

# REPORT OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

MARCH 2022



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland





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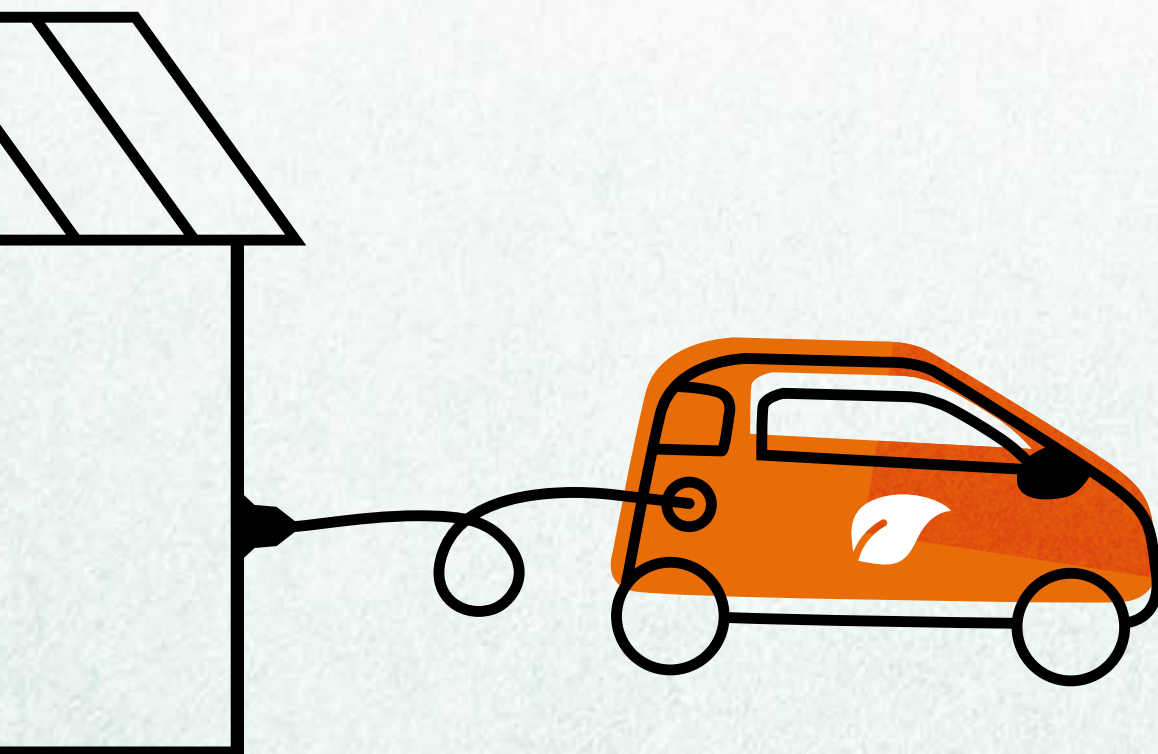
## ABBREVIATIONS

CnÓg	Comhairle na nÓg
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DECC	Department of Environment Climate and Communications
IPCC	The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MAPA	Most Affected People and Area
NDCA	National Dialogue on Climate Action
NPO	National Participation Office
PSE	Personal and Social Education
YAG	Youth Advisory Group

## LIST OF FIGURES

**Figure 1:** Example of Padlet from Activity 1

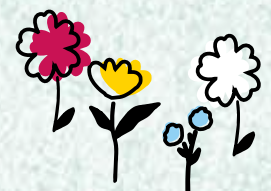
**Figure 2:** Topics with the most votes from each breakout room



## SUMMARY

### Final Recommendations for Government

Prioritised Recommendations: Transport		
What is the problem? (Situation)	What needs to happen? (Action)	What difference will this make? (Outcome)
<p>There are too many cars on the road.</p> <p>Students face barriers to cycling.</p> <p>The roads are unsafe.</p> <p>Bikes are expensive.</p>	<p>Encourage more cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike to school option.</li> <li>• Public bike share scheme.</li> <li>• Make bike lanes safer.</li> <li>• Separation of bike and bus lanes.</li> </ul>	<p>More people will cycle which will reduce use of private transport.</p>
<p>Transport was the 2nd highest sector affecting climate in Ireland in 2020. (<a href="http://www.seai.ie">www.seai.ie</a>)</p> <p><b>Public transport is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not accessible (not enough routes).</li> <li>• Not regular, reliable, or frequent enough.</li> <li>• Not connected enough, especially in rural areas e.g. suburbs or small towns not connected.</li> <li>• Need to travel into a main city to travel out again to another town. This makes it expensive, time consuming and not efficient.</li> <li>• The easiest option is always not sustainable.</li> <li>• Poor social etiquette /lack of rules enforcement on buses discourages use.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Improve public transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make public transport more appealing (reduce overcrowding).</li> <li>• Make it affordable, reliable and sustainable.</li> <li>• Use more efficient planning</li> </ul> <p>- Interconnected, regular, affordable, efficient (and sustainable).</p> <p>- More buses when young people are travelling (after school etc) to reduce overcrowding.</p>	<p>Benefits will not just be for the environment as improving public transport/cycling improves young people's health by allowing them to access rural areas for hikes and gives more opportunity for socialising with friends.</p>





## Prioritised Recommendations: Just Transition

### What is the problem? (Situation)

The climate crisis exacerbates existing inequalities, so we need solutions that both solve these injustices and the climate crisis. The cost-of-living green is high.

Just transition means no one should be left behind. Policies need to be inclusive and engaging.

Low-income families can barely afford to run a normal car let alone purchase an electric car. Current electric car grants are still not affordable for too many people.

