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Bridging generations for a just green transition

A study session by

Generation Climate Europe

in co-operation with the

European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Strasbourg

29 September - 3 October, 2025

This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.

Generation Climate Europe

Youth – Jeunesse

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Executive summary

The study session “Bridging Generations for a Just Green Transition” was the first study session organised by Generation Climate Europe (GCE). It was organised in cooperation with the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg September-October 2025. The study session lasted for 5 days, and gathered a total of 22 participants, as well as a preparatory team of 4, from across Europe. The sessions combined training, dialogue, and project development to equip participants with knowledge and tools for equitable climate policies and inclusive community mobilisation.

The study session focused on the topics of intergenerational fairness, gender equality, and citizens engagement, all in the context of climate change. The overall aim was to foster collaboration and create actionable solutions for a just and inclusive climate transition. It also included practical sessions focusing on relevant tools like stakeholder mapping, communication, and network building. At the end of the event, all participants set up their own action plans for actions that they wanted to implement in their own communities or organisations.



Study Session participants and the organising team outside of the Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

Introduction

This report contains an overview of the activities related to the study session: the planning process, the preparatory team, the participants, the programme and contents of the study session, outcomes, promotion, conclusion and recommendations. The report is meant for inspiration for future study sessions by GCE, or by other organisations on a similar topic. It contains descriptions, but also some evaluation and feedback from participants and organisers on the content and structure of the study session.

About GCE

Generation Climate Europe (GCE) is the largest coalition of youth-led networks on climate and environmental justice in Europe. Our mission is to empower young people to take meaningful action and become climate leaders in their communities, while also ensuring they have access to the decision-making spaces that shape their future. Across Europe, youth-led groups are driving innovative solutions to the climate crisis, but many face barriers of scarce resources, shrinking institutional support, and exclusion from political processes.

GCE bridges this gap by uniting 381 organisations so they can collaborate, exchange, align their work, and build power. We amplify their voices and ensure they are equipped to campaign on climate topics. By supporting underrepresented youth with skills, connections, and influence, we are building an ambitious and just European climate transition led by the people whose futures are directly at stake today.

Intergenerational fairness has been an important aspect of our work ever since we were founded in 2019. Since the beginning, we have been advocating for a “just green transition in Europe”. Intergenerational fairness is a key element of such a transition. We are also a part of the Future Generations Initiative; a coalition of civil society organizations that campaign for the rights of Future Generations in the European Union. Together, we have successfully advocated for a commissioner responsible for representing future generations; Commissioner Glenn Micallef for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport. Together with him, we organised an intergenerational dialogue in May 2025 - an event that inspired parts of the programme for this study session.

Aim and objectives

The aim of the event was to unite participants from diverse backgrounds to explore intergenerational fairness, gender equality in the green transition, and citizen engagement, aiming to foster collaboration and create actionable solutions for a just and inclusive climate transition. In order to achieve this aim, the study session had three objectives:

1. **Raise Awareness on Intergenerational Fairness**
   Train and inform participants on how youth are differently impacted by climate policies, while promoting fairness and equity across generations.
2. **Promote Gender Equality in the Green Transition**
   Address gender disparities in climate action by exploring the challenges women and gender minorities face in the green economy and by designing strategies for equal representation.
3. **Strengthen Youth Citizen Engagement**
   Empower participants to mobilise communities and youth organisations, ensuring citizens play an active role in shaping climate solutions and local green initiatives.

2 Preparations

The session was planned by a preparatory team consisting of volunteers from GCE and other relevant partners organisations. The team was chosen after an open call in April 2025, based on relevant experience with the topics covered during the study session. The team met for an in-person planning session in Strasbourg on 12–13 May and then continued their planning online.

The original preparatory team consisted of the following:

- **Biel Sanchez** (Spain) - Course director
- **Susan Loughlin** (Scotland)
- **Imelda Halilagic** (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- **Axel Eriksson** (Sweden)
- **Ralu Baciu** (Romania)

The original team set up the general plan for the study session, including the content of the individual sessions. There was then some changes to the preparatory team, and the study session was finally delivered by:

- **Jens Bartnes** (Norway) - Course director
- **Susan Loughlin** (Scotland)
- **Imelda Halilagic** (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- **Leonie Gassner** (Germany)

Sulkhan Chargeishvili was the educational advisor from the Council of Europe and provided valuable pedagogical and practical feedback throughout the process.



