



June 2025

YOUTH SHAPING EUROPE'S TOMORROW

YOUTH WORKSHOP ON ENVIRONMENT AND
INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I Introduction

A Description of the workshop

B Agenda

C Methodology

II. *Recommendations*

III. *Conclusions*

I. Introduction

A. Description of the workshop:

The U4EU 2.0 project aims to empower young citizens across the nine partner countries and beyond to become active contributors to the EU's decision-making processes. By doing so, the project intends to promote a greater sense of belonging to the EU and its core values among young Europeans. The project, which is implemented from May 2024 to April 2026, is co-funded by the CERV programme of the European Union.

The workshop in Amsterdam on the 14th and 15th of June 2025 was about Environment and Inclusive Governance and explored the intersection of environmental issues, governance, and democracy through a mix of practical exercises and discussions. Guided by experts, 52 participants from nine EU countries engaged in a shift from anthropocentric thinking to deep ecology, applying biocentric and ecocentric perspectives to analyze environmental issues. By mapping the broader system, they uncovered connections, addressed potential challenges, and explored solutions that prioritize the voice of Nature in decision-making. This interactive approach aimed to foster a deeper understanding of how environmental concerns can be more effectively integrated into governance framework. In this sense, the recommendations made as a result of this workshop are aimed to give guidelines to policymakers, at the EU level, but also at other levels.

B. Agenda:

Time	Activity
Saturday, 14th June 2025	
09:00–10:00	Breakfast & Informal Arrival
10:00–10:20	Opening Circle & Welcome
10:20–10:35	Tree Meditation
10:35–11:00	Non-Human Identification & Ecosystem Setup
11:00–12:00	Parliament of Things
12:00–13:00	Lunch
13:00–14:00	Sensory Workshop by Yara
14:00–14:15	Workshop Introduction
14:15–14:45	Actor Card Reflection
14:45–15:15	Small Group Dialogue
15:15–16:00	Group Ecosystem Mapping
16:00–16:20	Break
16:20–16:50	Balancing the Ecosystem
16:50–17:15	EU Recommendation Board Writing
17:15–17:30	Closing Circle
17:30–18:30	Break / Free Time / Walk
18:30–20:30	Food for thought/Cooking Together
20:30–22:00	Evening Program in Stadshoeve (Flexible)
Sunday, 15th June 2025	
09:30–10:00	Light Breakfast
10:00–11:00	Loop van de Hoop/Walk of the Hope
11:00–12:30	Nature Jewelry Workshop
12:30–13:00	Final Circle
13.00	Lunch

C. Methodology

For the workshop on Environment and Inclusive Governance, Cross Cultural Bridges developed a game, based on the logics the parliament of things that had its try-out during an earlier workshop in March 2025. The facilitators of the workshop first identified human and non-human actors that play key roles in Europe's Nature and agriculture. These actors were expressed by cards, and in a group work the participants mapped these actors and their interrelationships, in order to come to recommendations for the EU and other policy levels. In a plenary session afterwards, the participants mapped these recommendations to design a collective proposal.

Before the game, some physical exercises were done to make the participants familiar with the idea of non-human actors and the parliament of things. The first day finished with "food for thought" sessions in which the participants prepared a collective meal while having conversations on food, agriculture, Nature and food transition.

The second day the activities took place at "the walk of the hope" in order to experience how negative feelings (of loss and desperation) may be converted in positive feelings and action.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EU (and other policy levels)

By 52 young people from nine EU countries:

We recommend to consider Nature and agriculture as two interconnected themes, because we humans are part of Nature and farmers play a key role in biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation and other issues. In this framework, we recommend to include the logics of convivial conservation, not only in rural, but also in urban areas.

Specifically we recommend on Nature and agricultural policies:

- Real change needs to be done at a global scale, we need global and EU regulations to facilitate this change.
- Incentivize organic and local products by reducing the price of the products
- Encourage more local farming and less urban life
- Encourage the transparency of the production process by imposing serious sanctions
- Incentivize to invest in renewable energy
- CO2 tax (by EU) for supermarkets
- Green washing regulations
- Tighter sanctions on starting wildfires, and incentivize protecting forests
- Regulate animal populations that are crucial for Nature, such as bats.
- Alternative and creative ways to manage the migration of wild animals such as wolves.
- Promote alternative and more sustainable ways of agriculture
- Increase the costs for big companies such as

- supermarkets and incentivize local retailers
- Support local farmers that have activities with low CO2 emissions and that benefit biodiversity
- Implement a no packaging policy, to encourage local products in supermarkets and other shops and reduce pollution caused by plastic packaging and transport.
- Regulating and develop instruments for a “give and take” policy, e.g. for fishery.
- Globally, coordinate marine ecosystem preservation initiatives
- Multi-dimensional sustainability targets
- In general: Substitute Nature-Conservation by Nature-Relation

On Nature education and awareness we recommend:

- Increase the awareness about Nature and environmental issues by including it in the educational system, introducing Nature education (in Nature, with Nature, about Nature).
- Multidimensional education, breaking the chain with capitalism, shift from anthropocentric to biocentric and ecocentric education

On governance, we recommend:

- Participative diverse knowledge based representation for policy-making
- Promote collectivism and cooperation between communities
- Support local governance and the constitution of assemblies of citizens
- Reform the local governance perspective in order to prioritize Nature-relation

- The process of selection (of citizen's assemblies) should be randomized and representative, including work sector, age gender and minority groups.

Furthermore, for a sound Nature and agricultural policy it is crucial that themes as gambling, speculation, and lobbying are addressed:

- Lobbyism is organized and legalized corruption
- Raise awareness towards the extend of lobbyism harmful for the climate
- Nature-harmful lobbyism should be transparent and penalized
- Stricter rules for casinos and other gambling and speculation activities

In general, we think that more attention should be paid on the social acceptance of policies: who benefits, who loses, how can we help?

III. Conclusions

In the current context of multiple environmental crises, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and increased contamination, there is urgent need for effective policies on Nature, agriculture and governance by the EU and at other governance levels. These policies should be supported by the majority of the population and specifically by the youth. This is a huge challenge considering the increasing conflict between farmers and nature conservationists, and in general considering the polarization in our societies.

For this a first conclusion is that Nature conservation and agriculture should not be seen as conflictive, but as potentially synergic. Therefore we propose that we shift towards a paradigm of Nature-relation instead of Nature conservation. This also includes a shift from ego to eco, and anthropocentrism to biocentrism and ecocentrism, in which we humans do not consider ourselves being apart and above nature, but as a part of Nature. In this shift we should focus on seduction and not on involuntary obligations. "Living in harmony with Nature, is a good life".

For this, transition education and governance are key. We propose that education about, with and in Nature will be part of all formal and informal education, and that direct democracy citizen's assemblies becomes will be promoted, and become an integral part of the EU's democracy and policy making.

Furthermore, in our recommendations several concrete steps have been formulated, that already can be implemented in

order to get a more sustainable and fair food and agriculture system, in which continuously will be looked for a symbiosis with the other (wild) elements of Nature.

These conclusions also include that we should look at policy, not only from a reductionist perspective, but also from a holistic perspective.

Taking in account the current polarized and anti-political feelings by many European citizens, we also recommend that serious efforts should be taken on how negative feelings (of loss and desperation) may be converted in positive feelings and action.

This means, among others that politicians and policy makers should connect in a better way with the other citizens, and that citizens will get a major role in decision and policy making by direct democracy mechanisms.

Annex

- [Invitation](#)
- [Project Website](#)