ECHOES OF ENVIRONMENT AND DIGITALISATION

YOUTH EXCHANGE SUMMARY BOOKLET

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Echoes of Environment and Digitalisation

The Erasmus+ youth exchange project "Echoes of Environment and Digitalisation" was designed to bridge the gap between environmental awareness and digital engagement, empowering young people with the skills and tools to become advocates for sustainability. Over the course of eight days in Vienna, Austria, 40 participants from eight European countries explored climate misinformation, digital storytelling, and youth activism, gaining practical experience in creating audioguides as educational tools. The project emphasized non-formal learning, blending interactive workshops, hands-on content creation, and intercultural exchange to inspire young people to take action in their communities.

Through a series of thematic workshops, participants developed digital skills, analyzed sustainability challenges, and engaged in peer learning by exchanging perspectives on climate change, responsible consumerism, and greenwashing. They worked collaboratively to script, record, and produce audioguides that serve as interactive learning resources on sustainability topics. The experience fostered critical thinking, media literacy, and environmental responsibility, equipping participants with the ability to navigate digital information, advocate for sustainability, and engage in civic participation.

Beyond the immediate learning outcomes, the project had a lasting impact on both the participants and their communities. Many returned home motivated to implement local sustainability initiatives, such as organizing workshops, launching digital awareness campaigns, or engaging in climate activism. The project also strengthened cross-border partnerships among youth organizations, ensuring continued collaboration and knowledge exchange beyond the mobility. By integrating digital tools with environmental advocacy, "Echoes of Environment and Digitalisation" not only empowered young people to take meaningful climate action but also helped them develop resilience against climate anxiety through proactive engagement.

"This program completely changed the way I see climate action. I never thought digital tools like audioguides could be so powerful in educating others about sustainability. Learning how to create content and fact-check information made me feel more confident in sharing my knowledge. Now, I'm inspired to start my own local initiative, using digital storytelling to spread awareness and encourage real action in my community." – Luīze, Latvia

Co-funded by the European Union

Project Overview

Our Journey

The "Echoes of Environment and Digitalisation" youth exchange was created to empower young people with the skills and knowledge to engage in climate action and digital advocacy. Inspired by the growing need to address climate misinformation and encourage youth participation in sustainability efforts, the project brought together 40 young people from across Europe. Through a combination of interactive workshops, digital storytelling, and hands-on learning, participants explored how technology can be used as a powerful tool for environmental awareness and social impact.

Our Mission

The project aimed to bridge the gap between environmental education and digital engagement, equipping young people with the skills to critically assess information, create meaningful content, and drive local sustainability initiatives. By developing audioguides on key environmental topics, participants gained experience in digital storytelling, climate advocacy, and active citizenship. This exchange fostered a strong sense of collaboration, intercultural learning, and social responsibility, ensuring that participants left not only informed but also motivated to take action in their local communities and other surroundings.

"From shared ideas to real-world impact, our journey empowered young people to use digital tools for sustainability and change."

Our Values

At the heart of "Echoes of Environment and Digitalisation" lies a commitment to empowering young people through collaborative learning, creativity, and responsible action. Our project values reflect the principles that guided participants throughout the exchange, shaping their personal and professional growth while fostering a strong sense of youth engagement in environmental advocacy.

Creativity

Innovation drives change, and through digital storytelling, content creation, and sustainability-focused workshops, participants developed creative solutions to raise awareness about environmental challenges. By producing audioguides, digital campaigns, and interactive presentations, they learned how to use media as a tool for activism and education.

Digital Awareness

In a world of information overload and climate misinformation, participants learned to critically assess environmental narratives, recognize greenwashing, and harness digital tools responsibly. The project emphasized fact-checking, media literacy, and the role of digital platforms in shaping public perception of sustainability issues.

Teamwork

The exchange was built on collaboration, encouraging young people from diverse backgrounds to work together toward a common goal of digital advocacy for climate action. Through group discussions, hands-on activities, and peer-to-peer learning, participants developed interpersonal skills, cross-cultural understanding, and leadership abilities.