The prep team at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on day 3 of the study session. From left: Imelda, Leonie, Jens and Susan.

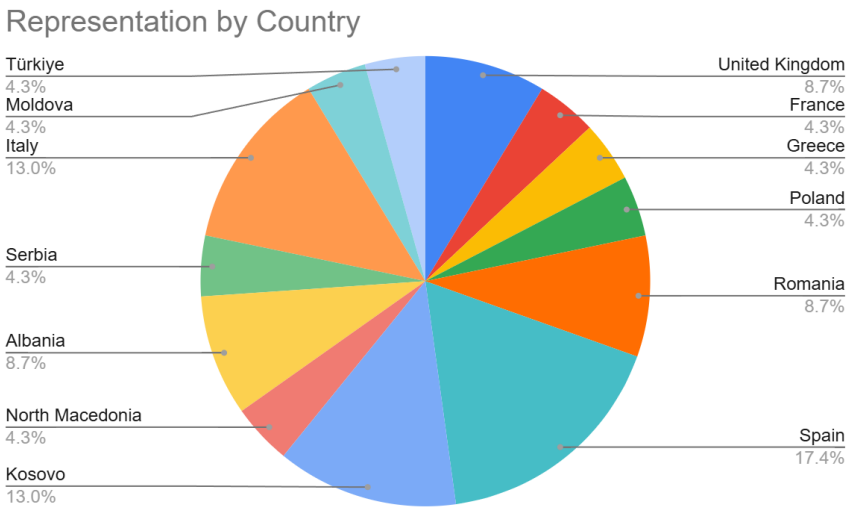
3 Participants

The study session had 22 participants in total, plus a preparatory team of 4 people. In total (including the preparatory team), 16 countries were represented. Participants ranged in age from 19-29. The gender distribution among participants was 72% female and 18% male, with room for greater gender balance in future editions.4 out of 26 were GCE volunteers, including two participants and two members of the preparatory team.

The participants were selected after an open call for participants in August 2025. The call was shared in our social media channels and forwarded to relevant partners. The selection was made based on the following criteria:

- **Age**: We aimed for a diversity of ages between the ages of 18 and 30.
- **Gender**: We aimed for an equal representation of different gender groups.
- **Country of residence**: We wanted diverse representation from different regions and countries.
- **Previous experience on climate**: This was seen as a plus.
- **Previous civic engagement experiences**: This was also seen as a plus.
- **Academic background**: We aimed for a diversity of academic background, to ensure a multidisciplinary approach.

In the end, we accepted participants from 13 different countries, with the following distribution:





Participants and the preparatory team outside the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

Programme and content

The 5-day programme was divided into 4 phases, designed to first give the participants some time to settle in with the group, then deep-dive into the topics of intergenerational fairness, climate change, gender equality, youth engagement, and how these topics are interlinked. In the end, participants identified needs for concrete action and made their own action plans for how to implement these actions in their own organisations or societies. The structure looked as follows:

Day 1: Introductions and getting to know each other
Day 2-4: Deepening understanding (various in-depth sessions on the relevant topics)
End of day 4: Identifying needs for action
Day 5: Planning action

The full programme can be found in Annex 1.

Day 1: Introductions and getting to know each other

The day started off with a welcome session, including practical information, a walkthrough of the programme, information about GCE and the Council of Europe, and the establishment of some shared rules for the rest of the study session. We then went on with some activities to allow the groups to get to know each other a little better, with the aim of establishing a social

environment based on respect and trust. This was particularly important since most of the participants didn't know each other before. Towards the end of the day, we went into some interactive activities connected to climate change and intergenerational fairness. The aim of these sessions was to ensure that everyone had a shared understanding of these basic concepts, before we dived further into the details in days 2-4.



On day 1: Get-to-know-each-other activities.

