



# **EcoInnovate Youth Work Evaluation meeting**

Content report





# Content report

From the Evaluation meeting

EcoInnovate Youth Work

Berlin, Germany; 02.12.2024. – 06.12.2024.

*Evaluation meeting was organised as part of the project “Ecologically innovative approaches to youth work activities in the field of entrepreneurship”.*

## EcoInnovate Youth Work

December 2024



YOUTH POWER  
Austria



Co-funded by  
the European Union





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## Introduction

This content report is made as part of the project “EcoInnovate Youth Work”. This report presents the main outcomes and outputs of sessions organised as part of the A2 evaluation meeting – mobility of youth workers. The activity was organised in the period 02.12. – 06.12.2024, in Berlin, Germany.

The project EcoInnovate Youth Work aims to enhance the capacities of youth workers and their organisations in designing and implementing educational activities that promote ecologically innovative approaches in youth work, particularly focusing on circular economy, green entrepreneurship, and sustainable local development. Through this project, youth workers are supported in integrating sustainability principles into their everyday youth work practices and in engaging young people in green transitions and environmental responsibility.

Each working day of the event consisted of morning and afternoon sessions, with a lunch break in between. Both sessions typically included two workshops of 90 minutes each, separated by a coffee break with refreshments. At the end of each working day, a reflection and evaluation session was held, allowing participants to share learning insights, evaluate the day, and prepare for the following sessions.

We hope that this material will serve other youth workers and organisations as an inspiration and resource for developing new projects and educational sessions on sustainability, circular economy, green skills, and youth-led environmental innovation.

Project team





## Summary

The growing climate and environmental crisis demands a rethinking of how we live, produce, consume, and engage with the planet. Environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and unsustainable consumption patterns have become defining challenges of our time. In this context, youth work has a crucial role to play in driving positive change by equipping young people with knowledge, values, and tools for sustainable action. One of the most promising responses is found in circular economy approaches, which challenge the “take-make-dispose” model and instead promote regeneration, reuse, and systemic thinking.

Green and circular entrepreneurship opens new pathways for youth empowerment, job creation, and community resilience. It aligns economic innovation with environmental sustainability and offers a vision of a fairer, greener future. But to harness this potential, youth workers need enhanced competences, innovative educational methodologies, and transnational cooperation. This is the core mission of EcoInnovate Youth Work.

Through its main activities – a training course (A1) and an evaluation meeting (A2) – and supporting local dissemination, the project brings together youth workers from Austria, Germany, and Bosnia and Herzegovina to foster ecologically innovative approaches in youth work practice. The training course in Berlin served as a transformative learning space where participants explored the intersections between green skills, circular economy principles, and youth work education.

The long-term aim is to stimulate the development of youth-led green initiatives, reinforce the role of youth workers as sustainability educators, and strengthen the ecosystem of organisations working in this field.

## Project objectives

1. To build the competences of youth workers from Austria, Germany, and Bosnia and Herzegovina for designing and delivering educational activities that integrate circular economy, sustainability, and green entrepreneurship into youth work.
2. To empower participating organisations to develop and implement new youth work projects and practices that promote environmental responsibility, green job skills, and sustainable local development.
3. To support the creation of local-level educational workshops, designed and implemented by participants after the training, contributing to the wider dissemination of knowledge and competences gained through the project.
4. To foster cooperation between partner organisations through sharing tools, approaches, and best practices, and to encourage future collaboration in the field of green and circular youth work.
5. To promote the use of non-formal education and Erasmus+ opportunities as mechanisms for competence development, inclusion, and innovation in youth work focused on the green transition.