Impact & Community Focus

True change happens at the community level, and our participants left with the skills and confidence to drive local initiatives. Whether through community workshops, digital awareness campaigns, or environmental action plans, they took ownership of spreading knowledge and inspiring change in their home countries.

Addressed Thematics

Project Scope

The project explored key environmental and digital literacy topics to equip participants with critical thinking skills, sustainable practices, and media awareness. Through interactive discussions and hands-on activities, participants examined issues and also explored the hidden environmental costs of digital consumption, learning how to reduce their carbon and ecological footprints while promoting ethical and responsible engagement with environmental issues. These topics provided a comprehensive understanding of sustainability and empowered participants to take action in their communities.
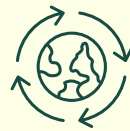
Circular Economy

.... promotes reducing, reusing, and recycling to minimize waste and resource depletion. Participants explored sustainable business models, zero-waste practices, and eco-friendly product design, emphasizing how circular systems create a more resilient economy.

Permaculture

... applies nature-inspired design to create self-sustaining food systems. Participants learned about companion planting, soil regeneration, and water conservation, discovering how urban and rural farming can enhance biodiversity and reduce environmental impact.

Biodiversity

... ensures ecosystem stability, food security, and climate resilience. The project highlighted threats like deforestation and pollution and explored conservation strategies, such as reforestation, wildlife protection, and sustainable land use.

Corporate Social Responsibility

... holds businesses accountable for their environmental and social impact. Participants examined ethical supply chains, corporate sustainability goals, and green business practices, discussing how companies can genuinely contribute to sustainability.

Addressed Thematics

Greenwashing

… misleads consumers by falsely claiming environmental benefits. Participants identified misleading sustainability claims, vague certifications, and deceptive marketing, gaining media literacy skills to critically assess corporate sustainability efforts.

Earth Overshoot Day

… marks when humanity exceeds the planet's annual resources. Discussions focused on ways to delay this date, such as reducing consumption, improving efficiency, and supporting circular economies.

Digital Waste

The internet and electronic devices consume vast energy and resources. Participants explored hidden environmental costs of cloud storage, streaming, and e-waste, learning sustainable digital habits to minimize their footprint.

Carbon/Ecological Footprint

… measures emissions, while an ecological footprint reflects total resource use. Participants calculated their footprints and explored sustainable lifestyle changes, such as energy conservation, green transport, and mindful consumption.

Building Blocks of Learning

Environmental Awareness

Participants deepened their understanding of sustainability, biodiversity, and circular economy principles, gaining insights into climate challenges and ecological responsibility. Through discussions on permaculture, corporate social responsibility, and Earth Overshoot Day, they explored ways to reduce environmental impact and promote sustainable living.

Digital Literacy & Media Awareness

With the rise of greenwashing and climate misinformation, participants developed critical thinking skills to analyze digital content. They learned how digital waste, online consumption, and corporate narratives shape environmental discourse, equipping them to navigate and challenge misleading sustainability claims.

Active Citizenship & Advocacy

The project fostered a sense of empowerment and responsibility, encouraging young people to take local action. Through workshops and collaborative tasks, they explored how youth engagement, policy influence, and grassroots initiatives can drive meaningful environmental change in their communities.
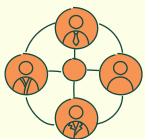
Collaboration & Creativity

Working in international teams, participants combined storytelling, digital tools, and innovative thinking to develop audioguides and digital campaigns. This hands-on approach not only enhanced teamwork and problem-solving skills but also provided a practical outlet for sustainable advocacy through creative expression.

Future City

Please come to the centre of the garden and stand under the trees.

Close your eyes and focus on your different senses. What sounds can you hear around you? Breathe in deeply and let the air fill your lungs. What can you smell? Can you feel the soft ground and leaves underneath your feet? Shift your weight and feel how the ground responds.

Now open your eyes. Take in what you can see. You can reach out and touch the leaves and bark of the trees. Focus on how they feel under your touch.