Day 2 - Deepening understanding I

On day 2 we started our deep dive into different aspects of intergenerational fairness, and how it connects to related topics. We focused on:

- **Generational solidarity in climate action**, trying to connect aspects of the two introductory sessions on day 1
- **Intersectional gender equality and the green transition**, exploring the intersectionality of our own identities, and how climate change (and climate solutions) puts different burdens on different people

- **Colonialism and intergenerational trauma**, exploring different dimensions of colonialism (economic dimension, racism, exploitation, cultural dimension, political dimension), and how past injustices affect present and future decision-making.

All the sessions involved a combination of presentations and interactive activities, with the aim of also making use of past experiences and knowledge from the participants.

At the end of day 2 we had a more practical session on personal storytelling, and how storytelling can be used as a powerful tool to achieve change and support advocacy.





On day 2: Exploring the relationship between intergenerational fairness and extractivism and presenting groupwork.

Day 3: Deepening understanding II

Intergenerational fairness requires discussions and dialogue between generations, and between different people from different backgrounds. On day 3 we explored citizens'

engagement, how we can engage different stakeholder groups in decision-making processes, and how to conduct dialogues across generations. The sessions were interactive and involved a lot of role-plays. Since all of our participants were young people, some of them had to play characters from other generations (even future generations) and try to argue from their point of view.

The programme ended after lunch, and the participants had the rest of the evening to explore Strasbourg.



On day 3: Another group presenting the results of their discussions.

Day 4: Deepening understanding III, and Identifying needs for action

On day 4, we dived further into some topics related to intergenerational fairness. We also focused on some concrete tools that can be useful in general advocacy work. The first sessions of the day focused on:

- **Communication and community mobilization**, exploring how different traditional and social media can be used to mobilize people and build community.
- **Stakeholders and stakeholder mapping**, giving the participant an important, concrete tool to be used when working on advocacy and trying to influence decisions.
- **Human Rights Mechanisms**, looking at how human rights can be used as a tool for change, and exploring some of the relevant work and resources from the Council of Europe.

At the end of the day, participants started to work on their own action plans, by identifying relevant actions that could be made in their own communities or organisations. We also provided information about how participants could continue to engage with these topics and discussed how they could apply for funding for relevant activities.



On day 4: Energizer outside.

Day 5: Planning action

On day 5, we started with one final in-depth session about how to build and maintain long-term collaborations and relationships with people and organisations, in order to achieve change. Participants then had some more time to work on their action plans, before all of the action plans were presented in the evening. The study session was then concluded with a session to summarise the entire program, talk about key learnings, and hand out certificates of participation.



On day 5: All participants with their certificates.

Promotion of the study session

As always, we aimed for the study session to have an impact beyond the participants who were present. In order to showcase that intergenerational fairness is an important topic to

GCE, and to promote GCE as an arena for civic engagement for youth in Europe, we promoted the study session in our channels online, as it was happening. We posted:

- One article on our website, created in collaboration with the CoE comms team.
- 1st picture carousel on Instagram (link) (5,9k views)
- 2nd picture carousel on Instagram (link) (4,8k views)
- One reel about intergenerational fairness on Instagram (link) (1,5k views)
- One full-day take-over on our Instagram story by one of our participants (link) (580 views)
- 1st picture carousel on LinkedIn (link) (3,1k impressions)
- 2nd picture carousel on LinkedIn (link) (1,7k impressions)

6 Outcomes by objective

Intergenerational Fairness and Solidarity

Participants reflected deeply on how environmental decisions disproportionately affect younger and future generations. Through real-life examples—from industrial pollution and deforestation to pension inequality and political representation gaps—participants recognised that intergenerational fairness requires to rethink policymaking.

Key outcomes

- Participants identified *youth underrepresentation* in parliaments as a key challenge, with an average imbalance favouring those over 45.
- Discussions revealed a growing need for *youth quotas* and representation mechanisms to ensure decisions reflect long-term sustainability.
- Several groups proposed *intergenerational fairness frameworks* to assess and balance policy impacts across age groups.
- Participants emphasised empathy and dialogue as core elements for fair climate transitions.

Participant feedback

Participants found the sessions intellectually stimulating and emotionally engaging. The exercise “Flipping the Script” helped them empathise with older generations while

advocating for youth interests. The session on “Generational Solidarity” fostered constructive debate and mutual understanding across cultural contexts.

