CCC-CATAPULT: CHALLENGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS: CHILDREN'S AGENCY TO TACKLE POLICY UNDERPINNED BY LEARNING FOR TRANSFORMATION. (CCC-CATAPULT)

INSIGHTS FROM GENOA, ITALY

KEY FINDINGS

- Young people consider scholar institution as the key driver for climate change education.

- Young people advocate the use of a variety of teaching methodologies that include innovative learning tools and a variety of learning places (formal and non-formal) such as outdoor spaces, museums, festivals and science-based outreach initiatives.

- Educators also express the necessity to attend specific training on climate change education and to transform current climate change education practices thus promoting the effectiveness of such initiatives.

- Young people express the need for their opinions/proposals to also be accepted and promoted in the context of intergenerational dialogue and also conveyed through different educational settings.

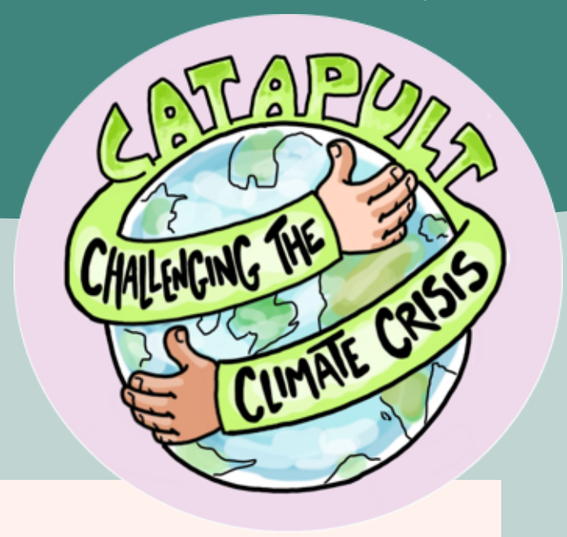
BACKGROUND

The JPI Solstice funded Challenging the Climate Crisis: Children's Agency to Tackle Policy Underpinned by Learning for Transformation (CCC-CATAPULT) project involves young people (15-18-year-olds) as researchers working with academics to examine young people's experiences of and learning around the climate crisis. This project is taking place in locations across Europe, including Bristol (United Kingdom), Galway (Ireland), Tampere (Finland), and Genova (Italy). We have recruited a diverse group of young people in each location to take an active role in both shaping the research itself and collaborating across research locations to explore the research questions.

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This policy brief presents key findings and recommendations based on the empirical evidence and the research conducted with young people, teachers in schools and other supporters of learning, as well as from workshops with local stakeholders and policymakers. It focuses on the research activities conducted in Genoa, Italy and aims to support decision-makers, practitioners, and academics working with young people on tackling the climate crisis in this area, while offering insights and lessons that can be applied in other contexts as well. In Genoa there is an opportunity to join up existing initiatives aimed at increasing urban resilience carried out by local authorities with educational activities, both within and outside the school setting.

PRINCIPLES OF CO-PRODUCTION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

A key commitment of the CCC-CATAPULT project was to ensure that the research had young people's voices central to its development and delivery. Hence, in the early stages of the project delivery, the project team recruited a group of young people, between 15-18 years old, as co-producers of the research. These young people were then actively involved in longitudinal dialogue about the design of the research, its execution and delivery, its analysis, and, finally, its dissemination.

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RESEARCH METHODS

We used qualitative and quantitative research methods to establish a broad empirical basis across the different case settings. Co-production underpinned all research activities, from design to delivery and interpretation. This was achieved through Youth Action Partnership (YAP) groups.
Data collection activities conducted in the Metropolitan area of Genoa included:

- 1 survey (408 participants) distributed in 8 high-secondary schools (academic and vocational) delivered to 15-18 years-old students to examine their perspectives, experiences, values and actions in relation to climate change as well as social and environmental issues more generally.
- 8 interviews with exponents in formal education (4 teachers from different subject areas), non-formal and non-educational (4 exponents organizations, movements or associations dealing with environment, climate); the interviews focused on exploring themes related to climate change education and integration and climate change knowledge.
- 5 focus groups with high-secondary schools (academic and vocational). The focus group discussions explored three core research themes: trust and intergenerational influence in relation to climate change, the value action gap and transformative futures for addressing the value action gap.
- 2 narrative workshops involving in total 27 students from 2 high-secondary schools (1 academic and 1 vocational) divided into 4 groups. These workshops aim at exploring the “places of significance” and the “learning places” and the implications of this place-based thinking for the development of transformative learning places.
- 1 policy workshop involving 14 attendees, including exponents of the local authorities, academics, educators (formal and non-formal), young associations and few members of the local YAP. The main objective of the initiative was to discuss on the potential learning places to fill the value-action gap in the local context of municipality of Genoa as well as the Liguria Region.

