

Report on school workshops

– *Green YOUTh Changemakers Project*

Co-funded by the European Union – Erasmus+ Programme

Introduction

This report presents a detailed overview of the school workshops organised in Romania and Bulgaria under the *Green YOUTh Changemakers* project. These activities represented one of the most important pillars of the project's local dimension, providing non-formal learning experiences to students who, in most cases, had limited access to international opportunities. The workshops took place between December 2024 and June 2025 in urban and rural schools, involving over 220 young people.

The workshops combined environmental education, creativity, and civic participation. They introduced topics such as climate change, plastic pollution, circular economy, fast fashion, and the importance of recycling. They also provided practical demonstrations—such as transforming PET bottles into 3D printing filament and producing jewellery or ornaments—showing students how theoretical knowledge can be translated into concrete, innovative practices.

General objectives of the school workshops

The workshops aimed to:

- Introduce students to key environmental issues and their relevance at local, national, and European levels.
- Use non-formal learning methods to complement traditional classroom education.
- Encourage creative thinking and problem-solving through eco-art, upcycling, and recycling activities.
- Promote civic responsibility and the idea that youth are active changemakers.
- Prepare participants for involvement in broader project activities, such as campaigns, logging, and consultations with decision-makers.

Workshop on plastic pollution & sustainability

Gheorghe Țițeica National College, 18 December 2024

1. Context and Rationale

The workshop *Plastic Pollution & Sustainability* was organised within the framework of the *Green YOUTh Changemakers* project, co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. It took place on **18 December 2024** at *Gheorghe Țițeica National College* in Drobeta Turnu Severin, Romania, and brought together **30 students aged 17 years old**, guided by teachers, youth workers, and project facilitators.

The rationale for this workshop was grounded in the increasing urgency of tackling plastic pollution, both globally and locally. Romania, like many European countries, faces challenges related to single-use plastics, waste management, and microplastic contamination of rivers. The Danube River, which flows through Drobeta Turnu Severin, is one of Europe's major waterways but also one of the most polluted with plastic debris. Thus, the workshop linked the **local environmental reality** of the Danube to the **global challenge** of marine litter and plastic waste.

2. Objectives

The specific objectives of this workshop were to:

1. Raise awareness among high school students about the problem of plastic pollution and its long-term consequences.
 2. Present the concept of sustainability in a youth-friendly, accessible way.
 3. Encourage students to reflect critically on their own consumption habits and propose solutions.
 4. Introduce non-formal education tools, combining audiovisual materials, debates, and group reflection.
 5. Motivate participants to engage in further eco-actions under the project.
-

3. Structure of the Workshop

The session was carefully structured in four main phases:

a) Introduction and Ice-breaking

Facilitators began with a short introduction to the Erasmus+ project, the goals of *Green YOUTh Changemakers*, and the purpose of the workshop. To create a friendly

atmosphere, a short ice-breaking activity (“Two truths and one lie about plastic”) was used. Students had to guess which statements about plastic (e.g. “A plastic bottle takes 450 years to decompose”) were true or false. This generated curiosity and set the stage for deeper learning.

b) Film screening

Two short documentaries from the series *Children Can Save the Planet* were presented:

- *Plastic is Forever* – focusing on the persistence of plastic in nature.
- *Everything is Connected* – highlighting the interconnections between ecosystems, consumption, and waste.

The visual format immediately captured students’ attention, sparking emotional reactions and discussions about how plastic affects animals, rivers, and even human health.

c) Group discussions and debates

After the screenings, participants were divided into small groups. Each group was given a set of questions to discuss:

- What examples of plastic pollution do you see in your community?
- How do you think single-use plastics affect the Danube River?
- What can students do in their schools to reduce plastic waste?

Groups reported back to the plenary, and a debate followed. Students argued about responsibility, with some saying “individuals must reduce their plastic use” while others insisted that “companies and authorities should take stronger measures.”

d) Reflection and action planning

The session closed with a reflection circle. Students wrote on post-it notes one habit they commit to change (e.g., bringing a reusable bottle, refusing plastic bags, recycling properly). Facilitators collected the notes and displayed them on a board labelled *Our Eco-Commitments*.

4. Participants’ profile

The 30 participants were high school students, in grades 11. Many came from families with limited financial means, which is relevant for the topic: affordability of eco-alternatives was an issue they often raised. Their previous exposure to sustainability topics varied, with some already active in school eco-clubs and others encountering the subject for the first time. The diversity of backgrounds enriched the discussions and provided authentic perspectives.

