



ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAMME - GROUP 3 PARTICIPANTS POINTS OF VIEWS ON THE EUROPEAN YOUTH GOALS

Here follows a report on the priorities expressed by participants referred to the European Youth Goals:

A. L. (Montenegro)

European Youth Goal: Quality Learning

Quality learning is one of the key European Youth Goals and a fundamental condition for sustainable development, social inclusion, and democratic participation. It goes beyond academic results and focuses on how young people develop competences, skills, and attitudes that prepare them for real life. Quality learning includes practical experience, critical thinking, digital literacy, emotional intelligence, and opportunities for active participation. From my perspective as a young person in Montenegro, strengthening quality learning is essential for creating meaningful opportunities and reinforcing young people's confidence in their future within the country.

In recent years, Montenegro has taken steps to improve learning processes, particularly through reforms linked to European integration. As a candidate country for EU membership, Montenegro is aligning its education policies with EU standards, which makes the European Youth Goals an important framework for national reform. Curricula have been gradually modernized, and participation in international programmes and youth initiatives has expanded learning opportunities beyond traditional classrooms. Mobility projects, non-formal education activities, and intercultural exchanges have contributed to skills development and broader perspectives among young people. These developments show that the learning environment is gradually becoming more open and dynamic.

However, important challenges remain. In many cases, learning is still predominantly theory-based, with limited emphasis on practical application and experiential learning. Students are often required to reproduce information rather than apply knowledge creatively or critically. Furthermore, inequalities between urban and rural areas affect the quality of learning experiences, particularly in terms of access to digital tools and extracurricular opportunities. The continued emigration of young people also suggests that learning outcomes do not always translate into sustainable personal and professional prospects within Montenegro.

Overall, these challenges highlight the need to shift from a system focused mainly on formal education structures toward a more learner-centered, practical, and inclusive approach to quality learning that responds effectively to social and economic realities.

In order to strengthen quality education in Montenegro, several actions could be considered:

First, educational institutions should strengthen cooperation with the private sector and civil society. Structured internships, mentorship programmes, and project-based learning would allow students to gain real-world experience before graduation.

Second, curricula should be further modernized to include digital literacy, entrepreneurship, environmental awareness, and soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and communication. These competences are essential in a rapidly changing global environment.



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Third, more investment is needed in rural education, particularly in digital infrastructure and teacher training. Equal access to quality education should be guaranteed regardless of geographic location.

Fourth, career guidance services should be expanded and professionalized. Young people need structured support in making informed educational and professional choices.

Finally, youth participation in educational reform should be strengthened. As young people are directly affected by education policies, their voices should be included in consultation processes, youth councils, and dialogue platforms.

From my perspective, quality learning in Montenegro is not only about improving institutions, but about empowering young people to recognize and develop their potential within their own country. It is about creating learning experiences that are practical, inclusive, and relevant to real-life challenges. By strengthening learner-centered approaches and aligning learning outcomes with modern societal and economic needs, Montenegro can reduce youth emigration, expand employment opportunities, and encourage active and responsible citizenship.

E. L. (Greece)

European Youth Goal: Youth Organisations & European Programmes

I think this goal is very important for my local community and for Greece because many young people do not know about the opportunities offered by European programmes. These programmes can help young people gain new skills, travel, study abroad, volunteer, and find better career opportunities. Youth organisations also help young people feel more active and included in society.

One challenge in achieving this goal is the lack of information and support. Many young people do not know where to find programmes or how to apply. In some areas, there are also not enough youth centres or organisations to support them.

To improve this situation, schools and local communities could organise more workshops and information events about European programmes. The government and local organisations could also provide better guidance and easier access to opportunities for all young people.