## Project Partners

### AT Youth Power Austria PROJECT COORDINATOR

Web: <https://yp-at.org/>

Youth Power Austria is a dynamic youth organization based in Vienna, working with young people on topics of civic engagement, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and digital transformation. The organization focuses on empowering youth through non-formal education, offering capacity-building programs, and connecting young people with opportunities across Europe. It brings strong expertise in developing and leading Erasmus+ projects focused on ecological awareness, circular economy, and youth participation. Youth Power Austria is especially active in green entrepreneurship initiatives, offering workshops and mentoring for young changemakers and supporting the development of youth-led projects addressing environmental challenges. Within this project, Youth Power Austria plays a key role in designing workshop content and guiding the green innovation process among participants.

### DE Youth Power Germany e.V. PROJECT PARTNER

Web: <https://yp-de.org/>

Youth Power Germany e.V. is a Berlin-based non-profit organization dedicated to empowering young people through youth work, digital education, intercultural exchange, and sustainability projects. It acts as a hub for educational innovation and youth activism, creating platforms for learning, sharing, and collaboration. The organization has extensive experience in leading Erasmus+ youth mobility projects and is particularly engaged in supporting environmental awareness and youth-led community actions. In *EcoInnovate Youth Work*, Youth Power Germany hosts the A1 Training Course and supports methodological development, contributing its expertise in project-based learning and green digital tools for youth work. Their Berlin team facilitates training on ecological transitions, sustainable living, and green economy careers.

### BA Spin – Okret PROJECT PARTNER

Web: <https://spin-okret.org/>

Spin – Okret is a youth-focused NGO based in Bosnia and Herzegovina, established with the goal of promoting positive values, healthy lifestyles, and equal opportunities for all young people. The organization specializes in working with NEET youth and those facing fewer opportunities, providing them with meaningful learning experiences through international mobilities and local educational activities. Spin – Okret applies a strong experiential learning approach, integrating non-formal education methods in both online and offline formats. In the framework of *EcoInnovate Youth Work*, Spin – Okret leads the communication and dissemination components, supports participant recruitment and mentoring, and contributes to capacity building in local communities through follow-up green entrepreneurship workshops.





## Program of the evaluation meeting

Each working day of the event consisted of **morning and afternoon sessions**, separated by a **lunch break**. Sessions generally lasted **90 minutes**, with **coffee breaks** in between, creating space for informal exchanges and group cohesion. Days ended with **group reflection, evaluation activities**, and shared preparation for the following day.

The event applied **non-formal and informal learning methods**, including simulations, group work, discussions, and theoretical inputs. Activities were developed with aim to build knowledge, foster peer learning, and promote green entrepreneurship and circular economy principles in youth work.

List of the educational sessions of the program (further descriptions of content, outcomes, and outputs follow in the next sections):

### DAY 1

- Arrival of participants
- Welcome evening and catching-up with local volunteers

### DAY 2

- Introduction to the evaluation meeting; Participants' expectations and contributions
- Sharing outcomes of local activities implemented in Austria, Germany, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

### DAY 3

- Continuation of sharing outcomes of local activities
- Dealing with challenges in implementation of local follow-up actions

### DAY 4

- Recommendations for development and implementation of local green entrepreneurial workshops
- Continuation of recommendations and group discussions

### DAY 5

- Planning and developing new European-level project ideas and cooperation initiatives
- Finalisation of joint proposals and partnership ideas

### DAY 6

- Final evaluation of the meeting
- Open space for consultation and planning
- Departure of participants





## Content of the sessions

This chapter will present and share summaries of the outcomes of the sessions organised as part of the evaluation meeting.

### 1. Welcome evening and catching-up

As the participants arrived in Berlin for the A2 Evaluation meeting, the first evening was dedicated to welcoming them in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The goal was to help participants reconnect with each other, catch up on their experiences since the A1 training course, and get familiar with the venue and the local surroundings.

The hosting organisation greeted the participants and facilitated the informal evening session together with volunteers and local youth. Basic information about the venue, public transport, local services, and safety procedures was repeated and made visible in the shared spaces for reference throughout the meeting.

