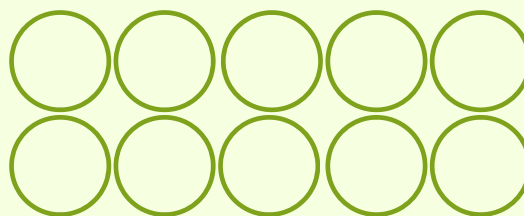




YMCA Brochure



YOUTH NEXT



Youth are not the future — they are **the present**. And they have the right to influence local, national, and European climate policies **right now!**

Youth Municipal Climate Action

This brochure is one of the project's main outcomes. It was co-created with the active input of youth and partners from all 5 countries during the final event in Alba Iulia. Inside, you will find real opportunities, verified resources, and best practices from our municipalities — for anyone looking to step up and join local climate action.



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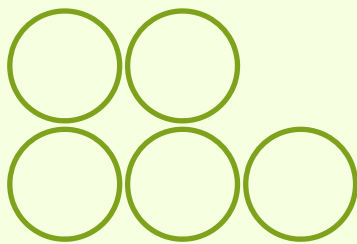


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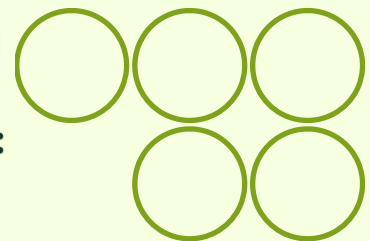
INTRODUCTION. ABOUT US

YMCA is a European project that brings together young people and local representatives to co-create a greener future for our cities.

6 organizations from 5 European countries, united by the conviction that climate change is also tackled from the bottom up.



**Funded by the European Union
— Citizens, Equality, Rights and
Values (CERV) Programme
Project No: 101192900 • Duration:
18 months • 5 countries • 6
partners**



OUR IMPACT

1069 direct participants
65,000+ people reached
5 partner countries
13 events & activities
18-month project timeline



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OUR PROJECT

YMCA — Youth Municipal Climate Action — is a European active citizenship project that brings face-to-face two worlds that rarely meet: young people and local policymakers. The goal: to create a genuine space for dialogue, where the voice of youth reaches exactly where decisions are made — in municipal councils.

The project spans 18 months, featuring events in each partner country, and culminates in a final event in Alba Iulia, where all participants will showcase the results of their joint efforts.

OUR MISSION

Real Dialogue



Safe spaces where young people and local politicians listen to each other and co-create solutions.

Climate Education



Workshops, best practice exchanges, and study visits to environmental initiatives across Europe.

Local Action



Every event is rooted in the local community — this is not an abstract project; it is about your own backyard.

Concrete Results



A handbook of good practices, an online brochure, and a YMCA Manifesto signed by youth from 5 countries.

Why does local climate action matter?

Climate change isn't happening somewhere far away—it's happening in your city, in your neighborhood, in your daily life. And that is exactly why real solutions start right there.

70%

of global CO₂ emissions originate from urban areas

55%

of the global population lives in cities—and counting.

+1.5°C

the critical warming threshold we risk crossing by 2040

1,000+

of the global population lives in cities—and counting



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Your City is More Important Than You Think

Local decisions have a direct impact

Public transport, public buildings, green spaces, waste management, and street lighting—all of these are managed by the municipality. Together, they represent a significant portion of a city's carbon footprint. A single good local decision—such as switching to electric fleets or planting trees in key areas—can reduce emissions by dozens of tons per year.

Local policies implement (or block) EU targets

The European Union has committed to achieving climate neutrality by 2050 through the European Green Deal. However, these targets are not met in Brussels—they are achieved through hundreds of thousands of decisions made by mayors, local councils, and public institutions. If municipalities do not act, the goals remain on paper.

Youth are the most affected—and the most motivated

Today's generation under the age of 30 will live the longest with the consequences of current climate inaction. Studies show that young Europeans are the most concerned demographic group regarding climate change—and also the most willing to get actively involved, provided they are given real spaces for participation.

Intergenerational dialogue produces better solutions

When local decision-makers and young people work together—rather than in parallel—climate policies become more creative, equitable, and easier to implement. Youth bring a long-term perspective, while local representatives provide the institutional tools. Together, they can make a difference.