M. S. (Greece)

European Youth Goal: Equality of All Genders

I chose Goal 2 because I believe that it is the foundation of a fair society and directly affects the opportunities young people have in education and employment. In addition, my choice also has a personal academic dimension, as I am a Social Policy graduate and have studied several courses on gender inequality and completed coursework on this subject. This background strengthened my interest in actively engaging with this issue. Furthermore, I chose the European Youth Goal on gender equality because I believe that it is a fundamental prerequisite for shaping a fair, inclusive, and democratic society. Gender equality directly affects the opportunities, rights, and prospects that young people have in education, employment, and their broader social development. Despite the significant progress that has been made in recent years, stereotypes and social discrimination continue to influence individuals' choices, behaviors, and life prospects from a young age. For this reason, I consider the promotion of





gender equality across all areas of society particularly important, with the aim of creating an environment of equal opportunities, mutual respect, and social justice.

2. Reflect on your local context: In the local and social context in which I live, I believe that gender inequalities continue to appear both in the field of education and in the labor market. A key challenge we face is the deeply rooted perception of the nature of the two genders: the stereotype that women are “naturally” more emotional, while men are expected to be “tough”, to avoid expressing their feelings, and not to discuss or analyze the issues that concern them. This division traps young people in predefined roles, as women are often undervalued in positions that require logic and leadership, while men are pressured to suppress their emotional expression.

How does it directly affect opportunities at:

1. Educational level:

Inequality often begins at school through social stereotypes. There is a deeply rooted bias that girls are “naturally” better and more diligent students, while boys are considered more undisciplined or to have an inclination only towards practical and technical subjects. This creates pressure on girls to achieve perfection, while boys may feel discouraged, as they believe that high academic performance is “not suited to them”. As a result, young people do not choose fields of study based on their personal interests or abilities, but based on what society considers “appropriate” for their gender. For example, girls more often choose fields related to care and education, while men dominate technical and manual professions. This division limits young people from pursuing what truly suits them, creating male-dominated and female-dominated fields even before they enter the labor market.

2. Labor sector in Greece:

In the labor sector in Greece, inequality is expressed in the following specific ways:

Commodification of gender:

In many cases, hiring decisions are not based on actual qualifications but on which gender is perceived to “sell” better for a specific position. Gender is treated as a form of “commodity” that is expected to generate profit. For example, a woman may be preferred in reception or sales roles mainly because of her appearance, while a man may be preferred in managerial positions because his gender is associated with “prestige” or “stability” in the market. This traps employees in gender-based labels and roles.

The “motherhood penalty”: Employers often avoid hiring young women due to the possibility of future pregnancy. Motherhood is viewed as a “financial risk” or “obstacle” for the business, which leads to the exclusion of capable women from the labor market or stagnation in their careers.

The “glass ceiling” in managerial positions:

It is observed that in senior and managerial roles, the majority are men.

There is a widespread misconception that undermines female leadership, based on the belief that women are “too emotional” or less decisive to lead, which limits their access to the top levels of hierarchy.

Sexual harassment:





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This is a harsh reality in the workplace. It violates dignity, creates an environment of fear and insecurity, and often forces women to resign, severely damaging both their professional and mental well-being.

In addition, the most extreme challenge that strongly concerns young people in Greece today is the rise of gender-based violence and femicides. This phenomenon is the tragic result of patriarchal attitudes and possessiveness, creating an environment of insecurity that prevents young women from developing freely.

Why do all of these factors hinder fair development?

As we mentioned earlier, if the labor market operates based on which gender is considered more “marketable” or if it views motherhood as a problem, then we lose our most valuable human potential. A society that underestimates women in managerial positions is a society that refuses to recognize ability beyond gender.

C. K. GREECE

European Youth Goal: Youth Organisations & European Programmes

European Youth Goal #11 holds profound significance for Greece, and specifically for major urban centers like Thessaloniki, which boast dense student populations. In a socio-economic landscape still recovering from prolonged financial and employment challenges, European mobility schemes such as Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps serve as vital mechanisms for human capital development [youthproaktiv.org]. These initiatives provide young citizens with indispensable opportunities to acquire transversal skills, cultivate intercultural competencies, and enhance their overall employability in a competitive global market. Furthermore, robust youth organizations act as essential pillars of local civil society, actively addressing systemic welfare gaps through grassroots solidarity projects and fostering a deeper sense of democratic engagement and European citizenship among youth populations.