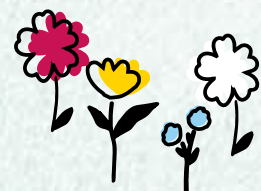
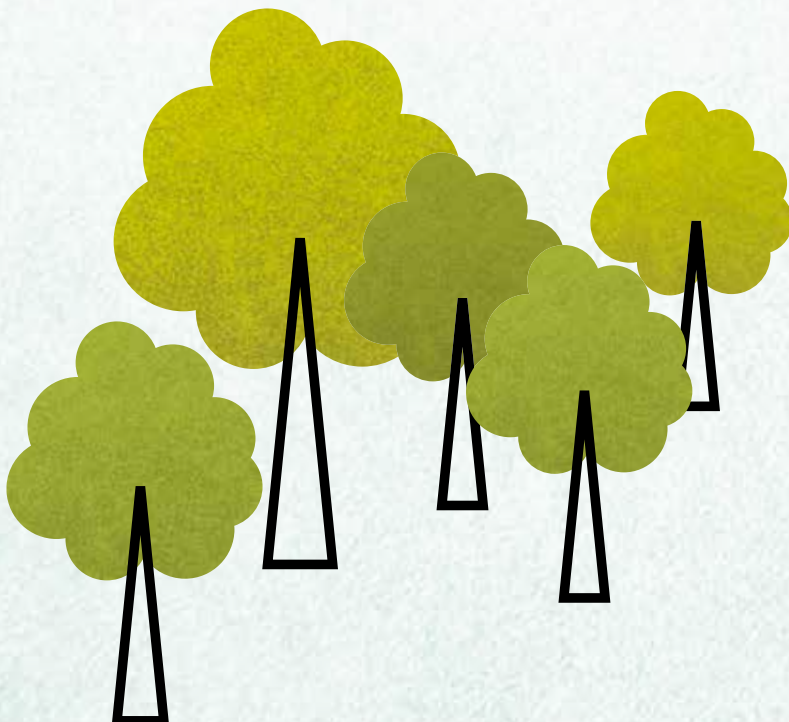
### What needs to happen? (Action)

#### Make sustainable transport more affordable

- Make e-cars an affordable option for people who live in poverty.
- Subsidise electric vehicles.
- We need better public transport to move away from relying on cars.
- Significantly stronger grants should be considered.
- More charging points.

### What difference will this make? (Outcome)

- More sustainable vehicles.
- Sustainable transport will be more accessible to those with lower incomes.
- Incentivise green transport.
- More people move to e-cars.
- Lower carbon emissions from transport.



## Prioritised Recommendations: Agriculture

### What is the problem? (Situation)

We need to focus on sustainable agriculture sector as they have very large agriculture related emissions.

Farmers often face blame for methane released by their animals.

Farmers are very unsupported around the development of climate issues but agriculture is harshly blamed for mass produce of methane gases.

### What needs to happen? (Action)

#### Education and support for farmers

- Support the farmers who might not know much about climate change and how they are affecting the climate.
- Education is offered to farming communities about ways in which farming can be undertaken more sustainably.

### What difference will this make? (Outcome)

#### The outcome would be:

- More informed sector on farming methods in line with SDG 15 Life on Land.
- Lower methane gas and CO2 emissions on agriculture.
- Reduced blame around Co2 emissions in agriculture.

## Prioritised Recommendations: Circular Economy

### What is the problem? (Situation)

Only 2% of fabrics are recycled.

Lots of greenwashing (companies and people profit off [by]misleading members of the public [in] to purchasing/doing actions that are supposed to be green but are not).

EU eco-label not mandatory.

No standards.

### What needs to happen? (Action)

#### Mandatory standard of eco labelling in food and clothes products.

- We propose legislation standard mandatory labelling like an energy efficient label that is on electrical items for example.
- Place symbols on packaging so the consumer knows more. (e.g. Carbon footprint rating)
- European eco label that you have to apply for it. Allow consumers to vote with their wallet. It is a practical step we could take. (Model on heating system)

### What difference will this make? (Outcome)

- More sustainable decisions/purchases
- Less landfill
- Informed consumer choices
- Regulation in fashion
- Shifts burden of emissions to corporations rather than consumers
- Discourages greenwashing
- Incentivises more sustainable manufacturing practices



## Prioritised Recommendations: Communication, Engagement & Climate Literacy

### What is the problem? (Situation)

Younger generation need to be engaged as it affects them.

### What needs to happen? (Action)

#### Support vote for 16 year olds

To support a bill to reduce the voting age to 16. The UNCRC states that young people have a right to a voice. Young people would advocate for change.

### What difference will this make? (Outcome)

This will engage more people.

Young people will call for change.





## Prioritised Recommendations: Communication, Engagement & Climate Literacy

### What is the problem? (Situation)

We need to be literate about climate action before we can work together.

Information on Government policy (including consultations) is not available in an accessible format.

People need to be engaged and informed on decision-making.

### What needs to happen? (Action)

#### Community engagement platforms

- Introduce a platform for bottom-up suggestions by introducing community engagement platforms. For example apps/websites/text alert system.
- Accessible to all sites, to promote greater active citizenship.
- Have consultations in workplaces as well as schools

### What difference will this make? (Outcome)

This will keep people more informed and engaged.

This would support greater active citizenship.



## BACKGROUND AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

In 2020 the Government committed to establishing **Youth Assemblies** to provide children and young people between the ages of 12 and 24 the opportunity to have their say on issues that are important to them. The messages and recommendations emerging from the National Youth Assemblies will feed into citizen assemblies and other broader citizen consultations, and will inform Government policy including climate, digitalisation, and rural development. Additionally, the National Youth Assembly of Ireland may consider other issues of importance to young people and their future.

### THE FIRST NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

The establishment of the National Youth Assembly on Climate aims to meet the following commitments for Government:

- The **Programme for Government**: Establish a Youth Assembly, with various modules to consider issues of importance to young people and their future, such as climate action, digitalisation, social media and communications, mental health and wellbeing.
- The **Interim Climate Actions 2021**: Establish a Youth Climate Council as part of the new National Dialogue on Climate Action engagement model and annual Climate Action Plan consultations, to help support future dialogue with young people.
- **Youth Participation**: Including the voice of children and young people in decisions that affect them, according to Government commitments under Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The first National Youth Assembly on Climate took place on the 2nd of March 2022, hosted by the Department for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) in partnership with the National Participation Office. The Assembly consisted of 35 young people, aged 12-24 years, from across Ireland. As the public health restrictions due to the Covid pandemic meant it was not possible to convene an in-person event, the National Participation Office worked with a Youth Advisory Group of 8 young people to co-design the online interactive event.

As well as providing the delegates with information packs in advance of the Assembly, in February 2022 DCEDIY hosted an information session to help prepare for the Assembly. At the preparation session, delegates heard from DECC and guest speakers including two climate scientists, Prof John Sweeney NUI Maynooth and Dr Cara Augustenborg University College Dublin, and two young climate activists, Finlay Thomson member of Foróige's eCollective and Treasa Cadogan UN Youth Delegate for Ireland. There was also a workshop for delegates to develop their capacity to construct actionable recommendations to be considered by the Government.

