment through intergenerational actions which would foster mutual understanding and build potential to co-create solutions."

Irish NWG report

Goal 2: Building mutual solidarity and support between generations

One of the values of intergenerational dialogue was said to be that it can build mutual solidarity between generations. This can challenge the perception that young people do not have the capacity to engage in decision making and further combat generational prejudices.

"Young people in Poland were heavily involved in helping seniors during the Covid-19 pandemic, but intergenerational cooperation was not maintained and continued thereafter. The young people stressed that a good way to encourage dialogue between elders on climate change would be meetings between youth councils of municipalities and councils of seniors."

Polish NWG report

"A more significant part of the participants expressed the need for such a dialogue and the concern that the elders "do not take it seriously". However, they feel striving to draw older generations into such a discussion is essential. They feel the importance of the need to renew and strengthen the dialogue between different age groups. The young have information, and the older generations have lived experience. All of these are reasons why it makes sense. However, there are concerns about who should facilitate this dialogue to be successful and not end up merely confirming one's negative prejudices about the other side"

<div align="right">Slovakian NWG report</div>

Goal 3: Enabling young people to influence the views of older generations on sustainability and promoting intergenerational learning.

The potential for young people to influence the views of the older generation on sustainability issues as well as for both generations to learn from each other was highlighted.

"A minority of young people living in rural areas indicated that they experience resistance from their parents and grandparents in promoting an environmentally conscious lifestyle. This is a significant problem for young people who wish to live more sustainably but still live at home. This experience has led to the suggestion that the older generation should also be involved in climate education."

<div align="right">Hungarian NWG report</div>

"Back in the days, the general population was poorer and had to live more sustainably in order to survive. We can learn a lot from the lifestyle of the older generation"

<div align="right">Bulgarian NWG report</div>

Methods for intergenerational dialogue

Specific methods for intergenerational dialogue were not explored in detail with young people through the NWG consultations, however some suggestions were made. These included:

- Deliberation and dialogue activities which included a representative mix of ages.
- Consultation activities that were cross-generational rather than being restricted to young people.
- Encouraging young people to speak and discuss with their older relatives.
- Meetings between youth councils of municipalities and councils of seniors.

Alongside the above, many youth participation mechanisms were highlighted through the NWG reports. These are discussed in full within the chapter on "Governance". Two particular mechanisms had a strong focus on intergenerational justice or representation and are therefore worth highlighting here:

- Youth tests and similar structural processes to examine intergenerational equality within policy making.
- Increasing the intergenerational balance and youth representation within formal decision making spaces such as Government boards and similar entities (through the use of quotas or other steps)

Summary on Intergenerational Dialogue

Intergenerational dialogue around sustainability and inclusion topics is framed by the context of:

- The perception of many young people that their views are not valued by older generations.

- The belief amongst many young people that current political systems represent the views and needs of older generations, and not of young people.

- The perception that young people place greater priority on environmental issues than older generations.

Sustainability and inclusion agendas are not 'youth issues', but rather issues that affect all of society. Therefore, good practice requires intergenerational dialogue which engages with the views of all generations in relation to policy making on sustainability and inclusion.

Intergenerational dialogue should not replace existing youth participation mechanisms or direct dialogue between young people and policy makers but should happen alongside them.

Intergenerational dialogue has the potential to:

- Legitimise and build recognition for young peoples' concerns about sustainability issues, as well as young peoples' efforts to influence the sustainability agenda.

- Build mutual solidarity and support between generations.

- Enable young people to influence the views of older generations on sustainability and promote intergenerational learning.