#### ⇒ Catch-up Café

A cosy “catch-up café” corner was set up in the meeting space, decorated with lights, cushions, and refreshments. Participants were invited to join one or more of the following activities to help ease into the program:

#### 1. Memory lane (photo wall):

Participants revisited printed photos from the A1 training in Berlin (September 2024) and added short handwritten notes about their favorite memories or key learning moments from that activity.

#### 2. Update circle:

In a relaxed circle, participants took turns sharing what they had been doing in the months since the A1 training – including updates on local activities, personal milestones, or new ideas connected to sustainability and youth entrepreneurship.

#### 3. Who’s here bingo:

An interactive icebreaker game where each participant had to find someone in the room who matched specific criteria (e.g., “has organised a local workshop”, “tried composting”, “lives near a river”, “wants to launch a green business”). The game helped spark spontaneous conversations and laughter.

#### 4. Berlin explorer mission:

Participants were divided into small mixed-nationality groups and given short creative tasks such as “Find three things near the venue that reflect circular economy principles” or “Photograph the greenest place you can find in a 5-minute walk.” The group returned and shared their quick findings in a light-hearted debrief.

The evening helped to build a warm group atmosphere and re-establish connections between participants. It also laid the foundation for the collaborative learning and evaluation process that would unfold during the following days.





## 2. Introduction to the evaluation meeting

### ⇒ Welcome and overview

Facilitators introduced the objectives of the A2 Evaluation Meeting as outlined in the project proposal:

- To reflect on the outcomes of the A1 training course and local follow-up activities
- To identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned
- To formulate recommendations for future youth work in the field of sustainability and circular economy
- To foster new cooperation ideas and initiatives among the partner organisations

They also clarified how the evaluation meeting fits into the overall project timeline and how its results will contribute to future planning and project development.

### ⇒ Expectations – contributions – working principles

To make the space more participant-centered, trainers used an interactive flipchart exercise:

**Expectations:** Participants wrote on sticky notes what they hoped to gain or experience during the meeting.

**Contributions:** Participants reflected on what they personally bring to the group (skills, knowledge, energy, tools, etc.)

**Working principles:** Together, the group discussed how they wanted to work together (e.g., openness, timekeeping, mutual support), and co-created a visual “group contract” for the meeting.

### ⇒ Activity: My highlight since A1

Participants were invited to find a partner from a different country and share one personal or professional highlight related to sustainability, youth work, or entrepreneurship since the A1 training in September. This helped reconnect participants to the project and encouraged peer learning from the start.

### ⇒ Logistics and practicalities

Before closing the session, facilitators covered all important logistical points such as:

- Daily schedule and location of sessions
- Meals and accommodation
- Communication channels for internal updates
- Emergency contacts and safety instructions

The session concluded with an open space for questions and clarifications.





### 3. Sharing outcomes of local activities implemented after the training course

This session marked the beginning of the in-depth evaluation process by focusing on the results of the local workshops implemented by each partner organisation in Austria, Germany, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aim of the session that was organised in the afternoon of the 2nd and morning of the 3rd working day was to give space to participants to present their work, reflect on the journey from planning to implementation, and draw lessons learned that could feed into future initiatives.

#### ⇒ Sharing presentations

Each national group was given time to firstly prepare the visual presentations, and then to present the local workshop they organised after the A1 training in September 2024. Presentations followed a similar structure:

- Overview of the event (title, duration, target group)
- Key elements of the methodology used
- Successes, challenges, and feedback from participants
- Adjustments made compared to the original plan

Participants were encouraged to use visual aids like photos, posters, and flipcharts to make their presentations more engaging. The presentations were followed by short Q&A sessions where other groups could ask clarifying questions or offer suggestions.



#### ⇒ Reflections from the partner countries

##### **AT Youth Power Austria**

Planned session: Green business lab – designing eco startups

The Austrian group successfully implemented the session as planned, with slight timing adjustments to allow more space for idea development. They reported high engagement from participants, particularly during the team-based business model canvas development and the pitch activity. One unplanned success was that two participants expressed concrete interest in further developing their ideas beyond the workshop.