The first National Youth Assembly on Climate was opened by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman T.D., who welcomed the young delegates to the Assembly and emphasised the Government's commitment to listening to children's and young people's views. The final session of the day was attended by the Minister for Environment Climate and Communications, Mr Eamon Ryan, who engaged with delegates at the end of the day, discussed climate action and listened to their recommendations.



## Box 1: National Youth Assembly on Climate 2nd March 2022

**Question 1:** When you hear the word 'Climate' what do you think of?

**Question 2:** What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland?

**Question 3:** What do you recommend the Government should do to address the priority areas?

### Activities

**Activity 1:** Open Space: In this activity delegates shared their top 5 thoughts on the word 'climate'.

**Activity 2:** World Café: In breakout groups the young people identified and discussed some of the key issues and concerns. This activity generated 24 themes which were prioritised to four issues for the final activity.

**Activity 3:** Development of recommendations: In the third activity, the young people identified recommendations and actions that might be taken under each of the four topics. To develop the recommendations the young people focused on three questions.

What is the problem?

What needs to happen?

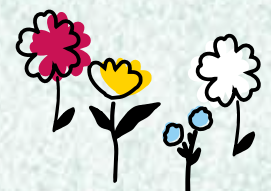
What difference this will make?

### QUESTION 1:

#### WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD 'CLIMATE' WHAT DO YOU THINK OF?

The words the young people used to describe the word 'climate' included:

- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- Climate justice
- Pollution
- Renewable energy
- Recycling
- Fossil fuels
- Warming temperatures
- Weather



## QUESTION 2:

### WHAT ARE THE MAIN PRIORITY AREAS IN CLIMATE ACTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN IRELAND?

For this exercise the delegates identified and discussed 20 topics. These included

- Biodiversity
- Climate justice
- Climate action literacy
- Climate education in schools
- Community engagement
- Corporate responsibility
- Education
- Education and involvement
- Engagement
- Government goals and polices
- Government support/reaching targets

- Incentivise sustainability
- Initiatives
- Just transition
- Local environment
- Mental health (eco-anxiety)
- Renewable energy
- Social issues
- Sustainable lifestyle changes
- Transport
- Youth climate & leadership roles

Each group voted on the issues and prioritised four topics for further in-depth discussion. These topics were: Transport, Government Goals and Polices, Just Transition, and Community Engagement.

## QUESTION 3:

### WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO TO ADDRESS THE PRIORITY AREAS?

The young people identified a series of recommendations and actions that might be taken under each of the four topics. For each recommendation they identified the problem/or issue they would like addressed, their suggestions for action, and what difference this would make. Each group voted on up to two actions, and volunteers from each group presented their recommendations to Minister Ryan for discussion.

**The seven recommendations covered five themes:**

- Transport
- Just Transition
- Agriculture
- Circular economy
- Communication, Engagement & Climate Literacy

The event was closed by one of the Youth Advisory Group who thanked everyone for attending and contributing to the discussions.



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

In the Programme for Government and the Climate Act 2021, Ireland has committed to halving our greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest. The Climate Action Plan 2021<sup>1</sup> provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting us on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050. This plan will put Ireland on a more sustainable path; cut emissions; create a cleaner, greener economy and society; and provide protection from the devastating consequences of climate change. The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on our climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated annually, including in 2022. Themes include:

- Electricity
  - Enterprise
  - Homes and Buildings
  - Transport
  - Land Use, Forestry & the Marine
- The Circular Economy
  - Just Transition to Climate Neutral Ireland
  - Citizen Engagement & Community Leadership
  - Carbon Pricing and Cross Cutting Policies

### NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE ACTION (NDCA)

Central to the realisation of the ambitions of Climate Action Plan 2021 is the engagement and empowerment of wider society. The National Dialogue on Climate Action (NDCA), led by the DECC, is the key mechanism through which climate actions related to public engagement, participation, community action, networking and capacity building activities are delivered in Ireland.

In 2021, a series of in-depth climate conversations took place which captured the views of over 3,800 people, including inputs from 100 young people from Comhairle na nÓg (CnÓg). These conversations identified areas where people are already making changes and where they feel they lack resources to pursue these changes.

The National Youth Assembly on Climate is the first major milestone in the year long programme of activities involving young people which include:

- Climate Conversations which involve two-way dialogues across the country and a national public consultation on the Climate Action Plan.
- A National Climate Stakeholder Forum to facilitate discussion between politicians, policy makers and stakeholder on accelerating the delivery on climate action.
- Promoting climate literacy through strategic communications and building climate action into the national curriculum at primary, secondary and at third level. Educational and engagement programmes involving younger people delivered through An Taisce including Green Schools, Climate Ambassadors, and Young Reporters for the Environment.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/6223e-climate-action-plan-2021/>

## THE NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLIES

In the Programme for Government 2020, Ireland committed to establishing National Youth Assemblies to act as a consultative forum for children and young people on issues that are important to them. The role of National Youth Assembly is to provide a systematic means of capturing the voices of young people in Ireland which will feed directly into the development of Government policy.

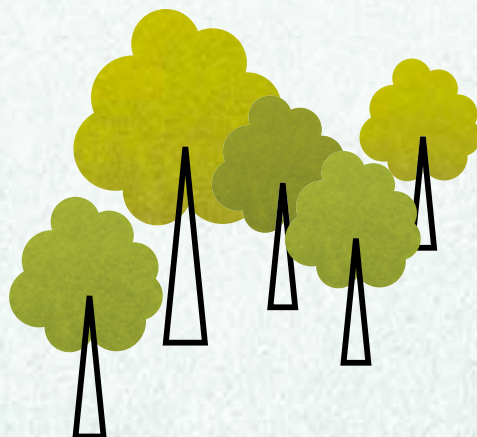
Delegates of the Assembly include children and young people between the ages of 12 and 24. The National Youth Assembly of Ireland is made up of 30 sitting delegates who take part for a term of 18 months. Delegates are nominated by CnÓg, established youth organisations and youth participation initiatives. Guest delegates are also nominated for Assemblies on specific policy areas and these are nominated by organisations that have a particular interest in the issue being addressed by the Assembly and from organisations relevant to seldom heard children and young people. The National Youth Assembly of Ireland convenes at least twice a year, once as the National Youth Assembly on Climate and once as the National Rural Youth Assembly. This also involves preparation workshops, Youth Advisory Groups and other lead-in events. The Youth Assembly may convene at other times on related issues or on other issues as required. No more than four Youth Assemblies may be convened in any year.