Youth Goals

APPENDIX

PARTICIPANT
DATA

Appendix: EUYD9 Participant Data

BACKGROUND CATEGORIES

Country	Number of young people who meaningfully participated in EUYD activities	Number of young people who gave feedback on EUYD themes otherwise	Total youth participants	Males	Females	Other gender	Prefer not to tell	Under 16	16-18	19-25	26-30	Prefer not to tell	Non disabled	Disabled	Prefer not to tell	Majority	Ethnic minority	Prefer not to tell	Majority	Religious minority	Prefer not to tell	Not LGBTQI	LGBTQI	Prefer not to tell	Rural Areas	Towns & cities		Prefer not to tell	NEETs	In work or education	Prefer not to tell
				GENDER				**AGE**					**DISABILITY**			**MINORITIES**						**SEXUALITY**			**GEOGRAPHY**				**EMPLOYMENT**		
AT	287	1819	2,106	132	145	3	7	14	142	107	18	6	258	29	-	231	56	-	264	23	-	259	23	5	107	180		-	44	243	-
BE_DE		33	33																												
BE-FL	162	80	242	62	98	2	-	-	24	113	25	-	162	-	-	121	41	-							12	14		-			
BE-FR	252	522	774	101	151	-	-	-	229	12	11	-													35	174		-			
BG	209	0	209	87	122	-	-																								
CY	255	4300	4,555	1,150	3,327	7	5	21	195	2,449	1,446	236				-	586	3,096	-	347	3,096	-	205	3,096	711	3,546		90	223	-	3,097
CZ	201	1001	1,202	500	501	-	-	8	207	464	321	-	901	80	20	911	40	50	761	190	50	811	140	50	360	631		10	20	881	-
DK	40	0	40	20	20	-	-	10	24	5	1	-																			
DE	704	36	740	92	148	1	-	25	-	38	23	-																			
EE	488	0	488	65	398	12	13	23	137	215	109	4				18	-	-	18	-	-	-	111	-	110	365		13	21	-	-
ES	255	1534	1,789	111	139	4	1	2	24	154	67	-	10	245	-	237	18	-				-	51	-	59	-		-			
FI	1200	1902	3,102	483	1,246	121	52	229	633	696	327	5				1,625	117	149	1,489	197	157	1,072	647	175	240	1,640		22	185	1,607	110
FR	146	714	860	76	57	1	3	28	55	58	5	-													68	78		-			
GR - no pax data	-																														
HR	111	217	328	116	191	1	20	-	64	152	100	12	265	6	5	237	13	26	219	39	18	193	60	23	81	225		13	24	225	14
HU	1200	153	1,353	70	83	-	-	1	36	99	17	-	3	142	-	131	6	16	101	9	48	133	6	14	106	47		-	6	147	-
IE	234	218	452	82	124	9	19	58	83	74	14	-	18	129	29	60	82	32	46	85	44	104	30	41	17	56		20	8	76	35
IT	400	500	900	202	171	27	-	-	47	197	156	-	360	35	5	287	97	16	243	112	45				79	310		11	129	250	21
LV	404	0	404	120	246	8	13	181	86	64	8	-	169	9	14	149	127	62	171	18	32	168	38	32	60	159		16	21	155	44
LT	312	119	431	42	77	-	-	67	37	12	3	-	109	3	7	97	22	-	89	21	9	105	13	1	67	52		-	116	-	3
LU	38	0	38	12	26	-	-																								
MT	147	294	441	166	238	35	2																								
NL	59	0	59																												
PT	99	0	99	35	63	1	-	1	31	49	18	-	85	6	4	67	16	5	70	13	5	66	12	9	33	66		-	5	94	-
PL	198	0	198	104	92	-	2	8	68	112	10	-																			
RO - no report	-																														
SE	301	1006	1,307	624	576	19	12	12	225	475	434	-	941	132	58	920	91	136	773	92	283	823	164	146	645	423		80	51	973	125
SL - no report	-																														
SK	430	211	641	64	143	1	3	18	125	47	21	-	193	11	7	167	30	14	162	14	13	174	17	20	98	113		-	26	173	12
TOTALS	**8132**	**14659**	**22,791**	**4,516**	**8,382**	**252**	**152**	**706**	**2,472**	**5,592**	**3,134**	**263**	**3,474**	**827**	**149**	**5,258**	**1,342**	**3,602**	**4,406**	**1,160**	**3,800**	**3,908**	**1,517**	**3,612**	**2,888**	**8,079**	**-**	**275**	**879**	**4,824**	**3,461**

Summary rows (by background category: Total youth / Gender / Age / Disability / Minorities-Ethnic / Minorities-Religious / Sexuality / Geography / Employment):

	Total youth (grey)	Gender	Age	Disability	Minorities (Ethnic)	Minorities (Religious)	Sexuality	Geography	Employment
PARTIAL TOTALS FOR EACH BACKGROUND CATEGORY: How many young people shared with us information on their background (including "Prefer not to tell")? (Figure in the grey field is based on an average value calculated using figures in all participant bacground categories.)	9,866	13,302	12,167	4,450	10,202	9,366	9,037	11,242	9,164
PERCENTAGES BASED ON PARTIAL TOTALS: How many percent of young people who shared with us information on their background fall into each category (including "Prefer not to tell")? (Figure in the grey field is based on an average value calculated using figures in all participant bacground categories. All other figures in this row are calculated directly for the given background category, indicating how many percent of the young people who provided information in that category selected which of the options.)	43.3%	33.9% / 63.0% / 1.9% / 1.1%	5.8% / 20.3% / 46.0% / 25.8% / 2.2%	78.1% / 18.6% / 3.3%	51.5% / 13.2% / 35.3%	47.0% / 12.4% / 40.6%	43.2% / 16.8% / 40.0%	25.7% / 71.9% / 0.0% / 2.4%	9.6% / 52.6% / 37.8%
TOTAL PERCENTAGE IN EACH BACKGROUND CATEGORY		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
VALID TOTALS: How many young people shared with us information on their background? (This row presents results without the "Prefer not to tell" option. Figure in the grey field is based on an average value calculated using figures in all participant bacground categories.)	8,385	13,150	11,904	4,301	6,600	5,566	5,425	10,967	9,164
VALID PERCENTAGES: How many percent of young people who shared with us information on their background fall into each category? (This row presents results without the "Prefer not to tell" option. Figure in the grey field is based on an average value calculated using figures in all participant bacground categories. All other figures in this row are calculated directly for the given background category, indicating how many percent of the young people who provided information in that category selected which of the options.)	36.8%	34.3% / 63.7% / 1.9% / 100.0%	5.9% / 20.8% / 47.0% / 26.3% / 100.0%	80.8% / 19.2% / 100.0%	79.7% / 20.3% / 100.0%	79.2% / 20.8% / 100.0%	72.0% / 28.0% / 100.0%	26.3% / 73.7% / 0.0% / 100.0%	9.6% / 52.6% / 37.8%

Note: This spreadsheet contains figures reported by NWGs with minimal alteration and verification. In some cases errors in reporting can be identifed and rows do not sum as expected.