Reflections:

The use of real-life Austrian green business examples helped ground the session in local relevance





A challenge was the diverse level of prior knowledge among participants, which they overcame by assigning mentors to each team

They concluded that hands-on tools like canvas templates and role-play pitching were crucial in helping participants internalise circular economy thinking

### **DE Youth Power Germany**

Planned session: Berlin circular startup studio

The German team shared that their workshop attracted a very diverse group of youth – including several participants new to entrepreneurship. They adapted the agenda slightly to allow for more time in the simulation part and reduced input time to avoid overload. The voting categories (“Most Circular”, “Most Scalable”, “Most Creative”) proved to be a fun and effective way to get peer feedback.

Reflections:

The startup simulation created a sense of ownership among participants and encouraged teamwork

Participants responded positively to local Berlin circular examples – especially when they saw familiar brands being discussed

The team realised that many young people had ideas, but needed more guidance in mapping out steps to make them realistic

### **BA Spin/Okret Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Planned session: Green ideas incubator – youth startups for circular change

The team from Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully engaged NEET youth in a local co-working hub, with the session adapted to include more time for the group brainstorming phase and simplified canvas materials to accommodate different education levels.

Reflections:

The session surfaced strong interest in using green entrepreneurship as a way to address local issues (e.g., plastic waste, textile reuse)

The “Dragon’s nest” pitching format boosted confidence and created a fun, competitive spirit

A major takeaway was the need for more support structures (mentorship, funding, follow-up programs) to take ideas forward

⇒ Conclusions and learning points





After all presentations, facilitators led a debrief circle where participants reflected on key insights from the local implementation phase. The following points emerged as common themes:

- Local relevance is essential: Adapting examples and language to the local context made activities more relatable
- Flexibility in delivery: Adjusting the original session plan to meet the group's needs and energy levels helped ensure success
- Mentorship matters: Young people were more likely to develop their ideas when they felt supported by facilitators or peers
- Need for continuity: Participants agreed that one-time workshops were impactful but should ideally be followed up by mentoring or project support programs
- The session successfully created space for mutual learning and appreciation, while also gathering input that would inform the next stages of collaboration and project development.





#### 4. Dealing with challenges in implementation of local level workshops and sessions

##### ⇒ Mapping challenges

Participants were divided into mixed-nationality groups and given the task to map the most significant challenges they faced during the implementation of their local workshops. Each group worked on a flipchart divided into four main categories:

1. Logistical and organisational issues (e.g., venues, timing, materials)
2. Participant engagement (e.g., turnout, motivation, dropout)
3. Content adaptation (e.g., tailoring methods to the local context)
4. Partnership and communication (e.g., collaboration with local stakeholders, internal coordination)

Groups used post-its to write down examples from their own experience and categorised them under the respective themes. This visual mapping helped make the patterns and shared struggles more visible across countries.

##### ⇒ Deep dive discussions

Each group then selected one key challenge to explore in more depth. They were asked to reflect on:

1. Why was this challenge significant in their context?
2. How did they try to address or overcome it?
3. What would they do differently next time?
4. What support or resources would have helped?

Discussions were facilitated using guiding questions, and each group assigned one note-taker to summarise the key points.

##### ⇒ Gallery walk and exchange

The outcomes of each group's reflection were displayed around the room in a gallery walk format. Participants were invited to walk around, read the posters, and add comments or ideas using post-it notes in a "peer advice" format. This created a dynamic learning space where diverse perspectives and experiences could enrich the solutions proposed.