## THE FIRST NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

The establishment of the National Youth Assembly on Climate aims to meet the following commitments for Government:

- The Programme for Government: Establish a Youth Assembly, with various modules, including ones for rural and urban young people.
- The interim Climate Actions 2021: Establish a Youth Climate Council as part of the new National Dialogue on Climate Action engagement model and annual Climate Action Plan consultations, to help support future dialogue with young people.
- Youth Participation: Including the voice of children and young people in decisions that affect them, according to Government commitments under Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Youth Assembly on Climate provided the delegates with the opportunity to discuss the issues before developing recommendations for inclusion in the Government's Climate Action Plan at the preparation session. The Assembly took place online on the 2nd March 2022 and was hosted by the Department for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) in partnership with the National Participation Office<sup>2</sup> (see Appendix 1 for project team).



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<sup>2</sup> DCEDIY's National Participation Office works across local and national Government to build, develop and sustain structures to enable the meaningful participation of children and young people in decision making at local and national level.



## SECTION 2: STRUCTURE AND FORMAT OF THE ASSEMBLY

### 2.1 THE STRUCTURE AND FORMAT OF THE FIRST YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

To design and implement the online Assembly, the DECC and DCEDIY worked in partnership with the National Participation Office (NPO) (see Appendix 1 for membership of the Project Group). Guided by the recently published Participation Framework<sup>3</sup>, the National Participation Officers took measures to ensure that delegates were prepared for the Assembly, were supported to express their opinions, and knew how their views would be used.

A Youth Advisory Group (YAG) was established consisting of eight young people who helped co-design the format for the day and who piloted the interactive activities. Three members of the YAG went on to host the preparation session and co-facilitated the Assembly event.

### 2.2 PREPARATION SESSION FOR THE YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

To prepare for the Youth Assembly on Climate the delegates were invited to an online preparation session. This online session provided the delegates with an opportunity to get to know each other, to hear from invited speakers and climate experts, and to prepare for making recommendations to Government. This preparation session provided the opportunity to provide delegates with Space and Voice, an important part of the Lundy's model of participation.<sup>4</sup> The preparatory event also provided the delegates with the opportunity to seek clarity by putting forward written questions for DECC in advance of the Assembly (see Appendix 2a-2c for further detail).

This session commenced with a presentation from a DECC Official, Dr. Robert Mooney, who leads on Citizen Engagement, Local Authorities and Community Leadership within the Aarhus, Climate Adaptation and Citizen Engagement unit with responsibility for the Climate Action Plan. Dr. Mooney provided the delegates with an overview of the evidence on climate change and outlined some of the Government's actions in securing different voices to inform the next Climate Action Plan 2022 (see Appendix 3a for further detail).

Four invited speakers (two climate scientists and two young climate activists) made short presentations to the group (see Appendix 3b). **Professor John Sweeney** (Emeritus Professor of Geography Maynooth University) and **Dr Cara Augustenborg** (Assistant Professor in Landscape Studies and Environmental Policy in UCD) provided the delegates with some facts about climate change and its impact globally and more locally, raised some questions for the Government, and outlined a range of actions that might be taken to address climate change.

**Finlay Thomson** (transition year student and climate activist living in Donegal) and **Treasa Cadogan** (the UN Youth Delegate for Ireland and Climate Ambassador) gave inspirational presentations where they emphasised the importance of hearing from young people and encouraged delegates to use their voice to make change. Finlay talked about his recent experience in the Foróige eCollective and how interviewing guests, such as Mary Robinson, Dustin Minzter and Jedward on their podcast (Future-Proof Living) has helped to raise awareness. He highlighted the need for diverse voices in youth participation and cautioned that change takes time but starts at the individual level. Treasa talked about her experience as the UN Youth Delegate for Ireland. She provided examples of different types of decision makers to influence and talked about the importance of young people having opportunities to build up skills (e.g. CnÓg, National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), Foróige) to bring your ideas to decision makers for change for future generations. She highlighted the importance of making change for future generations and noted that Wales has appointed a Next Generation Commissioner.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://hubnanog.ie/participation-framework/>

In the second part of the preparation session, the facilitators worked with breakout groups to build the delegates' skills in drawing up recommendations. This task required each group to take a problem, to describe the Situation (i.e. why the issue is important), to suggest Actions to address the problem, and to outline the possible Outcomes (i.e. what different the actions might make) (Outcomes). This served to develop their capacity to suggest recommendations as part of the Assembly (see Appendix 3b).

At the end of the preparation session, the delegates were encouraged to send any questions they might have in advance of the Assembly. The delegates submitted 32 questions covering 19 themes (see Appendix 3c). The DECC provided detailed responses to the questions in advance of the Assembly.

## 2.3 THE FORMAT OF THE YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

### 2.3.1 Welcomes and Introductions

The inaugural National Youth Assembly on Climate convened virtually using the Zoom platform (see Appendix 4 for programme). The session was opened by Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman T.D. who welcomed the young delegates to the Assembly and emphasised the Government's commitment to listening to children's and young people's views.

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*“ I am very happy to support Minister Ryan in seeing through this commitment in the National Dialogue on Climate Action to include the voice of young people in policy-making. Young people have led the way on calling for stronger, more urgent climate action. It is imperative that we listen to their voices and heed their calls.*

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Minister O'Gorman highlighted the role that young people have played in calling for action on climate and described the Assembly as a place where the Government will continue to listen to young people. By participating in the discussions, the views of young people will inform the climate action plan and will help to safeguard the future.

After the welcomes, one of the YAG members provided a short overview of the questions asked of the Minister and his Department after the preparation session (see Appendix 3c).

### 2.3.2 Activities

The Assembly was split into four activities (see Box 1 below) design to discuss and prioritise issues and to agree recommendations for action.



