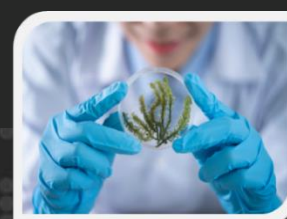
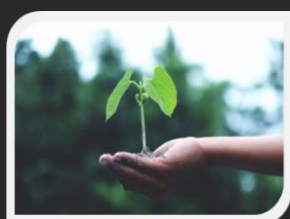


ONLINE BIOECONOMY YOUTH DEBATE #3

The youth leading the sustainable transition through bioeconomy



Event Report

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ORGANISER



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Outcomes and Recommendations

Miro Board outcomes on Topic 3.1

Topic 3.1 Questions	Participants answers
<p>1. How can youth influence policy in the areas of:</p>	<p>Renewable energy -Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Develop and promote clean energy startups or community-based renewable energy projects.</p> <p>Waste management - Advocate for extended producer responsibility (EPR) and circular economy principles. - Get the schools & communities involved in programmes like Eco-Schools or global campaigns like Global Action Days. - Engage in zero waste initiatives, clean up events, Composting programmes etc. - Join petitions</p> <p>Biodiversity - Citizen Science: Participate in biodiversity monitoring and data collection to inform policies. - Engagement in International Frameworks: Contribute to negotiations on biodiversity under global agreements (e.g., the Convention on Biological Diversity). - Join environmental movements. - Engage in scientific research, conservation projects.</p> <p>Sustainable agriculture - Support Local Food Systems: Push for policies favouring local, sustainable food production and consumption. - Youth Cooperatives: Form groups to demonstrate the viability of sustainable agricultural models. - Promote Agroecological Practices: Advocate for farming methods that prioritize sustainability, such as crop rotation and organic farming.</p>
<p>2. What are some successful examples where young people have shaped policies for a sustainable future?</p>	<p>Local level</p> <p>Milan - <i>Youth4Climate Manifesto</i>: Following the "Youth4Climate: Driving Ambition" event, a manifesto was released with ideas and proposals discussions. This document was presented to governments participating in COP26, ensuring that youth perspectives were considered in international climate negotiations.</p> <p>National level</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Italy: "Youth Policy Lab for Climate Action" - Greece: ECOWEEK, a non-profit organisation that raises awareness, founded in 2005. <p>International level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global Youth Biodiversity Network - "We Don't Have Time" global platform - Generation Climate Europe GCE: a coalition of youth-led networks addressing climate change issues at the European level. - Worldwide Climate Strikes in Communities, inspired by Greta Thunberg.
<p>3. The biggest barriers preventing youth from shaping policies that impact their future (from the most to the least voted)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limited access to policymaking processes & Lack of policy education: 10 votes 2. Economic, political and bureaucratic barriers: 7 votes 3. Insufficient representation: 3 votes 4. Cultural and social norms: 2 votes

Miro Board outcomes on Topic 3.2

Topic 3.2 Questions	Participants answers
<p>1. How the following stakeholders ensure that bioeconomy is accessible to marginalised communities and does not end up benefiting only larger corporations?</p>	<p>Local governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity Building: Provide training programs and educational campaigns focused on bioeconomy sectors like renewable energy and sustainable agriculture, targeting underrepresented groups. - Develop inclusive policies that prioritise marginalised groups, such as subsidies or grants for small-scale bioeconomy projects. <p>Community organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness Campaigns: Educate marginalised groups about bioeconomy opportunities and their rights to engage in decision-making processes. - Organise inclusive, language-sensitive community workshops to explain bioeconomy. - Involve underrepresented groups (e.g., women, refugees, ethnic minorities) in the design and implementation of bioeconomy initiatives (make them speakers/ live examples etc.). - Create community kitchen processing local agricultural waste into bio-based products. - Artistic and artisanal approaches to create new jobs. <p>NGOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer digital literacy training to help marginalised groups leverage technology for bioeconomy projects. - Projects that empower refugee communities to work in sustainable agriculture or biowaste management (e.g. the <i>NAOMI</i> project) - Access to Financing: facilitate microfinance opportunities or act as intermediaries to secure funding for small-scale bioeconomy projects. - Global Networking: leverage international networks to share good practices and provide marginalised communities access to markets for bio-based products. - In India, NGOs have worked with tribal communities to develop bio-based handicrafts from local resources. - In Spain, NGOs like <i>Fundación Biodiversidad</i> provide accessible training for rural women in sustainable agriculture. <p>SMEs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Employment: Prioritise hiring from local communities, especially underrepresented groups, for bio-based ventures. - Inclusive Business Models: Develop partnerships with marginalised communities, integrating them into the supply chain (e.g., sourcing materials from smallholder

