This booklet offers campaigns & activities, designed for and by youth, and inspirational articles and stories, thanks to the YFoEE volunteers.
01. INTRODUCTION TO THE YFOEE BOOKLET

Now, more than ever, we can witness the interlinked crisis on many fronts. From the health crises to the economic crisis, many feel that the struggle for a decent life is increasing. In these unprecedented times, it is important to stay together, help each other, and grow activist movements for a better future.

Learning how to campaign and inspire others to join and act, is now more important than ever. That is why, Young Friends of the Earth Europe in the summer of 2022 organized a series of capacity-building events, campaigns, and skill-sharing sessions, aimed at building a stronger movement and network.
INTRODUCTION TO YOUNG FOE EUROPE NETWORK

Young Friends of the Earth Europe is a grassroots network of young people and youth organizations, working collectively for social and environmental justice on a local, national and European level. We organize events and inspire young people to take action on issues ranging from climate change, food and agriculture, and education for sustainability – to ensure the voices of young people are heard in Europe and beyond. We’re active in over 20 countries across Europe, and bring together powerful local Young Friends of the Earth groups.

YFoEE is the youth branch of Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth International with whom we share a common vision and mission.

We are a movement created by young people and run by young people. Young people are involved at every stage of our work, from planning and running the program of our annual summer camp, to developing our long-term campaign strategies and plans. We do this by bringing together and working with our national groups and individual youth activists from Europe. Nearly everything is done by volunteers, who work with each other with a common goal and vision, across Europe.
OUR VALUES

Young Friends of the Earth Europe believes in empowerment, youth participation and the power of action. We stand up for what we believe: just and sustainable solutions to global problems. We aren’t afraid to demand bold and radical changes for a future that is just.

EMPOWERMENT AND PEOPLES’ SOVEREIGNTY

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, GENDER AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

COLLECTIVE ACTION

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

EQUITY

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

ANTI-FACISM

SOLIDARITY
02. WHAT WE LEARNED

Summer 2022 was full of activities for the Young Friends of the Earth Europe network and its allies. Some of the events we organized include:

- Network gathering and capacity building event in Belgium,
- Online skill-share and training sessions by and for young activists, and
- Summer camp in Cyprus, for environmental, climate, and social justice, for young activists all over Europe!

At the core of the Volunteer Program was to motivate and engage, as well as to develop the skills of the volunteers, so that they can fight and advocate for climate, environmental and social justice. The volunteer program offered information and skill-sharing in taking action, interaction, and practical exercises. The non-formal education curriculum for the series of online sessions will be co-defined together with the participants, thus including the participants in the whole process. Popular Education* principles and methodologies were an integral part of this program.

*Popular education is an approach to education that aims to empower participants to resist oppression and create social change. Hence, popular education tries to move away from education models in which a teacher deposits knowledge into the minds of students. Instead, popular education tries to draw out participants’ own knowledge and experiences in order to build critical consciousness—an in-depth understanding of the world that enables action.
SKILLS THAT WE GAINED

- **Main topics:** Climate, environmental and social justice, Intersectionality, Food Sovereignty

- **Campaigning skills:** how to plan a campaign, campaign strategy, and outreach, creating a communications and mobilization plan for a campaign, strategic campaign communications, including the message/story, objectives, target groups, list of activities, team responsibilities, allies, and timeline of campaign

- **Organizing skills:** how to create a session/training, how to facilitate a session, event organizing skills, working in an international team

- **Other topics** that we covered were:
  - International Solidarity
  - Communications and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
  - Environmental protection and solidarity in times of warfare in Ukraine
  - Devising - collectively creating a performance
  - Ethical Copywriting
  - DIY cosmetics & cleaning products
  - Artivism: co-creating art for actions
  - Medicinal herbs as immunity boosters
  - Poetry session
  - Local struggles
  - Sci-Tech journalism - how to interview scientists and interact with your audience
  - Life as a nomad, how to live by your flow and be fulfilled
  - Youth participation and volunteering
  - Design thinking and green public spaces
03. Campaigning Groups

YFoEE formed 4 groups to work on current topics important to us. Below you can read a short description of what each group was working on.