## Box 1: Youth Climate Assembly 2th March 2022

### ACTIVITY 1: OPEN SPACE

When you hear the word Climate what do you think of?

### ACTIVITY 2: IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY AREAS IN CLIMATE ACTION

What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland?

### ACTIVITY 3: WORLD CAFÉ TO GAIN A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

### ACTIVITY 4: CREATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Delegates focused on Situation, Action, and Outcome.  
(see Appendix 2b)

Before the formal activities commenced the facilitators in each of the breakout rooms introduced the adults in the room, asked for the delegates to introduce themselves and led on icebreaker activities to place the delegates at ease. This activity gave the young people the opportunity to get to know each other and to 'warm up' for the online interactions.

### 2.3 WHO PARTICIPATED?

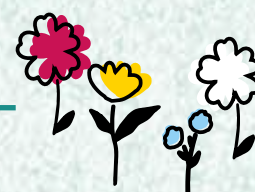
The 35 young delegates who took part came from 18 counties and represented 28 organisations (See Appendix 2 for list of counties and organisations). The Assembly consisted of 27 of the permanent delegates and 8 invited delegates. The delegates were aged between 12 and 24 years, 12 were aged between 12-15 years, 14 were aged between 16 and 17 years, and 9 were aged over 18.

### 2.4 DATA RECORDING

To ensure the views of young people were accurately recorded and presented, an independent report writer was commissioned to record the deliberations and to prepare a report outlining the young people's views and recommendations. The discussions in each of the breakout rooms were recorded on the Mentimeter<sup>4</sup> (Activity 1), Padlet<sup>5</sup> (Activities 2 and 4), and by the independent note taker.

<sup>4</sup> Mentimeter - Online polling tool

<sup>5</sup> Padlet - Online noticeboard



## SECTION 3: MESSAGES FROM THE ASSEMBLY

### 3.1 OPEN SPACE ACTIVITY

#### Box 2: Activity 1: Open Space

After the welcomes and introductions, the young people were split into smaller breakout rooms to explore the first question.

#### QUESTION 1: WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD 'CLIMATE' WHAT DO YOU THINK OF?

The delegates were asked to add their views to Mentimeter which collated their views in a wordcloud which was shared with the group for further discussion.

This exercise was to allow delegates have some 'blue sky' thinking to generate their initial thoughts on climate. Delegates were asked to list up to five words which they uploaded on Mentimeter (an online survey software) which was shared with the group as a wordcloud. This was followed by a brief discussion about some of the words selected in relation to what areas of young people's lives are affected by climate. (See Box 3 below for the outputs from each room and a summary of the discussions).

Some of the words that emerged across the four rooms were:

- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- Climate justice
- Pollution
- Renewable energy
- Recycling
- Fossil fuels
- Warming temperatures
- Weather



Recycling  
Renewable energy  
Fossil fuels  
Pollution  
Climate justice  
Weather  
Biodiversity  
Climate change  
Warming temperatures





## Room 2



### CLIMATE CHANGE

Changes in weather - recent storms in Ireland.

The impact of climate change is happening now

*Most people are still talking about climate change as if it is something in the future, further down the line.*

### BIODIVERSITY

The impact on all our lives.

*It affects every part of everyone's lives - your home, your mental health, your environment, travel, how you get food - everything will be impacted - which is scary.*









## 3.2 IDENTIFYING PRIORITY CLIMATE ACTION TOPICS

### Box 5: Developing Recommendations

#### ACTIVITY 2: IDENTIFICATION OF CLIMATE ACTION TOPICS

What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland?

#### ACTIVITY 3: WORLD CAFÉ APPROACH TO GAIN A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

The second activity was designed to explore which areas in climate action are a top priority for the delegates. Delegates were asked upload three suggestions onto a shared Padlet screen. When the young people were adding their responses, the co-facilitator grouped similar responses and suggested a title for the theme. When everyone had finished uploading their suggestions, the group reviewed the groupings, labelled the themes before discussing them further (see Figure 1 for an example of a completed Padlet screen and Table 1 for summary of themes identified in each breakout room).

The group was then asked to rank the groupings according to their top four priority areas on Mentimeter poll by ranking their preferences from 1 to 8.

Figure 1: Example of completed Padlet screen (Room 1)