Challenges in Goal Realization

Despite the strategic value of these frameworks, several structural impediments obstruct the comprehensive realization of this goal. A primary obstacle is the pronounced disparity in information dissemination, which often confines awareness of European programmes to privileged academic or urban circles, thereby marginalizing youth from rural areas or lower socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, the administrative and bureaucratic complexity inherent in applying for and managing European Union grants presents an insurmountable barrier for smaller, grassroots associations that lack specialized staff or permanent financial infrastructure. This vulnerability is further exacerbated by a general systemic devaluation of non-formal education within national institutional frameworks, which leaves local youth entities underfunded and unrecognized by public authorities and corporate employers alike.

Strategic Actions for Promotion

To mitigate these systemic deficiencies and advance Goal #11 effectively, coordinated interventions are required at both the municipal and state levels. Local authorities should formalize partnerships with established European networks to institutionalize permanent information hubs capable of providing structured, peer-led guidance to underrepresented youth demographics. Concurrently, capacity-building





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consortia must be established, wherein experienced non-governmental organizations mentor emerging associations in project management and European grant compliance. On a macro level, national ministries and higher education institutions must develop formal mechanisms to validate the non-formal learning outcomes and European Credit Transfer items acquired through these programmes, thereby integrating volunteer and mobility experiences into formal academic curricula and national employment frameworks.

D. D., Greece

European Youth Goal: Equality of All Genders

This goal is relevant when it comes to the Greek context because our society is still quite conservative. There are hate crimes and discrimination, femicides, and a general ignorance when it comes to different genders. Moreover, inclusive speech isn't a thing and self expression is limited in a strict heteronormative environment. Also, government initiatives are lacking, especially if one recalls that just recently Greece legalized same sex marriage.

The challenges that exist are many. As I mentioned above, government policies are quite conservative and don't really prioritize gender equality. Another big challenge is the orthodox church that influences a great deal of the population. As there is no separation between church and state, homophobia and misogyny become normalized and members of the clergy have a say in things like reproductive rights(for example the rights to an abortion).

Actions that could help advance this goal include collective action and a bottom up approach. Young people especially hold power and can change things trough protests, advocacy and activism. Education can also play a crucial role, in enlightening parts of society that have certain misconceptions or stereotypes about people with different genders.

I. R. (Montenegro)

European Youth Goal: Moving Rural Youth Forward

Moving rural youth forward is very important for Montenegro because a lot of young people from the rural part of the country, especially the north are leaving the country because of the lack of opportunities. Villages and smaller towns in the north have less job opportunities, fewer schools and chances for sports activities. Alongside that they have a lot less chances in participating in decision making and joining youth programs compared to the youth in other parts of Montenegro. The main problem and a challenge is the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas. Most young people don't see a future in living in their hometown because the salaries are either too low or finding a job is basically impossible. Young people from rural areas also don't feel as included in political activities if we compare them with young people from other towns. That leads to lack of political participation and political awareness. The government and local communities should invest more in the development of rural areas and towns, especially when it comes to education, job opportunities and infrastructure. What could also help when it comes to young people from rural areas to stay, not only in their hometown but in Montenegro, is supporting them in starting small business, agriculture and the development of





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tourism in those areas. Organizing a lot more youth programs and workshops would help young people feel a lot more connected to their peers in other towns and help raise political awareness.

G. D. (Montenegro)

European Youth Goal: Moving Rural Youth Forward

I chose this goal because it is very relevant in my local community, Tuzi, and also in many parts of Montenegro. Young people who live in smaller towns or rural areas often have fewer opportunities for education, activities, jobs and personal development compared to young people in bigger cities.