"The fastest path to real climate change runs through our city halls."

What happens if we don't act?

- More frequent and intense heatwaves.
- Flooding in unprepared cities.
- Droughts in agricultural regions.
- Enormous costs for public health and infrastructure.
- Climate migration within Europe.

These are not distant scenarios—some are already happening.



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Strategic Framework & Global Context

- European Green Deal
- 2030 Agenda – SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 13 (Climate Action)
- EU Mission: 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities
- IPCC Reports (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)

What Can Be Done — Right Now, at the Local Level?



Expanding green spaces and ecological corridors



Clean public transport and active mobility (cycling, walking)



Energy renovation of public and residential buildings



Circular economy and responsible waste management



Renewable energy for local institutions and communities



Engaging citizens (and youth) in decision-making

What Young People Can Do — Concrete Opportunities

This is a curated catalog designed to help you navigate the landscape of climate action and find the perfect path for your involvement. Whether you want to volunteer locally, study abroad, apply for funding, or speak directly to policymakers, here are the concrete tools to make it happen.



European Programmes



The European Union offers powerful, fully funded instruments designed specifically to support youth development, solidarity, and environmental action.

- **Erasmus+:** It's much more than university exchanges. Through Erasmus+, you can participate in Youth Exchanges (1–3 weeks) or international Training Courses focused on sustainability, networking, and green skills.
- **European Solidarity Corps (ESC):** This program funds young people (aged 18–30) to volunteer or manage projects that benefit communities. You can join a green volunteering project abroad (individual or team) or access funds to implement your own Solidarity Project locally.
- **LIFE Programme:** The EU's dedicated funding instrument for environmental and climate action. While it targets larger organizations, it offers incredible educational resources and supports large-scale projects that youth can interact with or learn from.



Learn more about:

Erasmus+ (Youth Opportunities)

European Solidarity Corps (ESC)



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Youth Environmental Networks



You don't have to act alone. Joining a network connects you with thousands of like-minded peers, provides free training, and scales up your advocacy efforts.

- **YOUNGO:** The official youth constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It allows young activists to formally contribute to global climate negotiations.
- **Youth4Climate:** A global initiative that champions youth-led climate action, offering a platform to showcase solutions, access resources, and meet decision-makers.
- **Fridays for Future:** The grassroots, youth-led movement that mobilized millions globally, perfect for those looking to get involved in climate activism, awareness campaigns, and public advocacy.

YOUNGO (UNFCCC Youth Constituency)

Youth4Climate Platform

Fridays for Future (Global)



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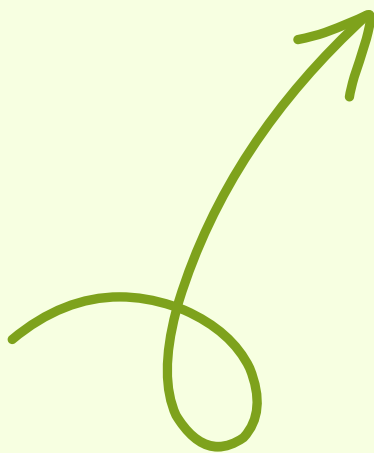
Projects & Grants



Have a great green idea but need financial backing? There are specific funds designed to help youth groups and organizations turn concepts into reality.

- **Youth-Led Innovation Grants:** Many international foundations and EU sub-granting schemes provide micro-grants for local eco-friendly projects (e.g., setting up community gardens, recycling hubs, or climate podcasts).
- **Local and National Youth Funds:** Keep an eye on municipal budgets or national youth ministries which regularly launch funding calls for youth NGOs or informal groups to address local climate challenges.

EU Funding & Tenders Portal (Official Grant Search)



European Youth Portal (Grants & News)



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Recurring Events & Conferences



High-level climate policy shouldn't happen behind closed doors. These annual events offer dedicated spaces, forums, and side-events specifically for youth delegates.

- **COP (UN Climate Change Conference):** The world's premier climate summit. Through youth quotas and networks like YOUNGO, young people can attend to pressure global leaders for faster action.
- **EU Green Week:** The biggest annual event on European environmental policy. It features dedicated debates, workshops, and networking opportunities focused on European ecological transitions.
- **EYE (European Youth Event):** Hosted by the European Parliament in Strasbourg (and locally), it brings together thousands of young people to co-create ideas for the future of Europe, with climate action always taking center stage.