1. Food origin
2. Energy consumption
3. Youth participation
4. Fossil-free

The campaigns were run by volunteers of the program with diverse responsibilities:

- coordination of the meetings
- facilitation of meetings
- social media communication
- leading of energizer games, check-ins & check-outs
- planning and implementation of campaign
- sharing results
The food origin group conducted research to determine how much of the foods we eat are from local sources and short supply chains, as well as their quality. They asked consumers: “Why do you buy food from the short supply chain (eco or farmers market)?”. The answers that they got were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide me and my family with locally produced healthy food</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support local producers</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For me it is form of activism</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was persuaded by a close person</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, they were looking at conventionally vs. organically produced food, ethical eaters, solidarity short supply chain solidarity, and the reasons for increasing doorstep food sales.

This group identified that Mallorca has low participation in environmental volunteering by young people. They found out that initiatives and campaigns around social and environmental sustainability, food sovereignty, and others, were not widely disseminated. To inspire young people, they created social media posts and agendas with activities in line with the work of Amics de la Terra. They reviewed the use of Instagram and possible ways to improve: to include more reels, to increase the frequency of posts in the week and to have an interactive feed.

They followed many campaigns organized in the region and what was noticed is that usually, people that participate are over 40 years old. So, they created different activities targeted at young people, where throughout September they could meet local environmental organizations, learn about agroecology and vermicompost, watch environmental movies and others.

One takeaway is that we must understand our limited capacities in the organization, especially as volunteers, and the challenge of low participation by youth is something that organizations face throughout other countries in Europe as well. It is up to us to try different ways for engaging youth and share together of our success stories so they can be implemented in other countries.
Fossil fuels are some of the main contributors to the climate crisis we are facing—globally, over 80% of CO2 emissions are caused by fossil fuels. Today, instead of finding solutions to the climate crisis by replacing our dependency on fossil fuels with more sustainable ways of producing and consuming energy, the governments of our countries are only replacing some fossil fuels with others. The fossil-free group worked in 2 directions.

1) collecting stories from different countries that fight for new or existing fossil-free plants and creating a video awareness campaign; 2) organizing non-violent direct actions in the countries, on the same date and time. On the question “Why are fossil fuels bad?”, people agreed on the accountability of fossil fuel companies and the top 5 reasons are shown in the graph below.

The fossil industry is directly connected with injustices that happen around us. Introducing the concept of ‘embodied energy injustices’ which reframes considerations of energy justice to explicitly consider hidden and distant injustices (upstream or downstream) arising from the extraction, processing, transportation and disposal of energy resources. The stories described by youth activists prove that those injustices hit the most vulnerable the most and energy poverty is increasing. We encourage integrative, systemic, transboundary assessment of the global implications and responsibility of energy-policy decisions.

Stories were collected from Ireland, the UK, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Cyprus, Germany and Croatia. In the future, the group plans to use these stories as a base of a script to produce a dynamic video with activists across the world, asking for a fossil-free future and making a live performance (living sculpture) representing rich people grabbing for fossil fuels and collecting the money out of it while they get covered by their own oil.

The energy consumption group was researching about the electricity generation: what is electricity consumption, what is the daily Energy Demand, and the main household energy consumption ways. Check out their gathered tips for saving electricity, both generally and more specifically.

As a next action, they are thinking to engage the public by sharing photos of pointless energy consumption on social media under a #example: Pointless public lighting.
In recent years, how many articles have you stumbled upon saying that this is our last chance to tackle climate change? Or maybe, if you’re a person who likes to fight disinformation and conspiracy theories, how many videos have you seen on Youtube of people trying to “prove” that global warming isn’t real and “they” have been lying to us all this time?

The first might lead one to wonder how many more chances we have. For how long are they planning to say that this is the last chance?

Many different and sometimes unreliable climate crisis-related information might confuse people who are just learning about climate change and global changes that result from warming temperatures.

Motherland

we pick up
elementary particles
of dust
from the toxic
untamed passion
that hangs above
our desires
and we create constellations
of refined illusions
the sky that belongs
to those who are born
under the stars
could never be
our light
at the end of the tunnel.

Communicating about the climate crisis

BY: ANA MTCHEDLISHVILI, FROM GEORGIA

BY: DIMITRA KANEVA, FROM BULGARIA
Okay, we’re still fighting climate change, but where’s the promised apocalyptic world? Why is it still cold in winter? I don’t see anything burning, except for some villages in Canada. And even if it is the last call, what am I supposed to do about it?