One of the main challenges is that many young people feel disconnected from opportunities such as trainings, cultural events or international projects. Public transport and access to information can also be limited, which makes participation more difficult. Because of this, many young people want to leave smaller communities and move abroad or to larger cities.

To improve this situation, local and national institutions could invest more in youth centres, education programmes and activities for young people in rural areas. It is also important to support youth organisations and create more opportunities for volunteering, training and employment. Better communication about Erasmus+ and European youth programmes could help many young people become more active and connected.

I believe that supporting rural youth is important because every young person should have equal opportunities, no matter where they live.

M. E.-M. (Greece)

European Youth Goal: Sustainable Green Europe

“Sustainable Green Europe” is of critical importance to Greece as our country faces significant threats from the global climate crisis. Supporting environmental sustainability and climate action is essential for protecting Greece’s unique biodiversity and natural landscapes. With the increasing frequency of extreme weather phenomena, such as catastrophic wildfires and floods, the need for a “Green Europe” is no longer a distant ideal but a matter of national urgency to ensure a viable future for the younger generation.

Despite the urgency, several systemic and cultural obstacles hinder the progress:

- **Lack of Environmental Literacy:** *There is a profound deficit in environmental education across the country. Many citizens remain unaware of the long-term detrimental consequences of their daily habits on the ecosystem.*





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- **Inefficient Waste Management:** Greece struggles with an inadequate recycling infrastructure. Both the state and the public have failed to implement a reliable waste disposal system, resulting in low recycling rates and overflowing landfills.
- **A Culture of Overconsumption:** We live in a society that prioritizes convenience over sustainability. This is evident in the excessive use of disposable products, such as single-use plastic coffee cups and packaging, without regard for the environmental footprint.
- **Institutional Gaps:** There is often a lack of coordination between state policies and local implementation, making it difficult to transition to a truly sustainable model.

To achieve meaningful change, I recommend focusing on the following strategic actions:

- **Educational Reform:** The national curriculum should be updated to include comprehensive environmental studies that foster a sense of civic responsibility and ecological awareness from an early age.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** The government must prioritize modernizing waste management facilities and expanding recycling networks to make sustainable living accessible to everyone.
- **Reducing the Plastic Footprint:** Implementing stricter regulations on single-use plastics and providing incentives for businesses and consumers to switch to reusable alternatives.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Investing in better public transport and cycling paths in major cities like Athens and Thessaloniki to reduce carbon emissions.
- **Policy Participation:** Creating more opportunities for young people to participate in meaningful dialogue with policymakers regarding environmental laws.

G. P. R. (Italy)

European Youth Goal: Mental Health and Well-being

This goal is relevant in Italy and in my local area because our generation is facing high level of stress and anxiety. The future is uncertain, there is often pressure from the society itself and recent global circumstances were not helpful in this scenario. Psychological well being has become an emergency.

There have been some recent key changes such as the introduction of the “primary care psychologist”, however there is much more that needs to be done. In fact, in small communities, there is still a sense of shame when it comes to mental health. Many young people suffer in silence. Plus, the “primary care psychologist” was great, but funding is often insufficient to meet the huge demand, the starting process is slow due to the high number of requests. This creates long waiting lists that discourage those in need of help. Sometimes the intervention happens when the person is already suffering a lot and could be helped before higher level of distress.