The trees are slowly losing their leaves before winter. Walk through the leaves that have gathered on the ground. Soon they will become part of the soil and provide rich nutrients for the new growth in spring.

Now go to the garden's gate and turn to your right to walk towards the park.

When you reach the park run across the grass towards the stairs as shown on the map. Enjoy the feeling of freedom and the nature around you. What plants can you see? Are there any animals?

When you reach the stairs, stop and look ahead towards the road. What can you see now? What can you hear? Are there any signs of nature here?

How does this make you feel? What would you like this place to be like?

Close your eyes again and imagine what this area could look like in the future. What sounds would you hear then instead of the cars on the road? Would there be bird song or wind rustling the leaves on the trees? What would you smell?

Open your eyes again and try to imagine this sustainable future city. Try to see it, overlapping the current reality in front of you. What aspects have changed? What is no longer there and what has appeared? What plants and animals are around you now in this imaginary future?

On your way back, think about the different steps that are necessary to move towards this sustainable future you have just imagined. As you do this, look around and see if you can find any first signs of this future and places where nature has held its ground.

You can choose which way you want to take back to the hostel, and also which way we take into the future.

Click here to listen to this Audioguide

Farewell

Here am I, standing in the middle of the forest. What am I even doing here? Thoughts are running through my head and I feel like I can't stop them. Take a deep breath – I think to myself. I listen to the sound. The forest whispers, once so wide.

Opportunity for sound effects

Now silent trees with no shade to hide. The rivers once so loud, (waterfall) lost in grief. Now species vanish brief by brief. (deep breath sound) Cold air is hurting my lungs. I feel like I'm drowning, but why does this bird sing so loud? (Crow screaming) I approach the tree looking up to see the author of this melancholic melody. There it is on a bare branch. A crow, alone just like me. Is this why you sing that melody? What are the reasons of your tears – I question while leaning on the tree (tree squiqing sound). She is searching for its nest in the trees but she lost it long ago. I feel lost too. I walk away from the tree.

Last inhale (deep breath sound), I look up. Cigarette cloud is above my head. Following every one of my steps and it's not letting me go. Everywhere I look it's calling my name. Maybe I lost my mind. It's getting darker and smoke is getting thicker. Weird. I don't remember lighting a cigarette ever in my life. But I know this smell, the smell of burnt tree (wood burning). I didn't realise it was this hot and now I can't see anything.

Walking over to another tree I spot a squirrel. She looks sad. Everything used to be so vivid but now it's colorless. It's trying to run away, it reminded me of myself. I don't seek help, I stay quiet. Someone will recognize my pain. It's all in the eyes, they don't lie. Right? Look into my eyes, come to the river that seems so distant. (River sounds) Can't you see how much I suffer? There is a broken branch, some old shoes, paper cups and now I'm filled with some black stain. Go search for ducks. Can you see them? Ducks left me. They said they will come back but they didn't. I don't blame them. I'm river with black stains. I would run away like a squirrel if only I could.

There are times I want to run away. Run away from myself, from you, run away to see who follows but as the wind hits my face and the sweat drips off my skin I turn around and you aren't chasing after me.

Can you at least try? It takes so little to keep me clean. To keep me alive.

[Click here to listen to this Audioguide](#)

Garden of Tomorrow

Do you see that bench over there? Let's walk over to it. Take each step slowly, feeling the ground beneath your feet, noticing how soft and welcoming it feels. Now, sit down on the bench, settle in, and take a slow, deep breath. Close your eyes and let your shoulders relax. Take another breath, even deeper this time, and feel the calm settling over you. You're away from the rush of everyday life —this garden is a place just for you.

Open your eyes now. Look around. Ahead of you stretches a beautiful, expansive garden, lush and full of life. Take in the colors—bright greens, deep blues, and soft yellows—each plant adding its own brushstroke to the scene.

Ahead, a tall tree with wide, welcoming branches awaits. Reach out, feel its rough bark, and give it a gentle hug. Sense its steady energy as you hold it. Step back, noticing the deep green leaves shimmering above you.