These folks may not know everything about climate change, but they know that big companies are trying to shift the guilt for the climate crisis to ordinary people. And maybe we shouldn’t feel as guilty as they want us to be, we should feel responsible for our planet and our future. There are several things we can and should do to deal with climate change and all its effects on the planet and our well-being.

We agree that to resolve this issue, we must first raise awareness about it, communicate with people, and ensure that combating climate change is our number one priority. We need to make everyone realize that activists and ordinary people, who aren’t in power, can make a systemic change. On the other hand, we can fight climate change on an individual level, by prioritizing walking or cycling over using private cars, going vegan, composting, and raising awareness about the climate crisis with others. Finally, the more educated we are about the issue, the more leverage and power we have to advocate with governments, get people on board, and reach our goal of fighting and meanwhile adapting to ever-intensifying climate change.

By: Ana Mtchedlishvili, from Georgia
ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION AT EVENTS

As a climate justice organization, it is extremely important to be accessible to everyone regardless of disability, socio-economic status, or anything else. The Young Friends of the Earth Network Gathering and Capacity Building Event was extremely accessible to me as a disabled person, specifically someone with Autism.

Something I learned from the event was the concept of a ‘brave space’. Often in meetings, we try to make a ‘safe space’, but the space is often much safer for some than others. For example, when I discuss my needs or accessibility at an action or event, I risk a negative reaction from others. In a brave space, we acknowledge the lived experience of people and how that makes some conversations more personal to them. We step outside of our comfort zone in order to learn and grow, while still feeling respected.

Another important element of a brave space is to be able to challenge by choice, to not force anyone to participate in a discussion, and instead encourage participation. Giving participants the option to stay silent or step out of a discussion creates this concept, and allows people, especially those with disabilities such as autism, to take breaks allowing them to participate more fully.

When I helped to organize the Summer Climate Justice Youth Gathering with YFOE Ireland, the idea of a brave space was something that I kept in mind regarding accessibility and inclusion.

In particular, when we discussed the cost of living crisis and energy poverty, we had to be aware that some people in the room were much more directly impacted by this than others.

A major way of making an event much more inclusive is by covering all or part of the cost of travel, food, and accommodation. This means that people from groups with lower socio-economic status are more likely to be able to attend the event, enriching the learning environment and bringing new ideas and lived experiences to the table.

Some ideas to ensure your event is inclusive!
- Is the venue wheelchair accessible?
- Is there an accessible bathroom?
- Is the venue public transport accessible?
- Is there a designated person to discuss access issues with?
- Is there a space for people who feel the need to leave during the event?

A key feature of creating an accessible event is to ask people what they need, rather than assuming. In particular, with people who are neurodivergent or have intellectual disabilities, it is important to assume competence. This means to assume that someone is able to do things unless you know otherwise. For example, asking them what they need before assuming they need someone else to communicate with them. Asking is key because it allows people to have the accommodations that make them feel the most comfortable and able to participate. At an event, it is a good idea to ask “is there anything needed to make the event more accessible to you”, a similar question on a sign-up form or at some point before the event, and also before the start of the event.

BY: CARA CLARKE, FROM IRELAND
I was born in a small and developing country that doesn’t have much influence on global climate change politics. However, there are many social and environmental issues, and the country has even been referenced as ‘Europe’s Waste Dump’.

Our stories and backgrounds in how we became activists are diverse. However, one thing I often notice in common is that the more we learn and become aware of these issues, the more overwhelmed we feel.

Hearing many people around me talking about the heavy burden on our generation, made me curious to find that 50% of youth have reported having mental health issues. This could be every second young person you meet on the street or your friend. These issues are reported to be closely linked to global inadequate responses to the climate crisis. And you can see that the destruction of the environment is not only affecting the environment around us. Since we are the environment, we are also affected, especially the younger generations.

Still, so many are blindly relying on “others” to solve this massive challenge and not feeling the responsibility to act. We’re facing the consequences of an ever-growing, ever-industrialized world. The result of a system that is based on endless growth trying to operate with limited resources. And we know that people who are the least responsible for these consequences are the ones who are suffering the most, while those that are contributing the most continue to thrive in ignorance.