Gender Equality in the Green Transition

The intersectional gender session used a “Spoon Theory” exercise to illustrate the compounded barriers faced by individuals with overlapping identities. Participants explored the realities of sexism, ageism, racism, ableism, and transphobia in the context of the green economy.

Key outcomes

- Participants recognised the *underrepresentation of women* in renewable industries (only ~25% of the workforce).
- Case examples from Moldova and Northern Ireland showed practical ways to increase women’s participation in technical fields.
- The group collectively concluded that sustainable climate solutions must be inclusive by design—addressing gender, class, and accessibility dimensions.

Participant feedback

Participants described this session as “eye-opening” and “emotionally grounding.” The use of character-based role-play and reflection exercises made intersectionality tangible. They appreciated how gender equality was framed not as a side issue, but as central to effective climate policy.

Youth Citizen Engagement

The “Citizen Engagement” and “Mobilising Communities” sessions connected theoretical discussions to grassroots practice. Participants examined successful models such as the *Green Belt Movement (Kenya)* and *Citizens’ Climate Assembly (France)*, and simulated democratic decision-making through a city council role-play.

Key outcomes:

- Participants learned to analyse success factors in citizen-led initiatives: transparency, inclusion, and persistence.

- They debated the legitimacy of civil disobedience, the role of scientists versus citizens, and the ethics of protest.
- The city council simulation showcased the complexity of policy negotiation and the importance of participatory governance.

Participant feedback

The role-play was highly appreciated for "bringing real politics to life." Participants noted that the debate highlighted competing needs between social groups (e.g., accessibility vs. environmental urgency), reinforcing the need for *just transition* approaches.

Other outcomes

Communication, Stakeholder Mapping, and Action Planning

Participants developed concrete *action plans* addressing local environmental issues through a rights-based and participatory lens. These included projects on intergenerational tree planting in Tirana, community gardens in Girona, sustainable transport systems, river protection, and frameworks for measuring intergenerational fairness.

Key outcomes

- Participants gained practical skills in stakeholder mapping and advocacy communication, identifying key actors, audiences, and channels.
- Human Rights Mechanism discussions linked environmental degradation with violations of the right to life and health.
- By the end of the week, each participant or group presented a feasible local or regional project, supported by funding strategies and partnerships.

Participant feedback

Participants valued the practical focus of these sessions and the mentorship on turning ideas into actionable projects. They particularly highlighted the *collaborative and peer-learning* environment as empowering.

Long-Term Collaboration and Network Building

The final day focused on sustaining collaboration and intergenerational partnerships beyond the study session.

Key outcomes

- Participants co-created digital and organisational frameworks for long-term cooperation (e.g., digital archives, shared mentorship, regular online and in-person meetings).
- Several groups committed to establishing or strengthening NGOs and community networks.
- Emphasis was placed on *trust, shared purpose, and knowledge transfer* between generations.

Participant feedback

The atmosphere was described as *hopeful and inspiring*. Participants appreciated that the session ended with concrete commitments, turning learning into continued collaboration.

Reflections and feedback

Across all five days, participants demonstrated increasing awareness of the interconnectedness between fairness, gender equality, and citizen empowerment in climate action. Participants reported that they had a good experience at the study session, and that their expectations were largely met. They mostly reported that the objectives were achieved, though there were some differences between the different objectives. Participants seemed to be happier with how the session had contributed to strengthening their youth citizens' engagement, and least satisfied with how we managed to address gender disparities in climate action. They also reported that they found the program and teaching methods appropriate, and that their competencies on issues related to the climate crisis had increased.

General participant feedback

- The interdisciplinary approach (linking human rights, gender, and sustainability) was highly valued.
- Many noted personal growth in confidence, communication, and critical thinking.
- The balance between discussion, reflection, and hands-on exercises was appreciated.
- Participants expressed interest in follow-up opportunities, mentorship, and future study sessions.

Challenges identified

- The complexity of intergenerational dialogue in politically polarised contexts.
- Translating awareness into policy influence at the national level.
- Limited time for deep dives into some exercises (e.g., City Council role-play).

