



MAY 2025

YOUTH SHAPING EUROPE'S TOMORROW

**WORKSHOP ON TRANSFORMATION AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CLIMATE
CHANGE AND DEMOCRACY**

YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The 2-day-workshop on Transformation and Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Democracy, held as part of the U4EU 2.0 project: Youth Shaping Europe's Tomorrow, was an event organized by KMGNE in collaboration with eight other European NGOs. The summit took place at the Projekthof Karnitz in Neukalen, Germany from 29th-30th of May 2025, gathering 52 young participants from over 14 nationalities and 9 countries.

The primary objective of the workshop was to facilitate exchange about the connections between climate change, democracy and sustainable transformations and the personal role that young people play in it. The learning experience was structured in different phases:

- Understanding the realities of the climate crisis and all connected crises
- Understanding the causes of these crises and how they are connected. What are the interconnections of climate crisis, justice and politics?
- Acknowledging the realities of the crises and what kind of feelings arise in this context.
- Taking action: how can we contribute personally to collective action for sustainable and solidary futures? What is our role in it?

Key Recommendations

The youth participants actively engaged in workshops and discussions, generating a set of insightful recommendations across various topics. The most significant recommendations include:

- 1. Systemic Economic and Social Change**
- 2. Climate Action Rooted in Justice**
- 3. Democracy, Participation, and Anti-Fascism**
- 4. Strengthening Community and Local Empowerment**
- 5. Youth-Centered Policy and Inclusion**
- 6. Truth, Media, and Digital Rights**
- 7. Responsibility and Accountability of Companies and Nation States**

INTRODUCTION

Background

The **U4EU 2.0** project: **Youth Shaping Europe's Tomorrow** is a collaborative initiative involving nine European NGOs, each dedicated to supporting young people and promoting social inclusion. Building on the successes and lessons learned from the first edition, U4EU: Youth Debating the Future of Europe, this project aims to amplify the voices of young Europeans and foster vibrant discussions about the future of our continent.

The primary goals of the project are to create a platform for young people to engage in meaningful dialogue, share ideas, and contribute to shaping the future of Europe. By providing opportunities for youth to participate in workshops, trainings, and conferences, the project seeks to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and platforms needed to lead and inspire change within their communities and beyond. As the EU continues to face crucial challenges like the Climate crisis, the Eurozone crisis, the war in Ukraine, refugee movements, discrimination, etc., the project aims to contribute to a more democratic and inclusive European Union and intends to promote a greater sense of political agency and the EU's core values among young Europeans.

The **Workshop on Transformation and Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Democracy**, held in Neukalen, Germany from 29th-30th of May 2025, was the 5th exchange event in the course of the project. Organized by KMGNE, it gathered **52 young participants** from over 14 nationalities and 9 countries.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the workshop were:

Knowledge and Insights: gaining a deeper understanding of the realities of the climate crisis with the underlying systemic interconnections and power structures and the connections to politics

Call to Action and Practical Solutions: developing actionable solutions to address the challenges discussed and acquiring practices of resilience, active hope and action in times of crises

Networking Opportunities: creating opportunities to connect, exchange contact information, and build a European network of young changemakers who can support and inspire each other beyond the summit with their respective skills and interests.

Opening up spaces to exchange about the differences of their experiences regarding rising fascist and right-wing movements and effects of the climate crisis in their respective regions and find connecting points and the power in coming together in solidarity and working on solutions together.

Future Involvement: Informing about future activities and encouraging continuous engagement and participation in the U4EU 2.0 project's upcoming events and activities

ACTIVITIES

Surrounded by sheep and red poppies in the rural area of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, an open, respectful and empowering space was created over the course of two days in the inspiring surroundings of Projekthof Karnitz, where young activists and interested young people were able to address some of the most pressing challenges of our time: the climate crisis, democratic resilience and the future of sustainable and just societies.

Day 1: Workshop on Climate Justice and Antifascism

1) Welcome and Introduction into the project U4EU 2.0, the workshop topics and setting the tone for a mindful, respectful and open-minded atmosphere for the day

2) Ice-Breaker Activity: getting active, warming up the body and creating exchange between the participants, getting to know each other

3) Introduction into Politics and Policies, Human Rights and Climate Crisis Facts

4) Exchange about the Intersections of Climate Justice and Antifascism

5) Input about Renewable Energy Policies and Politics

6) Climate Denial and Delay Strategies: exchange and game in groups to identify these strategies in communicative and news material from the participants countries

7) Youth Policy Recommendations: discussion and gathering of policy recommendations from the participants based on the following questions:

- What would you like to recommend to EU policymakers or policymakers in your country in the field of Climate Crisis, Sustainability, Climate Justice & Democracy?
- What can be done to prevent climate change delay?
- What do you recommend for successful sustainable and just environmental policies?
- What can the EU/my country do against the rise of fascist policies and for climate justice?