I propose three measures:

- 1) Strengthen the existing network by increasing funding and consequently hiring more professionals to reduce and then eliminate waiting lists;





- 2) *Include mental health education in schools. There needs to be an emotional education to teach children to recognise and manage their emotions from a very young age;*
- 3) *Create and promote spaces where people can simply talk and share their experiences or problems without a clinical context. They could feel less alone while connecting with others living the same situations or fears and would not suffer in solitude. As the saying goes “misery loves company” and sharing your burden with someone who truly understands makes you feel significantly better. It is important to normalise dialogue about mental health itself.*

E. T. (Albania)

European Youth Goal: Quality Employment for All

Ensuring fair, inclusive and quality employment opportunities for young people. The European goal of quality employment for all young people is very relevant in Albania because many young people still struggle to find stable, fair, and meaningful work, many have left the country or planning to leave. This has a great impact on their future as well as the development of local communities. A major challenge is that many young people lack the skills, work experience, or support needed to enter the job market, while other barriers include informal work, gender inequality, and limited access to employment services, especially for vulnerable groups.

One solution to improve this situation, Albania needs to strengthen vocational education and training, expand the youth guarantee, create more apprenticeships and career guidance opportunities, and improve cooperation between schools, businesses, and local institutions so that more young people can move successfully from education into quality employment.

M. V. (Greece)

European Youth Goal: Quality Employment for All

This goal aims to ensure that young people have access to fair and stable work opportunities, with decent salaries, healthy working conditions and equal opportunities, regardless of background or age.

In Greece, this goal is particularly important because the general working conditions for many young people remain difficult. Low salaries, unpaid overtime, unstable contracts, and psychologically exhausting work environments are common realities. In many workplaces, managers practice excessive micromanagement, often creating a culture where employees feel constantly monitored, undervalued or even humiliated rather than supported and encouraged to grow professionally. These conditions negatively affect not only productivity, but also workers’ mental health and overall well-being.

This raises an important question: Are young people truly welcomed in such work environments? In many cases, the answer seems uncertain. Many job positions require several years of experience while also expecting applicants to remain under a certain age limit, creating unrealistic expectations for young workers. Employees often demand ‘flexibility’ regarding working hours, which can create an oppressive atmosphere where young employees no longer know when they are actually working and when they are allowed to rest. The boundaries between personal life and work become unclear, leading to stress, burnout and insecurity.



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One of the biggest challenges in achieving this Youth Goal is the treatment young people receive in their workplace.

Even when younger employees are highly educated, well-trained, or possess more specialized skills, they are often treated with disrespect or dismissal. In many working environments in Greece, there is still a mentality that the opinion of the older or more experienced worker is automatically superior and unquestionable. As a result, younger workers may struggle to express ideas, contribute equality, or feel valued within their teams.

This hierarchical culture discourages innovation, cooperation and mutual respect. Another major challenge is the broader economic situation. Rising living cost and expensive housing make it extremely difficult for young people to live independently, especially when salaries remain low. Many young workers feel trapped between poor working conditions and financial insecurity, with limited opportunities for professional advancement.

To advance the goal of 'Quality Employment for All', important actions must be taken both locally and nationally. First, addressing the cost-of-living crisis should become a priority. Salaries should reflect workers' real qualifications, skills and contributions, while also being sustainable in relation to rent prices and daily living costs. A living wage is necessary for young people to build independent and stable lives.

Additionally, workplace culture and mentality must change. Work environments should promote cooperation, equality and respect instead of fear, egoism and unhealthy competition. People in positions of authority who discourage teamwork, abuse power or create toxic work conditions should not remain in key leadership roles. Managers and employees should be trained to encourage communication, mentorship and fair treatment regardless of age.

At the same time, stronger protections against unpaid overtime and exploitative practices are needed, along with clearer working-hour regulations that protect employees' personal time and mental health. Educational institutions, local communities and businesses could also cooperate more effectively to provide young people with realistic career opportunities, internships with fair compensation and support for entrepreneurship.

Overall, 'Quality Employment for All' is essential for the future of Greece. Improving employment conditions for young people would not only strengthen the economy but also create healthier, fairer and more hopeful society where young operations can truly thrive instead of simply trying to survive.