As you move through the garden, observe the plants and flowers, each vibrant and alive. Bend down to touch a soft petal, feel the freshness of the earth, and savor the life that surrounds you. Picture this same garden on a different day, a little worn and thirsty, flowers fading and leaves drooping. Notice how it changes, needing care to thrive.

You come to two paths. On one, the garden flourishes: bright leaves, fresh air, birds, and sunlight. The other feels dry and tired, a reminder of what happens without care. Every step you take shapes the garden's future, just as every choice shapes the world.

Now, imagine your perfect garden—alive, bright, full of life. Remember, each choice you make is a seed for the future. Walk forward with the care to help this garden thrive.

Click here to listen to this Audioguide

In the forest Audioguide

Welcome, traveler. Its me , Lumi the firefly. Today, I'm excited to take you to my favorite place—

the meadow, nestled at the heart of the forest. This time, I want you to experience the simple beauty that lies here, hidden just beyond the trees.

Do you hear that gentle rustling sound? That's the tall grass dancing in the breeze, moving softly beneath a sea of wildflowers. Each petal is a world of its own, and for my friends—the bees—it's a place to gather nectar and share whispers of the meadow's secrets. Watch them closely, each bee a tiny miracle of movement.

Now, look up. Do you hear those cheerful voices? That's the song of the birds, filling the air with music that's as bright as sunlight. The branches are their stage, and they sing for anyone who will listen.

Let's drift over to the river now. Feel the cool mist rising as it flows across the land, sparkling as it catches the light. This river is our heartbeat, feeding the plants, the flowers, and even us insects. It's the water we all depend on.

Branches crack and trees begin to tremble, as if in fear. Suddenly, there is a deafening whirring

sound, and the first tree falls. The forest falls silent, holding its breath. Then another tree falls, and another. Birds take flight in panicked flocks, weaving through the branches, trying to flee from an invisible foe. The deer bound away, leaping over roots and fallen logs, while rabbits, foxes, and insects scatter in every direction. But amidst the chaos, the little fierfly stays for a moment, watching as its beloved forest crumbles. Its wings buzz with desperation, almost as if it were shouting, pleading for the machines to stop. Yet the roar of engines drowns out the insect's voice, drowning out everything. With a heavy heart, the fierfly finally takes flight, retreating deeper into what remains of the forest, as the symphony of life it once knew fades behind it. The soundscape fades to silence, leaving only the memory of rustling leaves, chirping crickets, and birdsong, as the forest stands still, marking the end of an era.

Click here to listen to this Audioguide

Sacrifice in the name of progress

Sacrifice in the name of progress

I see you struggle finding the meaning of this life. Just think about what is the most important thing to you… I am sure that you want to be happy. I now invite you to listen to my voice and let your feelings flow into your heart.

Slow down for a second, can you feel the soft, wet grass under your feet. Look around you… Can you see the flower in the middle of the garden? go on…move a bit closer… take a sniff, listen to the beautiful bird song. Do you see the squirrel climbing the tree over there?

Sometimes she forgets where she puts her nuts, maybe you'll see some laying around in the grass between the colourful fallen leaves even now. Slowly make your way towards the gate of the garden. Feel the cold air on your face. Take a deep breath, feel the air entering your lungs.

Feel the soft ground beneath your feet.

Continue moving outside the bounds of the garden and along the road. Something is changing.

Do you feel the ground beneath your feet hardening? You take another deep breath, but it feels like less oxygen reaches your lungs. Can you feel the air getting heavier? You take a look around. A light fog settles around you. The animals have gone. There's several noises coming from the distance. The grass looks more yellow than green as if it has been burned by the sun.

A car is honking loudly somewhere to your right. You look at the buildings. Several skyscrapers block the heavens, a sky that was once blue now turned grey… ash grey…. The air no longer smells like flowers and freshly cut grass, all that remains is a strange toxic smell. From exhaust fumes perhaps?

Take a second to reflect on the two worlds you just experienced. Trust your senses. Was it all worth it? To sacrifice in the name of progress? Maybe it's not too late yet. You still have time!

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