

## OUR FUTURE IN PRESENT TENSE: A YOUTH MANIFESTO FOR OUR FUTURE

### Identity

We're a youth alliance spanning Italy, Greece, Austria, Slovenia, and Hungary, united for the greater good. Together, we're fueling a movement with a vision for a stable climate and a society free from discrimination and poverty. We are writing this manifesto because we believe that not enough is being done to combat climate change. We are frustrated not only by the lack of action, but also by the governments' apparent disinterest in the issue. The current environmental challenges directly impact our well-being and the sustainability of the planet we're set to inherit. We consider this an urgent situation, expressing concern about our future.

As active and mature citizens, we assert that our needs, dreams, and rights should not be degraded due to our young age. We strongly believe that addressing the issue of climate change is paramount, and our efforts are geared towards a safer world. Our mission goes beyond just making things better; we have a vision for our future and we are willing to work patiently towards that goal. Everything starts with us, the future.

Our goal is to understand the consequences of our actions and genuinely work towards saving our planet. This is our way of ensuring that our voices resonate with everyone, making a real impact. We are working together to address this issue, advocating for the well-being of future generations and those already facing the impacts of climate change.

We are willing to collaborate with anyone dedicated to resolving the issue, and we're putting forth all our efforts to push governments to take decisive action. The EU, being an interstate institution, plays a critical role in this effort. Given the gravity of the climate crisis, we believe that institutional collaboration is essential for achieving sufficient change.

The magnitude of the climate change problem calls into question our hopes for a better future. Things will worsen if we do not act soon. Recognizing that climate change affects everyone on the planet, we emphasize that we are all partners in this and must "act as if our house is on fire". The choices made at this moment will shape the quality of our lives and the world we bequeath to the generations to come. We represent the youth and emphasize the significance of acting RIGHT NOW.

### Understanding the problem

Climate change has broad-reaching impacts, notably affecting the younger generation and marginalized groups such as the homeless and those living in poverty. Disproportionately, climate change has a more pronounced effect on already disadvantaged populations, particularly in the global south. The urgency to take immediate action arises from mounting scientific evidence that climate change is accelerating, leading to extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and threats to biodiversity.

Ecosystem degradation results in the extinction of species, disrupting the order in the biosphere. Viruses affecting trees pose a threat to biodiversity, compounding the environmental challenges. Elevated carbon dioxide levels contribute to health issues like lung cancer, while microplastics in oceans find their way into homes.

Rising temperatures lead to water scarcity, triggering climate migration and conflicts over resources, fueling socioeconomic issues. Climate migration can exacerbate problems like overpopulated cities and social-cultural challenges.

Entire islands and coastal cities face erasure, with barriers proving both costly and insufficient. Many nations struggle to find clean energy solutions, emphasizing the need for affordable green alternatives. Natural resources are being depleted, while demand from a growing population continues to rise.

Current conditions, such as the delayed onset of winter in November, indicate unnatural circumstances. Environmental imbalances, as witnessed in Slovenia, Italy, and Greece this year, have exposed unprepared mechanisms, leading to severe consequences like floods and wildfires that have resulted in numerous casualties. Long-term effects, including irreversible environmental destruction, are evident.

Widespread ignorance and lack of education contribute to the misconception that climate change is not an immediate concern. Failure to act promptly worsens the situation. At the same time, eco-anxiety is increasingly affecting young individuals, contributing to a distinctive perspective on the challenges ahead.

The root cause of natural disasters lies in a post-industrial society that prioritizes individual gains over shared environmental well-being. If things continue like this, sustaining the global population becomes increasingly challenging. Politicians, being in positions of power, must be held accountable as they can make a substantial difference.

### **Vision for the future**

Our vision starts with a society guided by ecological values rather than the pursuit of profit. We want to create a landscape where greenwashing, no longer exists. We envision a future, where individuals take action not out of obligation but because they genuinely want to make a difference. A future where each of us contributes a small part to collectively preserve the planet. A future where humans coexist with nature, fostering connection without causing harm.

We envision a community founded on ecological principles, where governments mandate significant corporations to implement specific measures ensuring the safeguarding of our planet. We want governments to take proactive steps to preserve the environment, implementing concrete measures against polluting companies and major corporations, recognizing their primary responsibility, without solely relying on individual efforts. We envision a future where governments have strengthened their response mechanisms against ecological threats like wildfires and floods, enabling quick and effective reactions with the necessary technological tools. In this world, ecological crimes such as arson are treated as serious offenses, and comprehensive efforts are made to prevent and combat them. We advocate for governments motivated by prosperity rather than solely prioritizing industrial progress.

We aim for Climate action to evolve into a diplomatic tool for the EU, enhancing global compliance and cooperation in sustainable climate policies. We dream of a world where all nations collaborate to generate clean energy, working collectively towards achieving EU energy self-sufficiency.

We advocate for a future where the fast fashion lifestyle is left behind, and individuals prioritize essential needs over unnecessary purchases through mindful choices. We want to promote the use of

sustainable materials and reduce reliance on plastic items. We aim to make renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, widely accessible to all, breaking away from exclusivity for the middle and upper class.

We want to emphasize the importance of education and instilling personal values within families. We aspire to have a school at the forefront of combating climate change through advocacy and awareness. We envision a future where young individuals are eager to protest against political decisions that could harm the environment. A society with educated, informed, and critical-thinking citizens who actively voice their concerns about climate change.

We envision a future where no one has to fear losing their home or going without food and water. In our dreams for the future, there is a world free from the threat of climate catastrophes, where the word "climate change" is forgotten. We dream of a world where the safety and well-being of every individual are guaranteed, and the specter of environmental crises no longer hangs over our lives.

### **Commitment and action**

We commit to be mindful of our actions, making changes in our habits, such as reducing waste and being conscious of electricity usage. We commit to opting for public transportation over cars to minimize our environmental impact. As consumers, we vow to make informed choices, avoiding brands that exploit workers, harm the environment, or deplete resources, while also prioritizing shopping at second-hand stores and cease wasteful resource practices.

Recognizing that protecting the environment is integral to safeguarding our lives, we are devoted to this cause to ensure a better future for generations to come. Alongside environmental preservation, we acknowledge the importance of safeguarding human rights, such as the right to clean water, as part of our commitment to building a more equitable and sustainable world.

While personal changes matter, we're pushing for major, systemic shifts! We're dedicated to making companies and institutions answer for their actions. We're urging decision-makers to create laws that establish stricter boundaries for the industries and economic sectors causing the most pollution.

We pledge to support political parties advocating for positive environmental changes through our votes. We emphasize political engagement, whether by actively participating in the democratic system or exercising our right to vote. Beyond voting, we commit to joining protests to visibly demonstrate our concerns. Additionally, we will engage in social media activism by participating in relevant campaigns, calling out governments and companies practicing greenwashing. Our goal is to raise our voices collectively for a greener and more sustainable future.

Our commitment extends to educating people, especially the younger generation, through campaigns, lessons, and awareness initiatives, inspiring action across all generations. We vow to inform and educate older individuals who may not have an in-depth understanding of the issue. We pledge to be catalysts, inspiring groups of our peers by addressing the issue with them, encouraging greater environmental awareness, and motivating them to take action. We commit to embrace humanity and kindness in our actions! We commit to make our way of living a model for others. We commit to adopt a community mindset, united in our collective efforts!