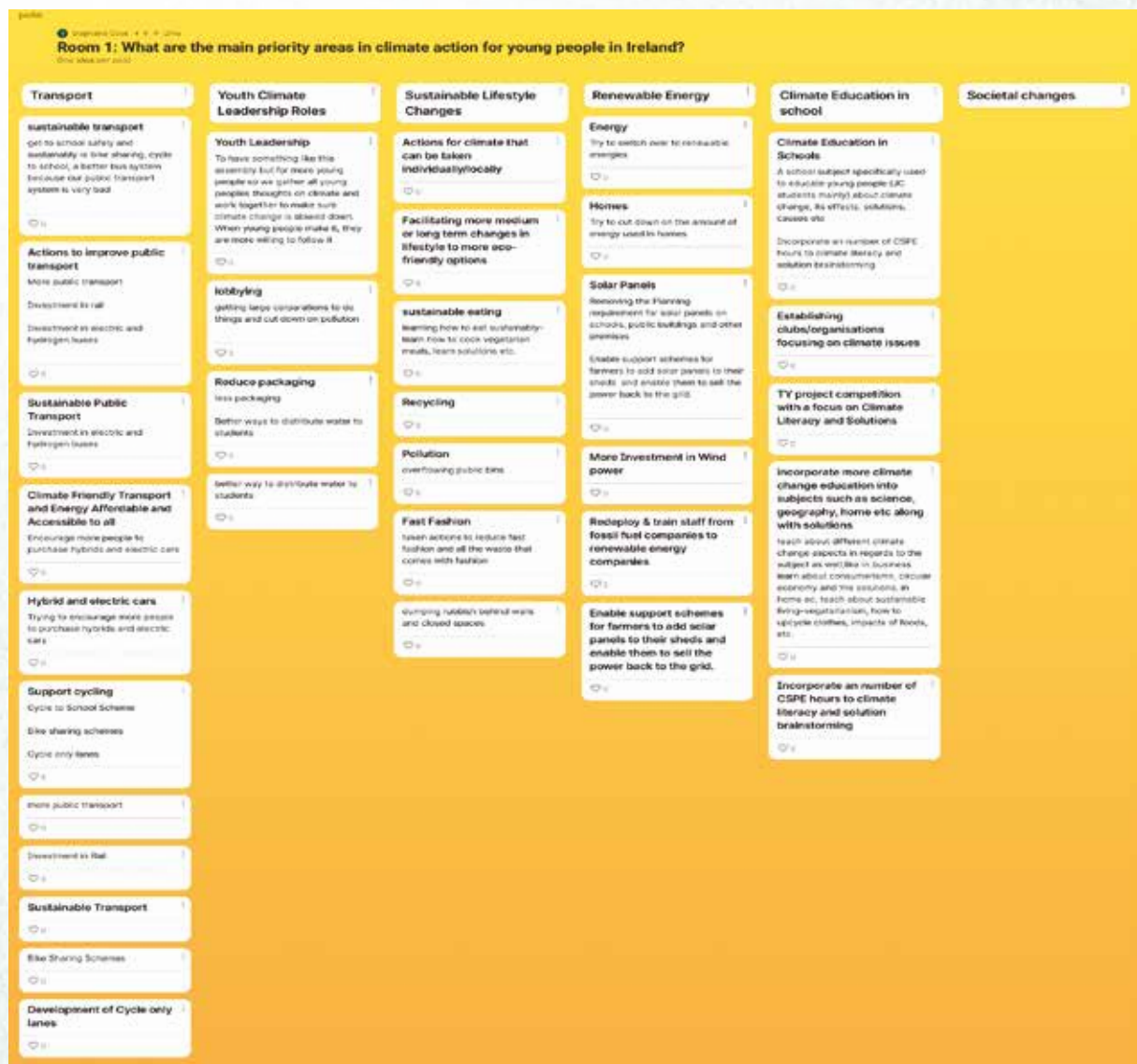


Table 1: Suggestions of topics grouped by breakout room

**ROOM 1**

Transport

Youth climate & leadership roles

Sustainable lifestyle changes

Renewable energy

Climate education in schools

**ROOM 2**

Incentivise sustainability

Local environment

Education and involvement

Corporate responsibility

Government goals and policies

Mental health (eco-anxiety)

Social issues

Climate justice

**ROOM 3**

Renewable energy

Initiatives

Climate action literacy

Engagement

Transport

Just transition

**ROOM 4**

Community engagement

Education

Just transition

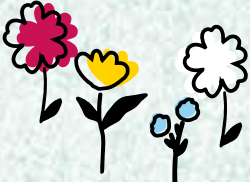
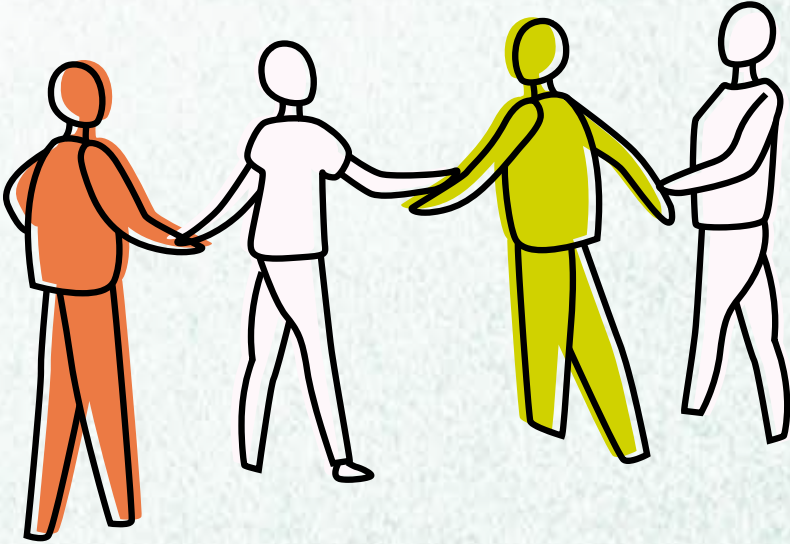
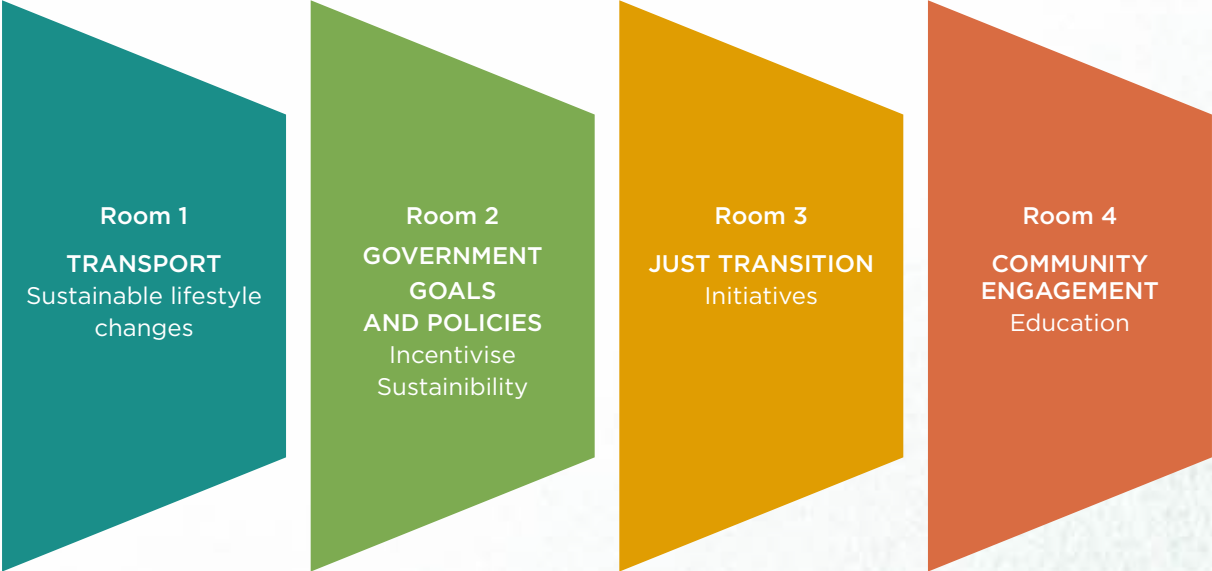
Government support/reaching targets

Biodiversity



The prioritisation exercise reduced the twenty suggested topics to eight topics (Figure 2). The topic with the most votes were selected from each room to develop into recommendations in Activity 4.