M. A. (Greece)

European Youth Goal: Mental health and wellbeing

Even if all European youth goals are important and vital to enhance European communities, one goal in particular stands out especially in times like these and that is mental health and wellbeing. In regard to the events that took place in Greece recently, with two 17 year old girls taking their own lives it is of great importance to promote and ensure that mental health issues are not taboo and discussions around such issues as well as more practical actions should be fostered.





The most challenging aspect in Greece regarding mental healthcare is that it is not considered a health problem rather than just a “difficulty” that should be dealt with individually without the presence of a specialist/ doctor. As a psychology student I have received a majority of disparaging remarks considering my career and the reasons I chose to follow this path.

In my opinion, especially in Greece, what is lacking is education on such topics and destigmatization of mental health problems. Families could participate in community events with their children in order to get informed. Also, movies and TV series could showcase a more realistic view of mental disorders so the public audience can acknowledge them. Lastly, personal growth ought to be everyone's responsibility if we want an inclusive and functional European community.

G. P. (Greece)

European Youth Goal: Mental Health & Wellbeing

*One EU Youth Goal that strongly connects to my local context is **Mental Health & Wellbeing**. In many communities across Greece, especially among young people, stress, anxiety, academic pressure, unemployment, and uncertainty about the future affect everyday life. In cities like Thessaloniki, students and young workers often face high living costs, pressure to succeed, and limited access to affordable mental health support.*

Young people today spend a lot of time online and may feel isolated despite being constantly connected. After the COVID-19 period, many students experienced loneliness, burnout, and lack of motivation. Although awareness about mental health is improving, stigma still exists. Some young people hesitate to ask for help because they fear judgment or think support is too expensive.

At the same time, schools and universities do not always provide enough emotional support or safe spaces where young people can openly discuss stress, relationships, or personal challenges.

Possible Actions

Several actions could improve youth mental health in the local community:

1. **School and University Workshops:**

Organize regular workshops about stress management, emotional wellbeing, and healthy social media use.

2. **Peer Support Groups**

Create youth-led discussion groups where young people can share experiences in a safe and non-judgmental environment.

3. **Accessible Counseling Services**

Municipalities and universities could offer free or low-cost psychological support for students and unemployed youth.

4. **Public Awareness Campaigns**



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Use social media, local events, and youth centers to reduce stigma around mental health and encourage people to seek help early.

5. **Community Activities**

Sports, volunteering, arts, and cultural activities can help young people build friendships and reduce isolation.

Conclusion

Mental health is an important part of young people's quality of life and future opportunities. Supporting wellbeing at the local level can help create a healthier, more inclusive, and more connected community. Small actions from schools, local authorities, and youth organizations can make a meaningful difference.

J. T. (Portugal)

European Youth Goal: Mental Health & Wellbeing

From the youth European goal, for Portugal I think it makes sense work on mental health and well-being. In my opinion, the sense of community is getting lost and having a support system is crucial for our well-being.

I believe with a support system, a group of friends, with a community, with people that we can trust and spend our time directly affects our mental health.

We are social beings and we need contact with others. However, this sense of community is fading because we don't build friendships with our neighbors anymore. Moreover, with smartphones, we hide behind screens and avoid contact with other people, especially older generation.

I think the main challenge is getting the youth interested in working on this kind of project. I believe that, with all of distractions that exist nowadays, it is complicated to engage participants in activities that help the community.

I don't blame the youth because if their families don't participate in community activities, it doesn't feel normal for them to participate either. To move the youth, we need to involve their families as well.

To advance the goal, we can create a program where youth and old generation interact through activities focused on mental health and ways to improve it.

It's important to strength the sense of community and show why it is so crucial for health, as well as how volunteering can improve our self-esteem and sense of purpose.

More importantly, is to let the participants experience this feeling firsthand without an initial explanation, allowing them to reach that conclusion on their own.