Day 2: Workshop on Active Hope and Resilience in Times of Crisis

1) Welcome back, Introduction into the workshop and Energizer: setting the tone, creating a safer space and getting active

2) Resourcing – Coming from Gratitude: exercise outside to get in touch with other beings, to connect with the gratitude in relation to nature, to reflect on the perceived separation of culture and nature, relationships with the ‘more-than-human’ and sources of energy

3) Spectrum Line of Ecological Emotions: creating space to exchange and share emotions and thoughts about the ecological crisis and the polycrisis in total, working through different emotions from concern to anger, grief and hope, acknowledging and differentiating even challenging emotions and transforming feelings of powerlessness

4) Dreamjourney - Vision Building: participants were invited to envision what a good life means to them and how they can move in little steps towards this vision

5) Blackout/Erasure Poetry: this co-creative session opened up space to interact with the challenging realities of the climate crisis and connected crises in new ways that highlight emotions, beliefs and values through artistic means. Climate change reports from all nine participating countries were transformed into poetry in an empowering manner.

6) What changemaker are you? coming from big visions to specific steps and action. The participants reflected on the role they want to play in socio-ecological transformations and in support of their visions. Using yarn, they weaved a “web of interconnected actions” to show the importance of their different roles and their interconnectedness as changemakers

7) Conclusion & Evaluation of the Workshop

YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

The Workshop on Transformation and Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Democracy, generated a variety of insightful recommendations across several key topics. Young people across Europe are calling for urgent, bold action that transcends token reforms and addresses root causes of inequality, ecological collapse, and democratic backsliding. Their recommendations are centered on justice - social, environmental, and economic - and reflect a desire to reshape both systems and values.

Key priorities include:

1. Systemic Economic and Social Change

- End public subsidies for fossil fuels, agribusiness (e.g., meat and dairy), and billionaire wealth accumulation.
- Tax the rich and multinational corporations fairly; use these funds to invest in public goods like education, transport, and eco-communities.
- Cancel unjust debt burdens on the Global South and pay reparations for environmental and colonial harm.
- Provide universal basic income and financial support for sustainable communities and initiatives.

2. Climate Action Rooted in Justice

- Invest heavily in renewable energy, public transport (especially a European rail network), and eco-friendly infrastructure.
- Support plant-based food systems through subsidies and Common Agricultural Policy reforms.
- Monitor and regulate resource extraction for green technologies to prevent new forms of exploitation.
- Reject “green capitalism” and superficial solutions; prioritize collective, community-driven alternatives over market-based fixes.
- Recognize, value and learn from alternative forms of knowledge from other communities

3. Democracy, Participation, and Anti-Fascism

- Establish local popular assemblies and youth clubs to identify environmental and social priorities and to offer alternatives for radical right-wing offers for youth
- Fund non-formal education programs that build resilience to misinformation and promote democratic values.
- Organize more political education in schools and community centers, especially around climate, anti-fascism, and economic justice.
- Recognize and confront fascist influences in media and politics; promote inclusive and anti-racist spaces.

4. Strengthening Community and Local Empowerment

- Invest in community centers, hubs, and regional infrastructure that empower people to act locally.
- Make laws easier for solar communities, cooperative projects, and circular economy initiatives.
- Encourage local engagement in policymaking, especially around climate policies.

5. Youth-Centered Policy and Inclusion

- Focus on the needs and potential of young people, recognizing their vulnerability to manipulation and their power as agents of change.
- Involve youth in policymaking and promote long-term thinking that protects future generations.
- Ensure schools accommodate disabled students and uphold educational rights for all.

6. Truth, Media, and Digital Rights

- Create and support independent NGOs to fight fake news and raise awareness about digital manipulation, not only, but also around climate denial and delay.
- Protect digital rights and regulate how online platforms shape public opinion and democratic processes.

7. Responsibility and Accountability

- Stop funding and supporting regimes and practices involved in genocide, ecocide, and colonial exploitation (e.g., military support to Israel, extractivist policies).
- Shift the blame for climate collapse from individuals to systemic culprits - namely, big oil, corporations, and complicit governments.
- Hold the state accountable for its investments and ensure they align with climate and justice goals (e.g., Agenda 2050, European Green Deal).