5. Learning outcomes

Knowledge

- Students learned about the persistence of plastics, the dangers of microplastics, and the global impact of plastic waste.
- They understood connections between local pollution (Danube littering) and marine ecosystems.
- They became familiar with the concept of sustainability and the 3Rs principle (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle).

Skills

- Enhanced critical thinking: debating responsibilities between individuals, companies, and governments.
- Communication: presenting group ideas in plenary.
- Problem-solving: proposing practical solutions for their own school (eco-bins, awareness campaigns).

Attitudes

- Stronger motivation to reduce personal plastic use.
- Recognition of their role as changemakers.
- Empathy towards animals and ecosystems affected by plastic.

6. Reflections and testimonials

Several participants shared feedback at the end:

- *"I never thought about how long plastic lasts. Now I understand why recycling matters."* (11th grade student)
- *"It is unfair that companies produce so much plastic and we, as consumers, are blamed. But we can also make choices."* (10th grade student)
- *"I will start bringing my own bottle to school. It is a small step, but it matters."* (9th grade student)

Teachers also noted that the workshop was more engaging than traditional lessons and appreciated the non-formal approach.

7. Impact

The immediate impact was visible in students' willingness to adopt new behaviours and in their enthusiasm during debates. Several expressed interest in joining the project's eco-actions (plogging, campaigns). The school administration also appreciated the workshop, later discussing with facilitators the possibility of introducing permanent eco-corners and recycling bins in classrooms.

8. Alignment with Erasmus+ Priorities

The workshop addressed the Erasmus+ priority of **environment and climate change** by raising awareness and empowering young people to take action. It also supported **youth participation** by encouraging students to voice their opinions, debate, and take ownership of solutions. The intercultural element was present indirectly, as facilitators connected local Romanian realities with global and European perspectives.

9. Conclusions

The *Plastic Pollution & Sustainability* workshop was a successful educational intervention, combining knowledge transfer, emotional engagement, and practical reflection. It not only increased awareness but also fostered agency among participants, demonstrating the value of non-formal methods in schools. The workshop laid a strong foundation for subsequent project activities, ensuring continuity between local awareness and transnational advocacy.

Creative Workshop “Eco Decor – PET to PET”

Gheorghe Țițeica National College, 17 December 2024

1. Context and Rationale

The “Eco Decor – PET to PET” workshop was implemented in the framework of the *Green YOUTH Changemakers* project as a concrete demonstration of how circular economy principles can be introduced to students through creativity and technology. It took place at *Gheorghe Țițeica National College* in Drobeta Turnu Severin, Romania, on **17 December 2024**, with the participation of **36 high school students**, accompanied by teachers, youth workers, and facilitators.

The rationale for this workshop was based on the increasing visibility of plastic pollution in the Danube region and the need to show young people not only the dangers of plastic, but also the possibilities for innovation and transformation. By turning waste PET bottles into filament for 3D printers and then into Christmas ornaments, students could experience firsthand how waste becomes a resource, combining environmental responsibility with artistic creativity. The timing of the workshop—just before the winter holidays—was intentionally chosen to make the activity more engaging and meaningful, connecting sustainability to festive traditions.

2. Objectives

The workshop pursued the following objectives:

1. To demonstrate circular economy practices in a practical, youth-friendly way.
 2. To develop creativity and digital competences through upcycling activities.
 3. To raise awareness about the environmental impact of PET bottles.
 4. To empower students to see themselves as active contributors to sustainability solutions.
 5. To build enthusiasm and ownership by linking ecological themes with holiday celebrations.
-

3. Structure of the workshop

The activity was carefully structured in four phases, each building on the previous one:

a) Introduction and awareness-raising

Facilitators began by presenting the concept of circular economy and the environmental

footprint of PET bottles. Students were shown statistics about plastic waste in Romania and the Danube, sparking discussions about everyday consumption habits. Teachers then linked these facts to the project's goals, creating a clear line from global problems to local solutions.

b) Demonstration of pultrusion technology

Students witnessed how 5L PET bottles, normally considered waste, could be transformed into filament for 3D printing. The pultrusion process was demonstrated step by step, with facilitators explaining technical aspects and safety precautions. Students were encouraged to ask questions, and many were impressed by the innovation: *"I never thought a simple bottle could become 3D filament,"* one student remarked.

c) Creative workshop – designing ornaments

Once the filament was produced, students were divided into smaller groups and guided through the design and 3D printing of Christmas ornaments. Shapes included stars, bells, and snowflakes. After printing, students painted and decorated their ornaments with eco-friendly colours. This stage fostered collaboration, creativity, and joy, with laughter and discussions filling the classroom.

d) Reflection and exhibition

The session closed with a group reflection. Each student presented their ornament and explained its symbolic meaning. An exhibition was created in the school's main hall, with a board displaying the slogan: *"From Waste to Wonder – Eco Decor"*. Teachers and visitors could admire the ornaments, reinforcing the message that sustainability can be beautiful and creative.

4. Participants' profile

The 36 participants were students aged 17 years old. Their levels of exposure to technology varied widely; for some, this was the first time they had seen a 3D printer. The workshop was inclusive, engaging both students with strong academic backgrounds and those less motivated in traditional classroom settings. The creative and practical format allowed everyone to contribute, regardless of prior knowledge.

5. Learning outcomes

Knowledge

- Understanding of circular economy principles and how waste materials can be repurposed.

- Knowledge of the environmental consequences of PET bottles.
- Awareness of innovative recycling methods and their applications.

Skills

- Technical competences related to 3D printing and pultrusion.
- Creativity and artistic expression through ornament design.
- Teamwork, communication, and problem-solving in small groups.

Attitudes

- Increased motivation to reduce, reuse, and recycle.
- Appreciation of the role of technology in sustainability.
- A sense of pride and ownership in creating visible, tangible eco-products.

6. Reflections and testimonials

Feedback from participants highlighted the transformative nature of the activity:

- *“This was the most interesting workshop I have ever attended. I learned how technology can help the environment.”* (11th grade student)
- *“It was fun to create something beautiful from a bottle that would normally be thrown away.”* (11th grade student)
- *“Now, every time I see a plastic bottle, I will think about what else it could become.”* (11th grade student)

Teachers noted that the activity bridged the gap between science and art, engaging students with different interests and strengths.

7. Impact

The workshop had immediate and visible impact. Students took their ornaments home, sharing the story with families and thus multiplying the message. The school decided to maintain the exhibition for the entire winter holiday, inspiring other students to join eco-actions. Moreover, teachers expressed interest in integrating 3D printing into future lessons, seeing its potential for both education and sustainability.

8. Alignment with Erasmus+ Priorities

This activity strongly aligned with Erasmus+ priorities by:

- Promoting sustainability and environmental responsibility.
 - Strengthening digital competences of youth through hands-on use of new technologies.
 - Fostering creativity, innovation, and active citizenship.
 - Ensuring inclusiveness, as all students were able to participate and contribute.
-

9. Conclusions

The “Eco Decor – PET to PET” workshop was a powerful demonstration of how environmental education can be made practical, engaging, and enjoyable. By combining technology, creativity, and festive traditions, it transformed students’ perception of waste and empowered them to see themselves as eco-innovators. The activity not only contributed to the project’s objectives but also left a lasting impression on participants, their families, and the school community.

Workshop on Fast Fashion

Vasil Levski High School, Karlovo – 21 March 2025

1. Context and Rationale

The *Fast Fashion* workshop was designed to address one of the most overlooked yet impactful environmental issues: the role of the fashion industry in climate change, water consumption, and waste production. Organised on **21 March 2025** at *Vasil Levski High School, Karlovo*, this session was part of the International Week of Water activities implemented within the *Green YOUth Changemakers* project.

Fast fashion has become a global phenomenon that encourages mass production, low prices, and rapid consumption cycles. Bulgaria, with its textile factories concentrated in Plovdiv region, is directly linked to this industry. Many of the participating students had family members working in this sector, which made the workshop particularly relevant and personal.

2. Objectives

- To raise awareness among students about the environmental footprint of textile production.
 - To explore the hidden costs of fashion: water consumption, chemical pollution, CO₂ emissions, and textile waste.
 - To encourage critical reflection on personal shopping habits.
 - To foster responsible consumer behaviour and civic engagement.
-

3. Structure

a) Introduction – setting the scene

Facilitators opened with a provocative question: *“How many clothes did you buy in the last three months, and how many of them do you really wear?”* This simple inquiry triggered a lively discussion, as students realised the disconnect between their consumption and actual needs.

b) Presentation – the lifecycle of clothes

A multimedia presentation followed, showing the environmental impacts of textile production:

- 2,700 litres of water needed for one cotton T-shirt.
- Use of pesticides and chemicals that pollute rivers.
- CO₂ emissions from synthetic fibres.
- Massive quantities of textile waste generated annually.

c) Group activity – fashion footprint

Students worked in small groups to analyse case studies (e.g. “A cheap polyester jacket” vs. “A locally produced wool sweater”). They identified environmental and social consequences for each product and presented solutions to reduce impacts.

d) Reflection – personal pledges

At the end, each student wrote a personal pledge on how they could reduce fashion waste. Some decided to donate unused clothes, others to buy fewer but better-quality items, and a few proposed a school clothes-swap event.

4. Participants’ profile

Around **30 students aged 16** participated. Many were aware of fashion trends but unaware of the industry’s environmental impacts. The workshop thus opened their eyes to the hidden side of consumerism.

5. Learning outcomes

- **Knowledge:** lifecycle of clothes, environmental costs of textile production.
 - **Skills:** critical thinking, teamwork, decision-making.
 - **Attitudes:** motivation to change shopping habits, interest in reusing clothes, empathy for workers in the textile industry.
-

6. Testimonials

- *“I never realised one T-shirt could waste so much water. I will think more before I buy.”*
- *“Our school should organise a clothes-swap fair. It will save money and help the planet.”*

7. Impact

The workshop inspired the eco-club of the school to plan a **Clothes Swap Fair** for spring 2025. Students also proposed creating a “Recycling Corner” for textiles at school.

Workshop on air pollution

Vasil Levski High School, Karlovo – 21 March 2025

1. Context and rationale

The *Air Pollution* workshop was implemented on the same day, addressing another critical environmental issue highly relevant to Bulgarian youth: **urban air quality**. Air pollution remains one of the top health risks in Europe, and Bulgaria records some of the highest levels of particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5).

Karlovo, although not a large industrial centre, is still affected by emissions from traffic and household heating. Students were already familiar with the “heavy” air during winter but lacked knowledge about the health consequences and possible solutions.

2. Objectives

- To provide students with scientific knowledge about air pollution and its sources.
 - To explain the health impacts of PM10 and PM2.5.
 - To raise awareness of local air quality issues in Karlovo.
 - To encourage personal and community solutions for improving air quality.
-

3. Structure

a) Introduction – personal experience

Facilitators asked: “*Have you ever felt that the air in winter is heavy or smoky?*” Almost all students raised their hands. This personal connection created immediate interest.

b) Presentation – what is air pollution?

An interactive presentation explained:

- Main pollutants: PM10, PM2.5, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide.
- Sources: traffic, industry, domestic heating, agriculture.
- Health effects: asthma, cardiovascular disease, reduced life expectancy.

c) Simulation Exercise – air quality in our city

Students were divided into groups representing “citizens,” “municipal leaders,” and “industry representatives.” Each group debated solutions to improve air quality: stricter regulations, renewable energy, or awareness campaigns.

d) Reflection and commitments

Students shared actions they could take: walking more, cycling, planting trees, and pressuring local authorities to monitor pollution levels.

4. Participants’ profile

The same group of **30 students aged 17** attended, overlapping with the *Fast Fashion* workshop. For many, this was their first structured discussion about air quality.

5. Learning outcomes

- **Knowledge:** causes and effects of air pollution, understanding of PM10/PM2.5.
 - **Skills:** debating, role-playing, problem-solving.
 - **Attitudes:** motivation to adopt sustainable mobility, readiness to demand action from local authorities.
-

6. Testimonials

- *“I finally understand why my grandmother’s health gets worse in winter.”*
 - *“It is not only about individuals, the municipality must also act.”*
-

7. Impact

The workshop motivated students to propose a **tree-planting action** in Karlovo, linked to the Week of Water. Teachers also expressed interest in integrating local air quality monitoring into future school projects.

Conclusions

By separating the topics of **Fast Fashion** and **Air Pollution**, the Karlovo workshops provided students with a dual perspective: one focusing on **consumption and responsibility as individuals**, the other on **collective action for community health**. Together, they broadened environmental literacy, developed competences in debate and problem-solving, and strengthened youth motivation to act as changemakers.

Promoting Sustainability in Schools

Vasil Levski High School, Karlovo & General Vladimir Zaimov Vocational School,

Sopot – 31 March 2025

1. Context and rationale

The *Promoting Sustainability in Schools* workshops were organised on **31 March 2025** in two educational institutions: *Vasil Levski High School* in Karlovo and *General Vladimir Zaimov Vocational School* in Sopot. These activities took place shortly after the International Week of Water and were intended to consolidate students' understanding of sustainability, connecting previous project sessions on plastic pollution, fast fashion, and air quality with practical solutions for schools and communities.

The rationale for these workshops was to **empower youth to think globally and act locally**. By engaging in discussions on recycling, water conservation, sustainable consumption, and eco-actions, students were encouraged to recognise their role as drivers of change within their own educational environments. Importantly, both schools have diverse student populations, including young people from rural areas and disadvantaged backgrounds, making inclusiveness a core principle.

2. Objectives

- To familiarise students with sustainability concepts in an accessible, practical way.
 - To promote recycling, water conservation, and eco-friendly behaviours in schools.
 - To empower young people to design proposals for sustainable actions within their schools.
 - To encourage collaboration between students, teachers, and local youth leaders.
 - To strengthen links between the project and local community initiatives (tree planting, plogging).
-

3. Structure of the Workshops

Both workshops followed a similar structure, adapted to the profile of each school:

a) Introduction – setting the context

Facilitators began by explaining the goals of the *Green YOUth Changemakers* project and how sustainability relates to everyday life. Students were asked: “*What does sustainability mean to you?*” Answers varied from “saving resources” to “protecting nature for future generations.”

b) Interactive presentations

Using slides and short videos, youth leaders introduced the topics of:

- Water conservation and its importance for local communities.
- Recycling practices and how schools can reduce waste.
- Sustainable consumption, focusing on food and daily habits.

c) Group work – designing sustainable schools

Students were divided into groups and tasked with developing action plans to make their schools greener. Ideas included:

- Introducing recycling bins in each classroom.
- Creating eco-corners with plants and educational posters.
- Campaigns to reduce water and electricity consumption.
- Organising plogging events in nearby parks.

d) Presentations and debate

Each group presented their proposals. Teachers and facilitators encouraged constructive debate, helping students to refine their ideas into realistic action steps.

e) Reflection and commitments

The workshops ended with reflection circles where students expressed one change they would like to see in their school within the next year.

4. Participants’ profile

- **Karlovo (Vasil Levski High School):** approx. 30 students aged 17, mostly from general education streams.
- **Sopot (General Vladimir Zaimov Vocational School):** approx. 30 students aged 16, many following vocational tracks (mechanics, agriculture).

The diversity of participants enriched the discussions: general education students focused more on awareness campaigns, while vocational students proposed practical eco-innovations linked to their training.

5. Learning outcomes

Knowledge

- Understanding of sustainability principles and their application in schools.
- Awareness of water conservation, recycling, and sustainable consumption.
- Familiarity with examples of eco-actions in other European schools.

Skills

- Teamwork and collaboration in group tasks.
- Public speaking and presentation skills.
- Critical thinking and problem-solving applied to real school issues.

Attitudes

- Greater motivation to act as eco-leaders in schools.
- Willingness to adopt sustainable behaviours (reducing waste, conserving resources).
- A sense of ownership and pride in contributing to greener schools.

6. Reflections and testimonials

Students' voices captured the spirit of the workshops:

- *"We can start with small changes, like turning off lights when we leave a room. It costs nothing but makes a difference."*
- *"As vocational students, we can build recycling stations as a practical project. This way we learn and help the environment."*
- *"It was great to work in teams and realise that our ideas matter. We can actually change things in our school."*

Teachers also appreciated the workshops, noting that the non-formal approach complemented their teaching and motivated students who are usually less engaged.

7. Impact

The workshops had an immediate impact on both schools:

- At *Vasil Levski High School*, students formed a committee to work with teachers on implementing recycling bins in classrooms.
 - At *General Vladimir Zaimov Vocational School*, vocational students proposed to design eco-corners with recycled materials as part of their practical assignments.
 - Both schools committed to participate in the project's upcoming **tree planting campaign**, connecting awareness with concrete eco-actions.
-

8. Alignment with Erasmus+ Priorities

These workshops addressed the Erasmus+ priorities by:

- Promoting **environmental and climate change awareness**.
 - Strengthening **youth participation**, as students designed their own sustainability proposals.
 - Ensuring **inclusion**, with diverse participants from both academic and vocational backgrounds.
 - Developing **civic competences**, preparing students to be active European citizens.
-

9. Conclusions

The *Promoting Sustainability in Schools* workshops in Karlovo and Sopot successfully translated abstract sustainability concepts into practical actions. By involving students directly in designing eco-friendly initiatives, they built motivation, responsibility, and ownership.

These sessions demonstrated that schools can serve as incubators of change, where young people not only learn about environmental issues but also practice civic engagement. The workshops thus contributed directly to the project's objective of empowering disadvantaged youth to act as changemakers at local, national, and European levels.

Upcycling workshop

Bistrița Secondary School, 14 April 2025

1. Context and rationale

The *Upcycling Workshop* at **Bistrița Secondary School** was organised on **14 April 2025**, involving **35 students** aged 12–15, most of them from rural families. This school is located in a semi-rural area of Mehedinți County, Romania, where young people face geographical and economic obstacles that often limit their access to innovative educational experiences.

The rationale for this workshop was to bring cutting-edge environmental education tools, such as 3D printing, into a rural school context. The activity focused on **upcycling PET bottles** into filament for 3D printers, which students then used to create jewellery and decorative items. By doing so, the workshop combined environmental responsibility with creativity and digital literacy.

2. Objectives

- To raise awareness about the value of recycling and upcycling.
 - To introduce rural students to 3D printing technology.
 - To stimulate creativity and innovation through practical activities.
 - To build environmental responsibility and self-confidence among students.
-

3. Structure

a) Introduction

Facilitators explained the concept of upcycling, contrasting it with recycling. Students were invited to brainstorm everyday objects that could be given a second life.

b) Demonstration of pultrusion

PET bottles were cut and transformed into filament for 3D printers. Students observed each step and asked questions about safety, technology, and applications.

c) Creative production

Students were divided into small groups and tasked with designing earrings, pendants, and bracelets. Each item was printed with the 3D printer, then decorated and painted. The creative process fostered teamwork and artistic expression.

d) Reflection and exhibition

An improvised exhibition showcased the jewellery pieces, with students proudly presenting their work.

4. Participants' profile

The 35 participants were mainly from rural families with limited access to technology. For most of them, it was the first time they had seen or used a 3D printer. This made the workshop not only an environmental activity, but also a bridge to digital literacy and innovation.

5. Learning Outcomes

- **Knowledge:** students learned about upcycling, plastic pollution, and the potential of digital technologies in sustainability.
 - **Skills:** creativity, teamwork, and introduction to digital fabrication.
 - **Attitudes:** increased self-confidence, motivation to adopt eco-friendly behaviours, pride in producing something valuable from waste.
-

6. Testimonials

- *"I never thought a plastic bottle could become jewellery. I will show my parents what we made."*
 - *"This was the first time I worked with a 3D printer. It was amazing."*
-

7. Impact

The workshop generated strong enthusiasm. Teachers noted that students were unusually engaged, especially those who usually struggle with traditional classroom learning. The activity also sparked interest in starting an eco-club at the school.

Eco-art workshop

Hinova Secondary School, 11 April 2025

1. Context and rationale

The *Eco-Art Workshop* was held on **11 April 2025** at **Hinova Secondary School**, involving **40 students** aged 9–13. Hinova is a rural community near the Danube, where environmental issues such as waste management and river pollution are visible and affect daily life.

The rationale for this activity was to show students how art can be used as a tool for environmental education. By transforming PET bottles into filament and then into jewellery, participants experienced the connection between creativity, sustainability, and innovation.

2. Objectives

- To raise awareness of plastic pollution and waste reduction.
 - To promote creativity and self-expression through eco-art.
 - To provide rural youth with access to innovative learning tools.
 - To foster teamwork and community spirit.
-

3. Structure

a) Introduction

Facilitators discussed the environmental impact of plastic bottles, linking the issue directly to the Danube River. Students were asked: *“How often do you see plastic waste near the river or in the village?”* Almost all confirmed frequent encounters.

b) Demonstration and production

PET bottles were cut, processed, and transformed into filament. Students were then guided through the design of eco-jewellery. Bracelets, pendants, and earrings were produced, decorated, and displayed.

c) Reflection and sharing

At the end, students shared their impressions and reflected on how they could reduce plastic waste in their community.

4. Participants' profile

Over 40 students, mostly from farming families, took part. Many had never had the chance to work with advanced technologies. For them, the workshop was both an environmental and a cultural experience, connecting innovation with traditional forms of creative expression.

5. Learning outcomes

- **Knowledge:** students understood the impact of plastic pollution and the importance of recycling.
 - **Skills:** creativity, teamwork, communication, and digital literacy.
 - **Attitudes:** motivation to act against plastic pollution, pride in their artistic creations, empathy for the environment.
-

6. Testimonials

- *"I will wear this bracelet to remind me that plastic can be dangerous but also useful if we recycle it."*
 - *"Now I understand why we should not throw bottles near the river."*
-

7. Impact

The workshop had visible impact: students not only created beautiful jewellery, but also expressed intentions to share the message with families and peers. The school decided to keep some of the jewellery as examples for future eco-art activities.

Conclusions

The workshops in **Bistrița and Hinova** demonstrated the power of combining technology, creativity, and environmental education in rural schools. They provided disadvantaged youth with access to innovative tools, strengthened their confidence, and encouraged them to see themselves as eco-changemakers.

By linking everyday waste with artistic and technological transformation, these activities embodied the spirit of the *Green YOUth Changemakers* project: **empowering young people to lead the way towards sustainability, no matter their background or location.**

Environmental education workshop

Gheorghe Țițeica National College, 6 June 2025

1. Context and Rationale

The *Environmental Education Workshop* took place on **6 June 2025** at *Gheorghe Țițeica National College* in Drobeta Turnu Severin, Romania.

The rationale for this activity was to provide young people with **practical, interactive learning experiences** on sustainability, recycling, and responsible consumption, while also encouraging intercultural dialogue and European values. Positioned at the end of the academic year, the workshop was an opportunity to consolidate students' environmental knowledge and reflect on their eco-habits before the summer holidays.

2. Objectives

The workshop aimed to:

- Strengthen students' knowledge about the **3Rs principle: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**.
 - Demonstrate the use of interactive and non-formal methods in environmental education.
 - Encourage students to critically reflect on their own behaviours and habits.
 - Promote cross-border dialogue and cooperation between Romanian and Bulgarian youth.
 - Inspire concrete commitments to sustainability within the school and at home.
-

3. Structure of the workshop

The session was divided into four phases:

a) Introduction –icebreaker

Volunteers introduced themselves and presented short stories

b) Interactive presentation – The 3Rs principle

Facilitators used colourful visuals, props, and real-life examples to explain the 3Rs principle. Students discussed how these principles could be applied in everyday life: reducing unnecessary purchases, reusing materials creatively, and recycling correctly.

c) Practical activities – “Waste Meter” and quiz

Two interactive methods were employed:

- *The Waste Meter Game*: students were divided into teams and given cards with different types of waste (plastic bottle, apple core, glass jar, paper bag, aluminium can). They had to classify each item as *Reduce*, *Reuse*, or *Recycle*. The exercise provoked debate and reflection, particularly about items that could fall into more than one category.
- *Eco Quiz*: a short quiz tested students’ knowledge of environmental issues, with questions ranging from global warming to local recycling practices. Friendly competition made the activity engaging and dynamic.

d) Reflection and commitments

The workshop closed with a reflection circle. Each student wrote one eco-commitment on a card and shared it aloud. Examples included: *“I will switch to reusable bottles,” “I will help my parents separate waste at home,”* and *“I will talk to my friends about reusing notebooks.”*

4. Participants’ profile

The activity involved **28 students** aged 17, primarily from urban backgrounds but with diverse socio-economic situations. Some were already engaged in school eco-clubs, while others had little previous exposure to environmental activities. The involvement of Bulgarian facilitators added novelty and intercultural learning, as it was the first time many students had interacted directly with peers from another country in a school activity.

5. Learning outcomes

Knowledge

- Clearer understanding of the 3Rs principle and its application.
- Awareness of practical ways to reduce waste and promote sustainability in daily life.
- Insights into European perspectives on environmental education, thanks to the Bulgarian facilitators.

Skills

- Teamwork and collaboration during games.
- Critical thinking in classifying waste items.

- Public speaking when presenting eco-commitments.

Attitudes

- Motivation to adopt eco-friendly behaviours.
 - Greater appreciation of intercultural cooperation.
 - A sense of empowerment and responsibility for the environment.
-

6. Reflections and testimonials

Students expressed enthusiasm for the workshop:

- *“It was fun to play games and learn at the same time.”*
- *“I realised that we often throw away things that could be reused. I will try to change this.”*

Teachers also praised the activity, noting that it provided a refreshing, non-formal complement to the traditional curriculum and encouraged students to think beyond national perspectives.

7. Impact

The workshop had a direct impact on students’ attitudes. Many showed commitment to changing personal behaviours and influencing peers.

8. Alignment with Erasmus+ Priorities

This activity contributed strongly to Erasmus+ priorities:

- Promoting **environmental awareness and climate action**.
 - Strengthening **youth participation** through interactive reflection.
 - Enhancing **intercultural dialogue** by involving Bulgarian volunteers.
 - Encouraging **civic competences**, preparing students for responsible European citizenship.
-

9. Conclusions

The *Environmental Education Workshop* at Gheorghe Țițeica National College successfully combined environmental learning with intercultural dialogue. By using

interactive and playful methods, Facilitators inspired Romanian students to reflect critically on their behaviours and commit to practical eco-actions.

The workshop confirmed that cross-border cooperation enriches local education and that non-formal methods can have lasting impact on students' motivation and attitudes. It left behind not only knowledge and skills, but also stronger connections between Romanian and Bulgarian youth – embodying the true spirit of the *Green YOUTh Changemakers* project.

Climate change workshop

Gheorghe Țițeica National College, 18 June 2025

1. Context and Rationale

On **18 June 2025**, the volunteer team of the *Green YOUth Changemakers* project returned to *Gheorghe Țițeica National College* in Drobeta Turnu Severin to conduct an **interactive workshop on climate change**. This activity brought together **30 students**, offering them a unique opportunity to deepen their understanding of one of the most pressing issues of our time.

The rationale for this workshop was twofold: first, to strengthen students' knowledge about the scientific, social, and economic dimensions of climate change; second, to empower them to recognise their own potential as agents of change. By holding this workshop towards the end of the school year, the project team ensured that students could consolidate the information gained during previous eco-activities while engaging in critical reflection on global and local realities.

2. Objectives

- To familiarise students with the concept of climate change and its global and local consequences.
 - To highlight Romania's vulnerabilities, including extreme weather events such as tornadoes, hailstorms, and droughts.
 - To demonstrate how individual and collective actions can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
 - To promote active participation and civic responsibility through interactive tools.
 - To inspire young people to take personal commitments towards reducing their carbon footprint.
-

3. Structure of the workshop

a) Introduction

Facilitators opened with an interactive conversation: "*What do you think when you hear the words climate change?*" Students' answers ranged from "melting glaciers" and "rising sea levels" to "storms" and "hotter summers." This showed that youth already associated the concept with global and local realities.

b) Thematic exploration

The session then moved into a structured presentation, addressing:

- The definition of climate change and why it is considered a global crisis.
- The concrete impacts visible in Romania: stronger storms, tornadoes in unexpected areas, hailstorms damaging agriculture, and prolonged droughts affecting both crops and water supply.
- The importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and shifting towards renewable energy, sustainable mobility, and eco-friendly consumption habits.

c) Interactive quiz – Kahoot challenge

To make the session dynamic, facilitators organised a **Kahoot quiz** on climate change facts and myths. Students competed enthusiastically, testing their knowledge while learning new information. This method ensured high engagement, laughter, and motivation.

d) Reflection on role models

Inspired by the global youth climate movement, students discussed the example of **Greta Thunberg**. They reflected on how young voices, when united, can influence decision-makers and change public perception.

f) Practical challenge – My Carbon Footprint

g) The final part of the workshop focused on action. Students were asked: “*What concrete action can YOU take to reduce your carbon footprint?*” Their answers were diverse and inspiring, including:

- Using bicycles instead of cars.
- Reducing meat consumption.
- Saving energy at home by switching off lights and electronics.
- Planting trees and taking care of green spaces.
- Encouraging peers to recycle more responsibly.

4. Participants' profile

The 30 participants were students aged 17, from various academic backgrounds. Many had already taken part in previous eco-workshops of the project, while some were newcomers. This mix allowed for peer learning, as more experienced students supported those less familiar with climate issues.

5. Learning outcomes

Knowledge

- Clearer understanding of climate change as a systemic crisis.
- Recognition of Romania's specific vulnerabilities.
- Awareness of how personal lifestyle choices contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

Skills

- Critical thinking in analysing the causes and effects of climate change.
- Teamwork and collaboration through the Kahoot quiz.
- Public speaking when sharing eco-commitments.

Attitudes

- Motivation to adopt sustainable behaviours.
- Empowerment to see themselves as change agents.
- Solidarity with global youth movements advocating for climate justice.

6. Reflections and testimonials

Students shared their impressions at the end:

- *"I realised that climate change is not only about melting ice, it's already affecting us here in Romania."*
- *"The quiz was fun and made me learn faster. I want to join more eco-activities like this."*
- *"I used to think that only governments can stop climate change. Now I see that small actions matter too."*

Teachers noted that the workshop complemented formal lessons in geography and biology, while providing a more interactive and motivational approach.

7. Impact

The immediate impact was visible in students' commitments to change personal habits. Several expressed interest in joining the project's plogging and tree-planting actions. The

school leadership appreciated the activity and proposed to integrate climate education into their annual eco-curriculum.

8. Alignment with Erasmus+ Priorities

The workshop strongly contributed to Erasmus+ priorities by:

- Addressing **environment and climate action**.
 - Promoting **youth participation** through reflection and commitments.
 - Fostering **critical thinking and civic responsibility**.
 - Strengthening **European identity**, as students connected their actions to global youth movements.
-

9. Conclusions

The *Climate Change Workshop* confirmed that young people in Drobeta Turnu Severin are informed, motivated, and ready to act. By combining knowledge transfer, interactive games, and personal reflection, the session empowered students to recognise both the urgency of climate change and their own capacity to contribute to solutions.

This activity reinforced the main mission of the *Green YOUth Changemakers* project: to create a generation of environmentally conscious and socially responsible youth, capable of building a sustainable future at local, national, and European levels.