Figure 2: Topics with the most votes from each breakout room



### 3.3 RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPMENT

#### Box 5: Recommendation Development

##### ACTIVITY 4:

In the fourth activity, delegates in each room developed two recommendations focusing on the Situation, possible Actions, and Outcomes. (see Appendix 2b)

In the third activity, the World Café, the delegates continued to work in their breakout room to discuss each of the four prioritised topics:

- Topic 1: Transport
- Topic 2: Community Engagement
- Topic 3: Just Transition
- Topic 4: Government Goals and Policy

Each facilitator was assigned one topic to explore in more depth spending 15 minutes with the first breakout room, and 10 minutes with each of the remaining rooms. All the breakout rooms had a second facilitator and note taker who remained in the room for all four discussions.

When entering the room, the facilitator asked the group to consider three questions on the topic.

1. What makes this so important?  
How does it affect young people? (Situation)
2. What can be done to solve this? (Action)
3. What difference will this make? (Outcome)

The facilitators reminded delegates to be clear about their suggestions for change, as only one group will be making recommendations about the topic.

The note takers in each room recorded the deliberations from each of the four topics. The report writer combined the messages from each breakout room in table format (see Appendix 5). The messages from the topic were sorted by Situation, Action and Outcome. To provide greater clarity the report writer also grouped the messages by sub-theme to capture similar messages.

**It is important to note that some of the messages are repeated across the different topics.**



## Summary of Topic 1: Transport

### WHY IS TRANSPORT IMPORTANT?

#### High emissions

- Focus on the emissions rates for transport.

#### Public Transport

The need for regular and reliable public transport:

- Public transport used daily by young people - but it is unreliable and inefficient:
  - Buses cancelled at the last minute/infrastructure doesn't make sense, not interconnected or logical (need 'interconnected suburbs')
  - Need to add more buses etc at school start and end times/More school buses
  - Public transport = Lack of routes and/or lack of direct routes/expensive
- Easiest option not most sustainable
  - Taking a lift from parents is the easiest option
- It is unappealing
  - Public transport can be scary and frightening. There is poor social etiquette (people not adhering to Covid-mask wearing rules to antisocial behaviour).
  - They (buses/trains) are also very dirty with litter.

#### Cycling

Barriers to cycling (as an alternative to cars)

- Many barriers to cycling e.g. cost of cycling, lack of infra-structure, safety concerns.

#### Sustainable Transport

- Need to focus on sustainable public transport-not just electric cars but also electric public buses. Investment needed in electric/hydrogen rail. No green washing, this needs to be done right.
- Electric cars - expensive

### WHAT ACTIONS MIGHT BE TAKEN?

#### Public Transport

- It needs efficient planning and reliable services
  - Make it more appealing
  - The rules on buses need to be enforced regarding (adhering to Covid-mask wearing rules to antisocial behaviour).
- They (buses/trains) need to be clean and free from litter.

#### Cycling

- Address the barriers to cycling
  - Introduce incentives e.g. cycle to school scheme (similar to cycle to work scheme)
  - Bike sharing schemes throughout the country (not just Dublin centric). Should be near bus stops/trains.
- Improve cycling infra-structure
  - Bike lanes need to be made safer (urban and rural issue).
  - Bike racks important (bikes are easily stolen or vandalised) in schools and within the community.

### **Sustainable Transport**

- More incentives to move to sustainable transport (e.g. electric cars)
- More sustainable public transport options

### **Other suggestions**

- Car free Sundays should be introduced
- Smart villages & hubs can help but need for internet/broadband to work throughout the country

### **What difference will it make?**

- Improved public transport
- Reduce emissions from private car use
- Young people use public transport now. If this is properly improved, young people will have the option to keep using public transport in the future rather than getting more cars on the road

### **Cycling**

- Air quality will be improved. Health benefits of walking, cycling, and having affordable interconnected public transport-people in cities can go for a hike/get into nature

## **WHAT MAKES 'TRANSPORT' IMPORTANT?**

The facilitators asked focused questions to gain a better understanding of role played by transport on the climate, what actions might be taken to improve the situation, and the possible impact of such actions (See Appendix 5a for further detail).

For the 'Transport' topic the delegates discussed five sub-topics<sup>6</sup>:

- **HIGH EMISSIONS**
- **POOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT**
- **BARRIERS TO CYCLING**
- **HIGH COST OF SUSTAINABLE OPTIONS**
- **WI-FI/BROADBAND**



<sup>6</sup> The report writer grouped the main messages into themes.



## HIGH EMISSIONS/POLLUTION

The high emissions from transport in Ireland was discussed in one of the rooms.

---

*Focus on the emissions rates for transport (2nd or 3rd worst environmental offender in the country). If you're cycling in Dublin you really get the air pollution and it's also very dangerous. Cars and buses burn a lot of fossil fuels - this is why it is one of the main topics. Burning diesel instead of car-pooling and using public transport*

---

### **The need for regular and reliable public transport**

The delegates were concerned about the environmental impact of relying on private cars (often no e-cars) rather than sustainable public transport. Public transport was described as 'inefficient and unreliable,' resulting in parents opting for the easiest option rather than the sustainable option.

---

*Easiest option is not the most sustainable*

---

Regular and reliable public transport was considered essential for participation in activities across the lifespan (i.e., not just for children and young people). It is needed to access education (school and colleges), training, work, healthcare, social and economic activities.

---

*The problem is access to public transport. Where I live it's not existent. If there were more buses going around the countryside it might occur to people to use them rather than taking the car.*

---

One of the groups discussed the tendency for public transport to be planned towards town/city centres rather than being planned logically to connect suburbs, which means short journeys (as the crow flies) often take longer and cost more as they require two or three buses.

---

*I used to get 66 bus to college and since they changed the route it is harder, I have to get two buses. There's no direct route now, it's worse*

---

One delegate described the lack of appeal of public transport due to the overcrowding and lack of etiquette.

---

*Need rules on buses that are actually enforced regarding social etiquette (not following Covid guidance to antisocial behaviour). Public transport can be scary and frightening. They are also very dirty with litter (buses and trains).*

---

The high cost of public transport in Ireland was also discussed.