Many of the frontline communities have lived through a history of violence and colonialism and are experiencing intersecting injustices because of their context of class, race, gender, and more.

It is critical to be aware that consumerism and toxic cultures reinforce our desires for the brand-new and trendy while moving us away from even knowing what makes us happy, and just enjoying being in the present moment, being alive, and finding what nurtures our beings.

We must understand that it is not the human vs the environment because the human is the environment. We are water, fire, air, and earth, all of it together.

Despite the pressing urgency, it’s essential to learn the wisdom of slowing down. At times of the disconnection that happened during the pandemic, I came across a wonderful practice, called mindfulness. This made me learn to give full attention to breathing, walking in the present moment, talking with compassion, and listening deeply, which is an ongoing learning practice. I believe it’s important to prioritize taking care of each other and finding what we truly enjoy and what brings us inner peace. And in order to fight capitalism, the endless rushing, and pointless consumption, I found this to be my internal way to do so.

By taking care of ourselves, we nurture the environment. And by taking care of nature - we take care of our homes, for people who already lost their homes, for people who can’t be as loud as you can.

Based on my TEDx talk.

BY: ENA UTEVSKA, FROM NORTH MACEDONIA
I was born in a country where the concept of "green space" was a given, so I grew up surrounded by nature. But soon, my family moved to Italy, on a different continent. I grew up not so blessed by nature, barefoot on the soil, picking up organic vegetables produced on our land, homemade and fresh, as compared to food I bought from commercial markets. However, I was lucky enough to grow up with a big garden where we continued the tradition of planting our own vegetables.

All of this luxury and blessing ended when my family and I moved to London, to Tower Hamlets. Not only were the houses extremely small in comparison to where I used to live, but there was a lack of green space, recycling bins and other environmental issues we had to deal with on a daily basis. In London, our borough has one of the highest levels of air pollution.

Everyone is affected by air pollution, especially the vulnerable and those with health problems. It can increase the risk of lung cancer, Alzheimer's and reduce life expectancy. As a result of air pollution, my family suffered severe asthma attacks.

According to statistics, every Londoner is affected by air pollution, and the longer they are exposed, the greater the damage. Children in Tower Hamlets have significant problems developing their lungs. They lose up to 5% of their lung capacity, sadly it's irreversible.

That was one of the reasons I joined Young Friends of Earth and built a campaign about air pollution for my local council. Since then, we are seeing changes in climate policy because of young people who are concerned about climate change.

We strive for a better future for ourselves and for future generations. Every day is wasted if nothing is done, every little step in this effort counts, so I encourage everyone to contribute their little big step in this change. We are all together in this and together we are stronger.

BY: SATHE MIAH, FROM THE UK
It is no surprise that industrialized nations and big corporations bear the most responsibility for climate change. However, its effects are felt more severely by the Global South and by low-income communities in the Global North. It is these people who are the least responsible for this problem.

Climate change is, therefore, both a social issue and an environmental issue, as certain communities are particularly vulnerable to this process and it certainly does not have the same impact on society as a whole.

As a result, climate change needs to be addressed from an intersectional perspective since it’s problematic from many different angles.

Climate change has developed in a world of injustice, and in this process, gender inequalities are only increasing. Most of the people affected by it are women from the Global South, women of color, and women in Indigenous societies. According to UN data, 80% of people who have to leave their houses due to climate change are women. Women are the ones suffering gender-based violence after natural disasters. Often, transgender women are discriminated against during disasters, as some examples indicate that they are not allowed in women’s shelters.

According to global data, women are responsible for more work related to the environment, such as gathering water and agricultural labor in developing countries. Their livelihood and income can be threatened by extreme weather events. Indigenous and rural women are often prevented from owning their land and resources, and they suffer from the effects of deforestation, loss of biodiversity, and other issues on their territories without having access to positions of power to stop it. In addition, women are 14 times more likely than men to die from climate-related disasters, as well as suffer disproportionately from resource depletion and poverty due to climate change.

Even though there are so many women activists who organize mass protests and strikes, the people in power are mostly men, who make decisions about climate policy. It is due to traditional gender roles that limit women’s opportunities. Policymakers need to consider the links between the environment and gender to find solutions to both problems. Finally, understanding the relationship between environment and gender is not only crucial for social or environmental justice, but it’s crucial for all the possible climate solutions that can be brought about by empowering women.
At the heart of all of our activities were young activists and campaigners, also participants, which had many reflections about this summer.

