

Lesson 4: Effects on youth due to climate change

Ivona Mandić & Laura Bušić



UMANO^{TE}RA
The Bosnian Foundation for Sustainable Development

SÜDWIND



CEPS Projectes Socials
<http://www.asceps.org>

Co-funded by
the European Union

Beyondthetales.org

Personal touch by Ivona and Laura

Why did you focus on this particular topic? Why do you find it important? What is the reason you think learners in this module should get familiar with the topic? How do you think knowing what you wrote can contribute to change?

We focused on this topic because, with all the overwhelming information, it is important to point out how it can affect health (mental and physical) and what "tools" the health system allows us to better deal with it. There's been a lot of care and sympathy put into this module and our main goal was to encourage young people to think about the environment and how it can have a big impact on our everyday lives. It was also a way of letting young people know that mental health is undoubtedly very important and that it's supposed to be taken care of.

It's a fact that these issues are one of the main topics among the newer generations, and those are problems that can affect all of us and not just individuals. Environmental pollution is a problem for all of us as a community, therefore the solution should be common, and for that reason, we cannot ignore it.



UMANOTERA
The European Foundation for Sustainable Development



CEPS Projctes Socials
<http://www.aceps.org>



Co-funded by
the European Union

Obviously, contributing to change can only be realized if a sufficient number of people proportional to the total world population decided to take a step forward. One of the solutions that is in need of discussion is raising awareness of the fact that there is no legal support for climate migrants because the legal system does not recognize them as such and cannot help them in protecting their rights. If this was discussed more often among different nations (not only those facing the problem). there is a possibility that there will be a change in their legal regulation, therefore we tried our best and point out that the only way we can help others and ourselves is by sticking together and having a voice.

"It only takes one voice, at the right pitch, to start an avalanche."

Dianna Hardy



UMANOTERA
The European Foundation for Sustainable Development

SÜDWIND



CEPS Projectes Socials
<http://www.aceps.org>



Lesson contents

Lesson 4: Effects on youth due to climate change

4.1. Climate crisis effects on mental health

4.2. Effects on physical health

4.3. Lack of legal support



UMANOTERA
The European Foundation for Sustainable Development

SÜDWIND



CEPS Projectes Socials
<http://www.asceps.org>

Co-funded by
the European Union

4.1. Climate crisis effects on mental health

The impacts of climate change on mental health are less studied, but evidence has shown the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety, sleep problems, cognitive deficits, and learning problems.

To make it easier for those who are dealing with anxiety, experts are offering this advice:

- *Have a safe place – the place where your feelings can be expressed and met with validation and support;*
- *Being active – it is proven that regular exercise can have a positive impact on the quality of life of people affected by mental problems in a way that it is reducing stress, improving our mood, and alleviating anxiety;*
- *Educating others – educating them about the importance of taking care of the environment and mental health;*
- *Emptying „Stress Bucket“ regularly – A stress bucket represents a tool whose purpose is to help us to deal with our stressors much easier and offer us options for that (good time management, doing something that we love, talking with other people, resting).*



4.2 Effects of climate crisis on physical health

- *According to the report of The World Health Organization children and youth are suffering from 80% of illnesses, injuries, and death attributable to climate change.*
- *The effects of climate change can be direct, indirect, immediate, or delayed. These types of threats are well studied and they include fatalities and injuries; heat-related illnesses; exposure to environmental toxins; infectious, gastrointestinal, and parasitic diseases that are more prevalent in warmer temperatures, and malnutrition.*



UMANOTERA
The European Foundation for Sustainable Development

SÜDWIND



CEPS Projectes Socials
<http://www.aceps.org>



Co-funded by
the European Union

4.3. Lack of legal support

Climate refugees are not provided with legal support in the context of International refugee law. The main reason is that Refugee Convention from 1951 does not recognize the term „climate refugee" but on the other hand, we can say that awareness about this problem is rising on the international level and it is calling for changes within International law.



- *Many young people feel the burden of shouldering the responsibility of climate action, which can lead to feelings of overwhelm and burnout. For those with low levels of general anxiety, climate change is found to cause them the most distress compared to other issues. While the researchers have shown that young people with lower levels of generalized anxiety are predisposed to climate worries, they found no climate distress being linked to dysfunction in day-to-day life, whereas COVID-19, for example, as we all know, had a huge impact on our lives, and made us start over in a way.*
- *Now, the grand question; why should we get involved in the first place if things are moving at such a slow pace and there's, objectively speaking, not much we can do?*

4.3. Lack of legal support

- *Climate change is a big issue and unfortunately, there are many young people in the world at this moment feeling the consequences of the same. Sea levels are rising, glaciers are melting, and vegetation zones are changing: The effects of human activity on the climate and the environment are becoming steadily clearer.*
- *Young people are not the only victims of climate change. They are also valuable contributors to climate action. They are agents of change, entrepreneurs and innovators. Whether through education, science, or technology, young people are scaling up their efforts and using their skills to accelerate climate action.*
- *“My generation has largely failed until now to preserve both justices in the world and to preserve the planet. It is your generation that must make us accountable to make sure that we don't betray the future of humankind.”- United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres*



UMANOTERA
The European Foundation for Sustainable Development

SÜDWIND



CEPS Projectes Socials
<http://www.aceps.org>



4.3. Lack of legal support

*We are sure most of us have heard about the famous young Swedish activist **Greta Thunberg**, who skipped school to show her compassion and sensibility to our planet. However, she is not the only young activist that's reached out to people all around the world regarding the topic of climate change, some other famous climate activists are;*

- ***Jamie Margolin**, a 20-year-old founder of the youth climate organization Zero Hour, an intersectional movement of youth climate activists.*
- ***Alexandria Villaseñor**, a 14-year-old climate activist. She founded the organization Earth Uprising, which educates and mobilizes young climate activists.*
- ***Helena Gualinga**, a 17-year-old activist from a small community in Ecuador in the Amazon rainforest. She spoke at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) in December, calling out world leaders for climate inaction.*

This just shows us that, in fact, no matter how old we are or how interested in this particular topic we are, we can always start speaking up and having our own voice for the greater good.



In conclusion, climate change has increased levels of uncertainty about our future and as its impacts intensify over time, one thing has become certain: We will leave the Earth to today's children and young people, and to future generations, therefore we must take care of it as such a large community.