This vision from youth is not about reforming broken systems - it's about reimagining a future where people and the planet come before profit. They are urging leaders to take responsibility, act decisively, and empower communities to build resilient, democratic, and sustainable alternatives.

KEY TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Realities of the Climate Crisis
- Climate Justice
- Interconnection of Democracy, Politics and Policies, Human Rights and Climate Crisis
- Rise of Right-Wing and Fascist Movements
- Intersections of Climate Justice and Antifascism
- Renewable Energy Policies and Politics
- Climate Denial and Delay Strategies
- Ecological Emotions
- Socio-ecological Future Visions
- Active Hope and Resilience in Times of Crisis
- Collective Change

OUTCOMES, CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The workshop successfully achieved its objectives by engaging young participants in meaningful dialogue, providing deeper understanding of the realities of the climate crisis and the polycrisis in total, looking at underlying systemic interconnections and power structures and its connections to politics, fostering a sense of unity, and generating a set of actionable recommendations. These recommendations reflect the collective insights, aspirations, and priorities of the young citizens engaged in the workshop activities.

By the end of the summit, participants felt empowered and inspired to take an active role in shaping the future of Europe. The event not only provided a platform for their voices to be heard but also equipped them with the tools and knowledge necessary to not remain in feelings of powerlessness in times of crises but effect positive change in their communities collaboratively. They could create and deepen a European network of young changemakers who can support and inspire each other beyond the summit with their respective skills and interests in the fight for solidary and sustainable futures.

Following the workshop, the project activities will continue to work with the results and effects generated by this event. In the next phases of the project, the participants will work on further recommendations in a variety of topics and training sessions will equip young people with essential skills in areas such as youth participation, democracy, and advocacy.

At an online roundtable with EU policymakers the youth has then the possibility to present their recommendations directly.

The project will culminate in a final conference in Greece, where the outcomes of the previous activities will be reviewed, and further strategies will be developed to implement the recommendations.

The highly motivated, open-minded group demonstrated the power of youth engagement in navigating the challenges of climate transformation and democratic renewal. The workshop marked another important step in strengthening European civic participation and socio-ecological activism among young people. The insights and recommendations from the workshop will guide our future efforts and contribute to shaping a more inclusive and dynamic Europe.

Thank you once again to all the participants, speakers, and partners who contributed to the success and ongoing impact of this workshop. We look forward to working together to turn these recommendations into reality and to continue our journey towards a brighter future for Europe.

APPENDICES

- **Detailed Agenda of the Workshop**
- **Project Website & Social Media**

DETAILED AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP

29TH OF MAY

WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE JUSTICE & ANTIFASCISM

| | |
|------------|--|
| 8:30-9:30 | Breakfast |
| 10:00 | Welcome from KMGNE, Ice-Breaker & Introduction to the Workshop |
| 10:30 | Introduction into Politics and Policies, Human Rights and Climate Crisis Facts Part I |
| 11:30 | Coffee Break |
| 11:45 | Introduction into Politics and Policies, Human Rights and Climate Crisis Facts Part II |
| 13:30 | Lunch Break |
| 14:30 | Exchange about the Intersections of Climate Justice and Antifascism & Input about Renewable Energy Policies and Politics |
| 16:00 | Coffee Break |
| 16:15 | Climate Denial and Delay Strategies & Youth Policy Recommendations |
| 18:00 | End |
| 19:00 | Dinner |
| afterwards | Free Time (bring your own games, singing book etc. if you want) |

DETAILED AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP

30TH OF MAY

WORKSHOP ON ACTIVE HOPE AND RESILIENCE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

| | |
|------------|--|
| 8:30-9:30 | Breakfast |
| 10:00 | Welcome back, Energizer & Introduction to the Workshop |
| 10:30 | Resourcing – Coming from Gratitude |
| 11:30 | Coffee Break |
| 11:45 | Spectrum Line of Ecological Emotions |
| 13:30 | Lunch Break |
| 14:30 | Dreamjourney - Vision Building & Blackout/Erasure Poetry |
| 16:00 | Coffee Break |
| 16:15 | What changemaker are you? |
| 16:45 | Conclusion, Feedback & Final Youth Recommendations |
| 17:30 | End |
| 19:00 | Dinner |
| afterwards | Free Time/Bonfire in the Garden |

Project Website & Social Media



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