"I was taken away by how many people are also involved in climate justice activism. Of course, I knew generally how many there is because of the Internet, but hanging out with them, sharing experiences, and genuinely getting inspired by them was so rewarding and it’s something I keep remembering from the summer camp."

"I learned how to listen to people’s different realities and it was really rich and emotive it made me more motivated to be engaged in activism to support and protect."

"I had a very good time and I have learned a lot of different activities that I will apply with groups. I loved to be able to learn and connect with different people with different backgrounds."

"I really appreciate having met more people that are engaged in the environmental fight in different countries - that is really important to me, as it gives me more strength!"

"I take with me many tools that I hope to be able to replicate and implement in other instances, but above all the motivation and energy of young people who want to make real changes that contribute to the well-being of our environment."
There were many participants that were inspired by the activities. Some of them shared with us their messages and key takeaways.

"All is one, one is all."

"People often underestimate the power and willingness of young people to be part of the change."

"Be yourself, even the others don’t like you."

"There is always somebody with the same/similar idea/wish or plan for action as yours, thus, you do not have to spend a lifetime thinking about making the first step. There is always somebody who will support that and join you in the fight."

"Peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing are so empowering."
This Youth Proposal for a Green Deal for Europe presents a narrative of the future we want and of the urgent intersectional transformation that is needed in our society. It presents young people’s visions for a socially just and ecologically sound future.

Joint youth declaration on food sovereignty

We worked with urban and rural young people from across Europe to put together a joint vision for the future of our food and farming system based on food sovereignty.

What is climate justice?

Stopping climate breakdown means fighting for climate justice. Here’s why.
This toolkit is full of articles, tools and case studies coming from the three-year journey YFoEE has taken to make our movement more inclusive. It is filled with volunteer initiatives, thoughts and personal experiences.

We build powerful movements by making sure everybody is empowered to be involved and nobody feels left out or overlooked. Here’s how.

This manifesto is a commitment to inform ourselves and our work, to challenge ourselves and one another, and to accountable and conscious in our efforts to be a part of the change we want to see in the world.

The Visions Toolkit contains instructions and tools to support YFoEE and other facilitators to run a variety of outreach activities, in three phases, enabling diverse individuals and groups across Europe under System Reset Project.

In this publication, Young Friends of the Earth Ireland explore options to transition the Irish food system towards a sustainable model based on food sovereignty.
MAXIMIZE & MINIMIZE LEARNING

Maximize & Minimize Learning is a powerful tool to help participants take responsibility for their own learning and identify personal strategies for them to make the most of the training, which can easily be adapted for online facilitation.

CLOSED-EYE GROUP PROCESS

This tool uses individual work, small groups and then large group to help the group access its own wisdom about a particular topic, helping people find their own successful experience.

BUDDY SYSTEM

By creating a buddy system, facilitators can create an intentional support structure for participants, increasing the speed and depth of learning. This tool can be adapted for online use by changing the means of communication between buddies.

SPECTOGRAM

This is one of our favorite physical tools, where people line-up along a spectrum. You get to see a range of personal reactions quickly. Online, you can do this as a poll, only you’re asking participants to answer along a scale with numbers at either end, like: 1...5.
**Fishbowl**

A tool to have a small group discuss a topic in front of everyone else.

[CLICK TO OPEN RESOURCE]

**Poll**

Ask everyone the same question with simple answers (1, 2, 3 / A, B, C / yes, no / etc.) and invite them to type their answer in chat, or if they can’t use chat, share out loud.

[CLICK TO OPEN RESOURCE]

**Closing Circles**

The closing circle activities can be performed when gathering online with variations adapted on virtual circles.

[CLICK TO OPEN RESOURCE]
THANK YOU!

Young FoEE is grateful to everyone that created this booklet and resource! Big thanks to the Steering group members, volunteers, activists, and participants in all events and activities, and to the YFoEE Coordinator.

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And, thank YOU for reading the YFoEE Booklet and Resource!

If you want to connect, join and share your ideas, write us an email at youngfoe@foeeurope.org

Follow us on social media:

www.youngfoee.eu

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