N.R. (Italy)

European Youth Goal: Inclusive Societies

This is such an important and decisive goal for any country, and in particular for the Italian community that I feel is living a time of recession (instead of progress) and isn't supporting its citizens as it should. In order to achieve this goal and actually help people feel included and sustained by their country, it has to





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face the actual situation in which its citizens live every day, without any judgement. Because turning your back won't shut a whole community down, front the situation: give us safe spaces where both majorities and minorities (such as women, lgbtqia+ people, poc people) feel free to express their true self and not worry about whether they could possibly get harassed, or worse; make up new activities about inclusivity, raise awareness on these topics and make sure no one gets left behind. These little precautions can really change the perspective of our and next generation's future.

E. S. (Albania)

European Youth Goal: Moving Rural Youth Forward

I chose this European Youth Goal because I think it connects a lot with the reality of young people in Albania, especially around Shkodër. One of the biggest conversations people my age have is about leaving. Almost everyone knows somebody who moved abroad or wants to move abroad in the future. Some want to study in another country, others want jobs, and some just believe life will automatically be better somewhere else. Sometimes it feels like we grow up hearing that success only exists outside Albania.

What makes this sad is that many young people do not actually want to leave their families, friends, or culture behind. They just want a better future. They want stability, opportunities, and a life where they can feel secure. I think this is why this Youth Goal matters so much. It is not only about villages or rural areas. It is about giving young people reasons to stay connected to their communities instead of feeling like they need to escape them.

In areas around Shkodër, especially smaller towns and villages, there are many problems that make young people lose motivation. One of the biggest issues is the lack of opportunities. There are not enough jobs for young people, and many of the available jobs are low-paid. A lot of families depend on agriculture, but farming today is difficult and often does not provide enough money. Because of this, many teenagers grow up believing that no matter how hard they work, they still will not have the future they want if they stay here.

Education is another challenge. Students in bigger cities usually have more access to courses, technology, activities, and different experiences. Meanwhile, in smaller places, students often have fewer opportunities. Even when someone is talented or hardworking, they can still feel behind because they do not have the same resources. I think this creates frustration. Young people compare themselves to others online or abroad and start feeling like Albania cannot offer them enough.

There is also a mentality problem that affects many young people. People constantly complain about the country and talk negatively about the future. When teenagers hear adults saying "there is no future here" all the time, eventually they start believing it too. After a while, leaving the country stops feeling like a dream and starts feeling like the only option. I think this is dangerous because when a country loses its youth, it loses energy, creativity, and people who could improve it in the future.

At the same time, I understand why people leave. Salaries are often low, corruption is still a problem, and many young people feel ignored by politics and society. Sometimes it seems like talent and hard work are not enough. That can make people lose hope quickly. But I also think Albania has potential, especially





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cities like Shkodër. We have culture, history, tourism, nature, and talented young people. The problem is that these things are not supported enough.

I think one important step would be investing more in education and youth programs. Schools should prepare students for real life, not only exams. Young people should have more opportunities to learn languages, technology skills, business skills, and creative skills. Today, the world is changing fast, and students need modern knowledge if they want to compete. If young people had better preparation and support, they might feel more confident about building a future here.

Another thing that could help is creating more opportunities for youth employment. Many young people finish school but struggle to find work experience. Internships, training programs, and support for small businesses could make a big difference. Some teenagers have ideas and ambition, but they do not know where to start or cannot afford to take risks. If local governments or organizations supported young entrepreneurs more, it could encourage people to stay and create opportunities inside their own communities.

Tourism could also help areas around Shkodër develop more. Northern Albania has beautiful mountains, lakes, villages, and traditions that attract visitors. If tourism was developed carefully, it could create jobs for young people in hotels, restaurants, guiding, transportation, and local businesses. Instead of villages becoming emptier every year, they could become places where young people actually see opportunities. I think rural areas should not be seen as "left behind" places. They have potential if there is investment and good management.

Another important thing is listening to young people more seriously. Many teenagers feel like adults make decisions for them without asking what they actually think. Schools and local institutions should create more spaces where young people can share ideas and participate in discussions. Even small things matter. When people feel heard, they feel more connected to their community and more motivated to improve it.

