



Political dimension of wellbeing and nature

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Wellbeing and the relationship with nature may seem like private matters, but they are also presenting a big focus of the politics. Politics has already recognised the (maybe already irreversible) damage done to nature. Future generations will face the aftermath of climate change. Politics appeals to young people to *take the lead both in adopting more sustainable lifestyles and in creating solutions* (COE).

Young people feel the pressure and uncertainty about the future. This is expressed as a worry, which leads to many cases of anxieties and depression. They feel as if they have no saying about their future. Resilience is what is expected of them to be able to adapt to the changes (technological changes, demographic trends, discrimination, social exclusion, fake news, populism, with yet unknown effects on jobs, skills and democracies).

EU Youth Strategy set a list of 11 youth goals which contribute to better future development:

- **Connecting EU with youth:** Foster the sense of youth belonging to the European project and build a bridge between the EU and young people to regain trust and increase participation.
- **Equality of all genders:** Ensure equality of all genders and gender-sensitive approaches in all areas of life of a young person.
- **Inclusive societies:** Enable and ensure the inclusion of all young people in society.
- **Information and constructive dialogue:** Ensure young people have better access to reliable information, support their ability to evaluate information critically and engage in participatory and constructive dialogue.
- **Mental health and wellbeing:** Achieve better mental wellbeing and end stigmatisation of mental health issues, thus promoting social inclusion of all young people.
- **Moving rural youth forward:** Create conditions which enable young people to fulfil their potential in rural areas.
- **Quality employment for all:** Guarantee an accessible labour market with opportunities that lead to quality jobs for all young people.
- **Quality learning:** Integrate and improve different forms of learning, equipping young people for the challenges of an ever-changing life in the 21st century.
- **Space and participation for all:** Strengthen young people's democratic participation and autonomy as well as provide dedicated youth spaces in all areas of society.
- **Sustainable green Europe:** Achieve a society in which all young people are environmentally active, educated and able to make a difference in their everyday lives.





- **Youth organisations and EU programmes:** Ensure equal access for all young people to youth organisations and European youth programmes, building a society based on European values and identity.

However, not everything follows the ways of politics. In the paper [*Disobedient Youth: Lessons from the youth climate strike movement*](#), published in the Online library of the Council of Youth, you can find more about youth activism on climate change. [Here](#) you can find the history of such youth movements in Europe.

But how to support political changes you ask? Youth workers have several roles. They are perceived as learning supporters for the young people, but also as advocates in youth policy making and community building. What can one do to advocate for nature, wellbeing, and young people with local decision makers? In the report made by Mental Health Foundation, they have prepared some recommendations to bring it to local decision makers:

1. Facilitating connection with nature.
2. Protecting the natural environment and restoring biodiversity.
3. Improving access to nature.
4. Making green spaces safe for all.
5. Using the planning system and urban design to improve the visibility and availability of nature in every local area.
6. Developing a life-long relationship with nature.