	<p>farmers).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shops selling fair-trade bio-based products made by marginalised artisans. <p>- There is the need for ecosystem connections among stakeholders to boost inclusive growth.</p>
<p>2. Traditional jobs face several challenges. How can bioeconomy contribute to reducing them?</p>	<p>Economic challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional/alternative income streams e.g. waste valorisation and conversion to new products. - create new, sustainable employment opportunities in sectors like renewable energy. - Introduce bio-based products to emerging green markets. They will be more competitive than in traditional markets. <p>Environmental challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs in the bioeconomy (e.g., organic farming, renewable energy production, bioplastic manufacturing) prioritise environmentally friendly practices, reducing worker exposure to pollutants and hazardous materials common in traditional industries. - Waste reduction in the environment. <p>Social challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bioeconomy initiatives often emphasize inclusivity, creating opportunities for marginalised communities, including women, youth, and rural populations, through cooperative models and fair-trade policies. - Localised bio-based production systems strengthen community ties, ensuring equitable benefit-sharing and social cohesion. - Bioeconomy can strengthen rural economies by reducing job migration, rural depopulation, unemployment or NEETs given that it exploits local natural resources: local jobs creation such as eco-tourism, biobased crafts etc. <p>Technological challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transitioning to the bioeconomy involves adopting modern, clean technologies (e.g., precision agriculture, bioinformatics), providing workers with training to enhance employability in advanced sectors. - Bioeconomy sectors often focus on grassroots innovation, allowing workers to participate in designing and improving technologies tailored to local contexts. <p>Legal and Regulatory challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governments can integrate enhanced labour standards into bioeconomy policies, ensuring fair wages, safe working conditions, and rights for workers involved in green jobs.

	<p>Psychological and Health challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mental Well-Being: Green jobs foster a sense of contribution to environmental and societal betterment, improving job satisfaction and reducing workplace stress. - Compared to traditional industrial jobs, many bioeconomy roles (e.g., sustainable agriculture, bioproduct manufacturing) involve less exposure to toxic substances and occupational hazards. - Bioeconomy can replace harmful chemicals with bio-based, non-toxic alternatives in farming and manufacturing.
<p>3. The educational system can better prepare young people to understand policy, political systems, and their rights by integrating the following strategies.</p> <p>(from the most to the least voted)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Participation in Decision-Making: 6 votes 2. Civils education and Practical workshops: 5 votes each 3. International Perspectives and Digital Tools for Political Engagement: 3 votes each 4. Rights and Advocacy Training: 1 vote 5. Partnerships with Policy Makers: 0 votes

Key Insights stemming from the discussions

The discussions during the event highlighted critical strategies and challenges related to promoting inclusivity in the bioeconomy and preparing young people for active participation in policymaking. Participants emphasized the roles of key stakeholders—local governments, community organisations, NGOs, and SMEs—in ensuring that marginalised communities benefit from bioeconomy initiatives rather than being left behind. Capacity-building efforts, inclusive policies, and targeted training programs were identified as essential measures to empower underrepresented groups. NGOs and community organisations showcased successful awareness campaigns, workshops, and hands-on projects that not only educate but also create tangible opportunities for local employment and entrepreneurship. Similarly, SMEs were encouraged to adopt inclusive business models and build partnerships with local communities to ensure equitable benefit-sharing. A key takeaway was the need for stronger collaboration and ecosystem-building among stakeholders to sustain inclusive growth in the bioeconomy.

The event also explored how the bioeconomy can address the challenges of traditional jobs, providing innovative solutions across economic, environmental, social, technological, and psychological dimensions. Discussions highlighted the potential for creating alternative income streams, green job opportunities, and environmentally friendly practices that reduce exposure to harmful conditions. Socially, the bioeconomy offers a pathway to inclusivity by fostering community ties and reducing rural depopulation through local job creation in sustainable sectors such as eco-tourism and biobased crafts. Moreover, adopting modern technologies and enhancing workers' skills were presented as key steps toward building a more advanced and resilient workforce. Participants also recognised the bioeconomy's ability to improve mental well-being and workplace safety by replacing harmful industrial processes with sustainable alternatives.

Another significant focus was on the educational system's role in preparing young people for political engagement and advocacy. Participants strongly supported strategies such as integrating youth participation in decision-making, civics education, and practical workshops to bridge the gap between young people and policymaking processes. However, the lack of strong partnerships between educational institutions and policymakers was noted as a barrier that requires further attention. Overall, the event provided actionable insights into fostering a sustainable and inclusive bioeconomy while empowering marginalised groups and the next generation to take active roles in shaping their future.