UNFCCC COP
(Climate Change Conferences)

EU Green Week

EYE (European Youth Event)



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 Volunteering & Local Action**5**

Real change starts from the ground up. You don't need a massive budget to make an immediate, tangible impact in your own municipality.

- **Community Eco-Volunteering:** Join or organize local tree-planting drives, river cleanup campaigns, or waste-sorting workshops in your neighborhood.
- **Civic Participation & Co-Design:** Use the structures built by projects like YMCA to attend municipal council meetings, join local youth councils, and help co-design local climate adaptation plans directly with your local policymakers.



Useful Resources and Verified Sources

To help you stay informed, track climate progress, and find inspiration for your own local actions, we have curated a selection of verified, high-impact platforms and tools. Use these resources to back your ideas with accurate data and join the wider European climate conversation.

Official EU Climate Portals

Access authoritative data, official policy frameworks, and the latest environmental strategies direct from the European Union.

European Climate Change Programme (ECCP): The central hub for learning about the EU's strategies to meet its emission reduction targets under the European Green Deal.

👉 [Explore EU Climate Action](#)

Climate-ADAPT (European Climate Adaptation Platform): A specialized tool that shares data, case studies, and systemic solutions to help Europe adapt to the urgent realities of climate change.

👉 [Access Climate-ADAPT](#)

European Environment Agency (EEA): Provides independent, data-driven insights and interactive maps monitoring air quality, water safety, and biodiversity across Europe.

👉 [View EEA Data & Maps](#)



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Useful Resources and Verified Sources

Platforms for Monitoring Local Policies

Tools to check what your municipality is doing, compare local strategies, and hold local decision-makers accountable.

Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (Europe): The world's largest movement for local climate action. Check if your city is a signatory and view its official Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP).

👉 **[Search Your City on the Covenant](#)**

European Green Capital & Leaf Awards: A platform showcasing the best practices of eco-forward European cities. Perfect for finding inspiration and replicable blueprints for your own community.

👉 **[Discover Green Cities](#)**

The EU Cities Mission: Monitoring the progress of 100 European cities working to become climate-neutral by 2030, serving as innovation hubs for all other municipalities.

👉 **[Check the Climate-Neutral Cities](#)**



Useful Resources and Verified Sources

Newsletters, Podcasts, and Online Communities

Stay inspired, listen to leading environmental voices, and connect with global youth networks through modern media formats.

EU Greenlight Newsletter: The official weekly newsletter by the European Commission, bringing you the latest updates on green funding calls, environmental laws, and civic events.

👉 **[Subscribe to EU Green Updates](#)**

The "Outrage + Optimism" Podcast: A highly engaging, youth-friendly podcast co-hosted by Christiana Figueres (former UN Climate Chief), focusing on the balance between climate frustration and actionable hope.

👉 **[Listen on Spotify / Apple Podcasts](#)**

Climate Youth Hubs & Discord Servers: Grassroots, digital community spaces where young activists exchange graphics, coordinate local campaigns, and share tips on municipal lobbying.

👉 **[Connect with Climate Youth Networks](#)**

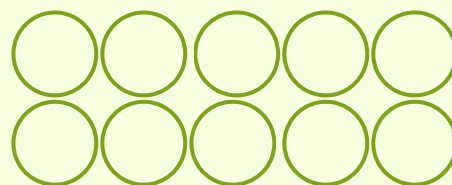


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BUILD THE FUTURE. SHAPE YOUR CITY



Thank you for exploring the YMCA journey! This brochure is not just a collection of pages—it is an open invitation. The tools, programs, and networks listed here are now in your hands.

Climate action doesn't start in distant international summits; it begins with a single youth initiative, a shared idea, and a direct conversation inside your local municipal council.

**The future of our cities is green, collaborative, and youth-led.
Be the voice that shapes it!**

Stay Connected & Take Action

Official Website: ymca-cerv.eu

Follow the Movement: **#YMCA #YouthClimateAction**

Contact local: **Reach out to the municipal or youth organization in your city to join the upcoming local roundtables and environmental actions.**



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