⇒ Plenary discussion

In the final part of the session, the facilitator gathered the group for a plenary conversation to summarise the recurring challenges and the most promising responses. Key reflections included:

- The importance of flexibility and backup plans when working with youth, especially in uncertain local environments
- The need for stronger partnerships with local actors (NGOs, schools, municipalities) to boost reach and credibility
- The value of preparation and follow-up to keep young people engaged beyond one-time events
- A call for more practical toolkits and mentoring resources to support future local initiatives



The session concluded with participants sharing how the insights gained from peers could help improve their future youth work activities—highlighting that challenges are not failures, but stepping stones for growth and innovation.





## 5. Recommendations for development and implementation of local level projects and activities for empowerment of youngsters for entrepreneurial activities with focus on sustainable approaches and circular economy

This session served as a culmination point of the evaluation meeting—dedicated to translating the learnings, reflections, and feedback from the previous days into forward-looking recommendations and strategies for the future. The session aimed to support participants in synthesising their experience and producing practical, realistic, and impactful recommendations that can improve the quality of youth work projects in the field of sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship.

The session was implemented over the course of a full day (6 hours total), using a combination of brainstorming, structured group work, peer review, and consensus-building methods.

### ⇒ Mapping good practices and lessons learned

In national teams, participants reviewed their experiences from the A1 training course, local-level implementation, and the current evaluation meeting. Each group was invited to create a poster summarising:

1. What worked well in supporting youth entrepreneurship at the local level?
2. Which educational methods were most effective?
3. What kinds of support (materials, partnerships, tools) proved valuable?
4. The aim was to identify elements worth keeping, replicating, or scaling.

### ⇒ Identifying gaps and improvement areas

Next, groups were asked to identify challenges that persisted or emerged across different phases—especially those that prevented them from fully empowering youth in sustainable entrepreneurship. These included:

1. Access barriers (e.g., rural youth, NEETs, youth with low digital skills)
2. Short-term project formats with no continuity
3. Lack of local mentorship or incubator networks
4. Missing know-how on circular economy and green business models



This phase served to focus attention on key needs.





⇒ Thematic working groups – co-creating recommendations

Participants reorganised into mixed-nationality working groups based on interest, choosing thematic focuses such as:

1. Educational methodologies and workshop formats
2. Partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation
3. Access and inclusion of youth with fewer opportunities
4. Digital tools and resources to support learning
5. Policy-level recommendations for local youth strategies

Each group worked on developing concrete, action-oriented recommendations, ensuring they were applicable across various contexts and adaptable to different levels of youth work.

After the first round, groups rotated and joined different topics, enriching the recommendations with additional input and perspectives.

⇒ Sharing and finalising recommendations

Each group presented their refined recommendations in plenary. Through open discussion and consensus-building, participants selected the most impactful and feasible ideas to be included in a joint summary of recommendations.

The facilitators captured and documented the final recommendations to be used both internally by the project partners and externally for dissemination to other youth organisations and networks.

**Final recommendations:**

1. Design practical, hands-on activities

Use methods like startup simulations, role-plays, and green business modeling to foster real-life problem solving and creativity.

2. Introduce the circular economy through local relevance

Connect abstract sustainability concepts to tangible local challenges and community-based solutions.

3. Ensure continuity through mentoring and follow-up

Youth-led ideas need support beyond one-off workshops. Create local mentoring structures, peer networks, or partner with incubators.





#### 4. Strengthen partnerships with local eco-enterprises

Collaborate with green startups, cooperatives, and sustainability-driven NGOs to provide role models and real-world examples.

#### 5. Make youth work more inclusive

Adapt workshops for NEET youth, migrants, and rural participants using accessible language, digital tools, and community outreach.

#### 6. Use digital platforms to enhance learning and visibility

Combine in-person sessions with online learning (e.g., microlearning, webinars, video pitching), and showcase youth-led projects online.

#### 7. Integrate sustainable entrepreneurship into local youth strategies

Advocate for inclusion of circular economy and green innovation within youth policy at the municipal and regional level.

#### 8. Empower young people to take ownership

Let youth design and lead parts of the program to build agency, motivation, and a sense of entrepreneurial identity.