Follow-up and recommendations for future work

For participants

All participants prepared their own action plans during the final days of the study sessions, where they planned actions that they themselves could do in their communities or organisations after the end of the study session. Some focused on how to implement elements from the study session into projects they were already working on, white others planned completely new projects. Some participants wanted to develop their ideas in small groups, while others preferred to do it alone. Here are some examples of projects that were proposed:

- Community gardens in Girona, Spain
- A monthly Creative Connection Club in Tirana, Albania.
- Expanding the public bike system in Girona, Spain
- Using graphene − metal oxide materials to remove pesticides from water in Romania
- Implementing intergenerational perspectives in a youth climate organisation in Sicily, Italy
- Large-scale forest preservation project
- A series of informal lectures in Warsaw Poland, following the American concept “Lectures on Tap”.

Participants were encouraged to be realistic in their plans and develop an idea that they could feasibly implement on their own or together with others. Some participants came up with very concrete and detailed action plans of a realistic scope, while others developed interesting projects that probably were of an unrealistic scope.

The templates for the action plans can be found as Annex 3.

Several of the participants also expressed interest in volunteering with GCE as a way to continue to learn more about the topics of the study session and contribute to our advocacy for a just and green transition. At least one participant (and possibly more) have joined the organisation after the study session.

For GCE

Internally, a presentation of the study session was made in one of our monthly coordinator's calls. 12 coordinators (team leaders) and 3 board members participated in the call. The call included information about the program and content of the sessions, outcomes and feedback from the participants, and lessons learned by the preparatory team. We shared experiences with the rest of the organisation, also relating to the practical execution of an event like this, since we are not so used to organising in-person events yet. We also discussed possible topics for another study session, and potential cooperations with member and partner organisations. The conclusion was that we aim to organise another study session as soon as possible, ideally in partnership with a member organisation.

Intergenerational fairness continues to be one a prioritized topic for GCE in our advocacy. One of our key organisational priorities in the coming months is to revive our future generations team (the team responsible for advocating on issues related to intergenerational fairness), since their activity level has been quite low lately.

Conclusion

The study session "Bridging Generations for a Just Green Transition" has generally been a success. Changes to the preparatory team made some of the planning a little challenging, but the result was a study session that satisfied the expectations of both the participants and the preparatory team. We also achieved our objectives of (1) raising awareness on intergenerational fairness, (2) addressing gender disparities in climate actions, and (3) strengthening youth citizen engagement.

For a relatively young youth organisation like us, the study session in collaboration with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe also proved a very useful way to organise an in-person, capacity-building activity that benefits both our volunteers and other young people and contributes to our larger organisational goals.

We want to thank the European Youth Centrefor the cooperation and look forward to the opportunity to organise another study session in the near future.

Annex 1 - Programme

	Monday 29th : Introductions and getting to know each other	**Tuesday 30th:** Deepening understanding	**Wednesday 1st:** Deepening understanding	**Thursday 2nd:** Deepening understanding, Identifying needs for action	**Friday 3rd:** Planning action
09:30-11:00	Welcome & Keynote	Generational Solidarity in Climate Action	The Power of Citizen Engagement from an Intersectional Lens	Best Practices for Mobilising Communities for Climate Action	Building Long-Term Collaboration
11:00-11:30	**Coffee break**	**Coffee break**	**Coffee break**	**Coffee break**	**Coffee break**
11:30-13:00	Get to know each other & Mindfulness	Introduction to Intersectional Gender Equality in the Green Transition	Cross-Generational Dialogue on Climate Action	How to Work with Stakeholders and Stakeholder Mapping	Continue action plans
13:00-14:30	**Lunch break**	**Lunch break**	**Lunch break**	**Lunch break**	**Lunch break**
14:30-16:00	Impacts of climate change	Colonialism and Intergenerational Trauma	**FREE AFTERNOON**	Using Human Rights mechanisms for climate justice (with CoE)	Presentations of Action Plans
16:00-16:30	**Coffee break**	**Coffee break**		**Coffee break**	**Coffee break**
16:30-18:00	What is Intergenerational Fairness?	Personal Storytelling		Develop Action Plans	Closing Reflections & Commitments
18:00-18:30	**REFLECTION GROUPS**			**REFLECTION GROUPS**	

Annex 2 - Template action plans

Name:

What is the problem?
What is your solution(s) or aim?
What are your actions (briefly)?
Who are you targeting?
Who can you work together with or get help from?
Which resources do you need?
Timeline: