

**TOPIC:** The educational systems provide students with the tools necessary to become more aware of the current situation and encourage their involvement in climate justice.

The climate emergency is currently one of the most important issue of our time. People have become more aware of the situation through the use of social networks and the media coverage. These means allow them to confront with each other and make proposals to local and central governments. On the other side, since schools and universities are responsible for the education of new generations, they should develop programmes and initiatives to promote sustainability while putting the protection of the environment at the centre of the educational system. Are these projects enough to raise awareness among citizens? Or does the respect for the environment develop in different contexts?

**Argument PRO:** "The public school/university offers a wide range of opportunities, such as meetings, ordinary activities and trips to increase the awareness on climate change among students."

**Argument AGAINST:** "The public school/university does not offer the necessary opportunities to students in order to increase their knowledge on climate change."

#### Current situation and context.:

Greta Thunberg, the young leader of the movement Fridays For Future, has been able to reach thousands of young people worldwide through her activism and activity on social media. To increase the participation to the public debate, educational establishments are required to provide the necessary tools to the new generations. In fact, the UNESCO has acknowledged education as a key factor to contrast climate change. The approval of the law 92 on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 named "Introduction of civic education in schools", has motivated all Italian schools to introduce a more in-depth analysis of environmental sustainability, sustainable development and climate change for at least 33 hours per year starting from the school year 2020-2021. Nonetheless, many believe that this approach towards issues, such as active citizenship and environmental protection cannot be achieved through the instruments of formal education. It would be better for the younger generations to learn what it is wrong or not and what one should do or not at home or within their social groups outside the educational system.

#### Arguments pro:

- The school/university offers a series of activities, which aim to reinforce the connection between students and nature.
- Students can access a wide range of meetings on this issue organized or promoted by schools, both online and offline.

#### Arguments against:

- The school/university is not able to quickly adapt to the current crisis and give the right priority to the issue of climate change.
- Our daily actions matter: turning the lights off, avoiding water waste, reducing the use of ecommerce, recycling and choosing local food products are important choices. Most of the times, schools/universities do not take into consideration the power that every consumer and citizen hold.

#### Further Insights:

- The Guardian: [School curriculum fails to reflect the urgency of the climate crisis](#)
- UNESCO: [Climate Change Education and Awareness](#)
- UN News: [Climate change: educating students to fight the crisis](#)
- BBC: [Climate change: Schools failing us, say pupils](#)