I also think mental health is connected to this topic. A lot of young people feel pressure about their future. Some are scared they will never have financial stability or independence. Others feel guilty because they want to leave their country but also love it at the same time. Social media also increases pressure because people constantly compare their lives to others. These emotions are real, even if people do not always talk about them openly.

Personally, I do not want Albania to become a place where the only dream is leaving. I want young people to have real choices. Of course, studying or working abroad can be a good experience, and there is nothing wrong with that. But it should feel like a choice, not something people are forced to do because they think they cannot succeed here. I want Albania to improve enough that young people can imagine a future inside their own country too.

I think change is possible, but it will take time and real effort. The government cannot solve everything alone, but society also needs to stop accepting negativity as normal. Young people need support, opportunities, and reasons to believe their future matters here. If education improves, jobs increase, and communities invest more in youth, then maybe fewer people will feel like leaving is their only hope.





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In conclusion, European Youth Goal 6 is very important for Albania because young people are the future of the country. Right now, many feel disconnected from that future. Rural areas especially face problems like unemployment, lack of opportunities, and population loss. However, these challenges can change if there is more investment in education, employment, tourism, and youth participation. I believe Albania has potential, but young people need to actually feel that potential in their daily lives. A better future should not feel impossible here. Young people should be able to dream about building a life in Albania, not only about leaving it.

E. S. (Greece)

European Youth Goal: Connecting EU with Youth

For young people in Greece, connecting EU with youth is a vital bridge between local struggles and European opportunities. Following a decade of economic hardship, many Greek youths feel a sense of Euro-Fatigue, perceiving the EU more as a source of distant bureaucracy than a partner in their personal success. Addressing the “brain drain” crisis Greece suffers from, depends on this connection. Effectively highlighting EU funded initiatives like Erasmus and the Youth Guarantee project, demonstrates that the EU project offers tangible paths for graduates to stay and thrive within Greece.

The main obstacle remains the perception that EU decisions are made “top-down” without considering the unique socioeconomic realities of each country. To fix this, we should prioritise direct digital integration and school based programs that bring European representatives into Greek schools. By replacing dense policy papers with interactive social media campaigns and student-led debates, the EU can become a visible, relatable presence. This shift from abstract politics to authentic live engagement is the most effective way to empower Greek youth to take ownership of their role within the European Union.

M. F. (Portugal)

European Youth Goal: Mental Health and Well-being

In Portugal, many young people face mental health problems such as anxiety, stress, and depression. School pressure, economic difficulties and youth unemployment. After the pandemic, the need for psychological support in schools and universities became even more evident. Although some support services exist, many young people still have difficulty accessing free and quick psychological support. In rural areas, this access is even more limited. However, there is currently more openness to talking about mental health, especially among young people. To improve this situation, several actions can be taken, such as creating more free psychological support services and organizing awareness campaigns on mental health and combating bullying. It would also be important to improve access to psychological support in rural areas through online services and encourage workshops on emotional management, anxiety, and digital well-being. The mental health of young people is essential for the future of Portugal and Europe. Investing in emotional well-being helps young people lead healthier, more balanced, and more engaged lives in society. Therefore, it is important that schools, families, and governments work together to ensure support and opportunities for all young people.





Micha Thodora
Greece



Connecting EU with
Youth –strengthening trust and
communication between young
people and the European Union

- ① This goal is relevant in my country because it will help many young people to connect and communicate with eu an gain the trust the need. And I think it would be nice if it we've done collectively.
- ② The difficality in achieving this goal is who will bring the young people into regular contact with the eu and who will organize the groups.
- ③ The actions that could help promote this goal are sosial media Facebook, Instagram, tiktok and others is an email, phone call for an appointment and certainly someone who knows from some office government but this in Greece is difficult the do not support young people as much as the should. Thank you.