#### 9. Embed sustainability in all project dimensions

From catering to materials and transport—practice what we preach by applying green principles in all project logistics.

#### 10. Promote transnational exchange of tools and success stories

Build a shared pool of resources and methodologies across partner organisations to enhance mutual learning and scale best practices.





## 6. Planning and developing new European level projects and cooperation

This full-day session was dedicated to supporting youth workers and educators in planning new local-level initiatives to promote youth entrepreneurship with a focus on sustainability and the circular economy. Building on the results of local workshops implemented after the A1 training, this session provided time and space for participants to reflect, exchange good practices, and co-develop new ideas tailored to their local contexts.

The main aim was to stimulate realistic, needs-based planning of activities that can be implemented by the organisations at the community level, without relying on Erasmus+ funding, but instead leveraging local networks, community spaces, schools, municipalities, and private sector partnerships.

### ⇒ Local ecosystem mapping

Each national team worked together to analyse their local context by answering:

- What are the pressing environmental and youth challenges in our communities?
- What resources, spaces, partners, or funding streams are already available?
- What types of initiatives are most needed and most feasible?

Participants mapped out key stakeholders such as municipalities, NGOs, eco-businesses, and youth centres.



### - Project design lab – from challenge to action

Using a structured worksheet, each national team developed a local-level project plan. The template included:

- Title and duration
- Target group and local partners
- Main objectives and impact
- Core activities and methods
- Timeline and resources needed

Teams then rotated in a “consultation carousel” to give and receive feedback from peers.

### ⇒ Commitment and follow-up





Each team finalised their project ideas and committed to specific next steps, including internal planning meetings, stakeholder engagement, or pilot phases. The session closed with short presentations and celebration of the creativity and practical impact of each idea.

### **Local project ideas developed during the session**

#### **AT Austria – Youth Power Austria**

Project title: Green Impact Studio

Concept: A 6-week afterschool program for high school students in Vienna and Linz combining sustainability education with entrepreneurial thinking.

Core activities:

- Weekly workshops on topics like circular economy, sustainable product design, and digital marketing for eco-startups
- Visits to local green businesses (e.g., RepaNet, Markta)
- Youth-led mini-projects, supported by volunteer mentors from the green tech sector

Target group: Young people aged 16–19, especially those in vocational schools

Partners: Local high schools, youth centres, Refurbed, Vienna Business Agency

Planned start: Autumn 2025

#### **DE Germany – Youth Power Germany**

Project title: Berlin Eco Jam – Youth hackathon for circular solutions

Concept: A weekend eco-innovation event (48 hours) where young people co-create tech and design solutions to local environmental challenges.

Core activities:

- Problem framing with local businesses and environmental NGOs
- Expert-led ideation sessions (e.g., UX design, zero-waste systems)
- Team prototyping and demo pitches

Target group: Youth aged 18–30 from Berlin and Brandenburg with interest in tech, design, or sustainability

Partners: Circular Berlin, Original Unverpackt, local FabLabs and coworking spaces

Planned start: February 2026





## **BA Bosnia and Herzegovina – Spin / Okret**

Project title: Eco Aktiva – Youth for Green Community Action

Concept: A series of grassroots eco-entrepreneurship challenges held across smaller towns (e.g., Cazin, Bihać, Velika Kladuša) where youth develop community-based sustainability ideas.

Core activities:

- Community clean-up and upcycling days
- “Green Idea Market” – pitching and voting on small sustainable business ideas
- Small seed grants for youth-led initiatives (e.g., plastic-to-products workshops, refill stations)

Target group: NEET youth and vocational school students aged 17–25

Partners: Municipal youth offices, Mozaik Foundation, local schools and media

Planned start: Spring 2026

Each team committed to launching at least a pilot phase of their project within the next 6–9 months. The projects reflect the real needs and resources of each local community, aiming to empower youth not only with knowledge—but also with opportunities to act.