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YOUNG PEOPLE ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE

The survey results provide an initial overview of the views of the young people in relation to various issues associated with climate change. In the Genoa context, students involved in this first empirical activity (survey) recognize climate change as an important or very important environmental issue (Genoa=84%; other partner locations: Galway=86%; Bristol=84%; Tampere=66%). They also believe that addressing it requires changes or action in different sectors of society, covering both the individual and collective spheres, as well as the areas of business, national government and climate change education. Participants express interest in climate actions. Direct engagement is distributed predominantly on individual actions (e.g., recycling or reusing) rather than collective or political actions. In relation to barriers that may prevent young people from taking action on climate change; in Genoa students believe they need more information/education on climate change (Genoa=78%; total average=56%). They also recognize the importance of supports to help them get involved in climate action, including easy access to information on climate change and its impacts (Genoa=84%), skills training (Genoa=79%), and lessons/classes/activities on climate change at school (Genoa=78%).

The students, involved in the focus groups, perceive a lack of intergenerational dialogue and do not feel involved in decision-making processes. In some cases, students perceive limited attention and listening to their opinions and proposals on the issue of climate change from the old generations, and in addition, the lack of a solid knowledge base of the younger generation on the issue of climate change may contribute to making intergenerational dialogue more difficult. However, students believe that their active involvement can help address issues related to the climate crisis.

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METHODOLOGIES AND PLACES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE LEARNING

Students involved in the empirical research activities in the project framework considered the role of schools as central in driving climate change education. In particular, students pointed to areas of the educational process where action is needed to help bridge both knowledge gaps and the value-action gap on climate change. There clearly emerges a need to broaden educational approaches both in terms of tools and places of learning. Specifically, students propose to include activities and experiences based on learning-by-doing that can involve actors and places outside the educational institution and contribute to the deepening of the issue from different perspectives as well as to the development of different skills. For such transformations to be enacted, students and educators agree on the need to foster specific training paths for teachers and more generally for those involved in the process of learning about climate change.

In the project framework, the Genoa research team has stimulated the students to explore possible future scenarios of living and learning places that also include the implementation of Nature Based Solutions (NBS): solutions inspired and supported by nature, designed and managed to provide a wide range of ecosystem services such as water treatment, air quality, recreational services, and climate mitigation and adaptation.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The results obtained as part of this research project allowed to point out the following recommendations that can support future involvement and research activity on the relationship between the young people and climate change.

<u>Climate Change Education – CCE</u>

- **Adapt the CCE contents to the corresponding level of education at which it is offered by making it more and more in-depth as the level of education advances, thus encompassing a wide range of topics.**
- **Further develop climate change education activities in schools so that they are more focused on experience and action, such activities should also be implemented in collaboration with other CCE actors. This should encourage more opportunities to organize lessons on CCE outside the traditional classroom and activities that involve different experts such as researchers, practitioners, policy representatives, etc.**
- **Include NBSs as an educational tool in relation to climate change. NBSs can offer an interesting opportunity to explore climate change impacts and possible solutions with a distinctly multidisciplinary perspective, as they provide an opportunity to simultaneously examine the socio-technological and environmental aspects involved in these typologies of technical solutions.**
- **Design experiential field activities to examine interventions to mitigate the impacts of climate change at the urban scale (e.g., NBSs); these activities should include a visit and critical classroom discussion, including examples/good practices at international level.**

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Multi-stakeholder initiatives to support climate change education

- **Create a network or community of practice involving stakeholders working at the intersection of climate change education, urban resilience and nature-based solutions to promote the exchange of knowledge and best practices.**
- **Fostering synergy among similar local initiatives (e.g., resilience workshop/guidelines/nature-based workshops) by bringing them together through the creation of platforms to promote innovative educational opportunities that directly engage young people and also include their perspectives.**

Future research directions

- **Further investigate, test, and evaluate the role that Nature-Based solutions can play in strengthening climate change education.**
- **Promote knowledge on NBS and their associated ecosystem services to technicians in public authorities to support the implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.**

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FOR FURTHER READING, PAPERS, TOOLKITS AND MATERIALS, PLEASE VISIT HTTPS://CCC-CATAPULT.ORG/

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