---

*The cost of transport - it should be free for most of my money goes on transport to get to college*

---

## BARRIERS TO CYCLING

Delegates described several barriers to cycle use. The lack of infra-structure to support cycle use, including the lack of safety in both urban and rural settings, was discussed. In one room delegates discussed the lack of bike racks in schools and in the community to secure, the often expensive, bicycles. This group also discussed the changeable weather in Ireland.

- Cycling can be expensive
- Cycling can be unsafe
- Not enough bike racks

## NEED TO FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

In addition to the limitations of public transport, delegates discussed the barriers to adopting sustainable options such as electric cars for personal use.

- High cost of electric cars
- Not enough charging points

---

*Not enough charging points. What happens if you live in an apartment or a house without a driveway? How could you charge then?*

---

## LACK OF CONNECTIVITY (BROADBAND)

In one group, delegates discussed the impact of commuting on the climate. This group felt if connectivity (broadband) improved this would help to reduce the need for people to commute for work.

## WHAT ACTIONS MIGHT BE TAKEN?

### The suggestions for actions included:

- Addressing the barriers to public transport
- Address the barriers to cycling
- Supporting sustainable transport
- Other actions

### Address the barriers to using public transport

Across all four breakout rooms the delegates put forward several suggestions to address the difficulties in transport and connectivity. These included:

- Improve public transport
  - More regular buses (plan timetables to match school/college starting times).
  - Have more logical systems of public transport. Connect the suburbs without the need to travel to the centre of towns/cities.
  - Add more buses etc at school start and end times. Reduce the cost of public transport.

---

*We need bus timetables that make sense  
In the countryside if you need a car you should have one  
- and eventually replace it with an electric.  
But the infrastructure should be as good as possible  
To make free public transport an urgent goal.*

---



### Address the barriers to cycling

- Infrastructure required to make cycling viable e.g. safe bike lanes: urban and rural issue.
- Introduce incentives e.g. cycle to school scheme (similar to cycle to work scheme).

---

*Bike sharing schemes throughout the country (not just Dublin).  
They should be near bus stops. If it is sunny, it will nudge people to hop on a  
bike rather than use the bus. More bike racks in schools and public spaces.*

---

### Support sustainable transport

- More sustainable public transport options.
  - More green forms of public transport.
- Electric cars need to be cheaper.
- Have more charging points

---

*It's so important to build tram routes. Give people good options.  
We need to think about inequality and different wage levels.  
Electric cars need to be cheaper. All cars electric policy by 2030  
'wishful thinking' and 'unrealistic' Without proper grants.  
Not enough charging points. What happens if you live in an apartment  
or a house without a driveway? How could you charge then?*

---

### Other actions

- Improve connectivity (e.g. broadband) to reduce need to travel to work
  - Allow more remote working (which would also take pressure off rural roads)
- Car free Sundays should be introduced
  - Work towards car free cities/Sundays

---

*We need to work towards car free cities. If you're cycling in Dublin  
you really get the air pollution and it's also very dangerous.  
In the countryside if you need a car you should have one  
- and eventually replace it with an electric. But the infrastructure should  
be as good as possible Car free Sundays . That happens in other EU cities,  
on a Sunday you need to access cities by buses*

---

### What difference will this make?

Delegates put forward a number of possible outcomes of their suggested actions which included:

- An increase in the use of public transport
- Increased uptake of sustainable cars (e-cars) and sustainable public transport which will lower emissions
- Increase uptake of cycling with the added health benefits for individual and benefits for environment.

---

*Young people use public transport now. If this is properly improved,  
young people will have the option to keep using public transport in the future  
rather than getting more cars on the road.*

---

### 3.3.2 TOPIC 2: GOVERNMENT GOALS AND POLICY

## Summary of Topic 2: Government Goals and Policy

#### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- Government has the power to translate our ideas into actions
  - We need to cut our emissions fast
  - The government has policies – they really need to stick to them
    - need for accountability
  - We need to stick to 1.5 degree rise in temperature
- Government has had some successes e.g. plastic bags, retrofitting support but more action is needed.
- Young people are concerned about the climate, and need to be involved and informed on Government's plans
- Young people need to have a voice – the Government needs to reduce the voting age.

#### WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

- Accessible information on what is happening.
- Bring in vote at 16 – to involve more young people
- Establish a climate section in every department of the government and educate the ministers on the climate crisis
- Mandate about packaging in shops, food products, clothes – symbol representing the carbon footprint.
- Policies to help businesses go green.
- Focus on need to support agriculture and develop policies and incentives to ensure a Just Transition for farmers.
- Alternative energy sources:
  - Phasing out fossil fuels.
  - Explore Hydro-electricity potential.

#### WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL THIS MAKE?\*

- Informing and involving the public in decision making at Government level will empower the public
- If the government develop an app/website where people can access their climate related policies etc. in a user-friendly language and in one space they will be more informed.
- Opening up public consultations to public spaces and workplaces will reach more people.

*\* Not all outcomes for each of the suggestions were discussed*



### Why is 'Government Goals and Policy' important?

Delegates' responses to why the **Government Goals and Policy** is important were grouped under four subthemes:

- The Government has the power
- Government action to date
- To support transition to sustainable options
- The need to address climate anxiety
- The importance of youth voice

#### The Government has the power

Delegates described the central role played by Government in translating their ideas into action. Some felt that whilst individuals doing action to be more climate aware, there is only some much that can be achieved without concerted action by Government.

---

*Government has most power to make changes.  
I think as much as people put forward ideas, government plays  
a key role in putting our ideas and proposals into practice.  
If it is going to be expensive, so it is important to know how the government will react.  
People are doing a lot - getting on top of initiatives, government are lacking,  
responsibility falls on them the most of this crisis*

---

One group stressed that it was not what actions the Government make, but also the lack of action that will impact on their future.

---

*We will be more affected by what the government doesn't do  
- rather than what they do. It will affect us for the next 50 years.*

---

Some delegates identified specific actions required by the Government. These covered exiting fossil fuels, and the importance of sticking to targets set by the scientists

---

*Exit fossil fuels early. The new IPCC report said that by 2030 we have to half our emissions.  
We need to do it even earlier, we have to put renewable energy into place year by year.  
To have emission targets in place, and that they fit the ones that are given by the IPCC scientists.  
That we meet the scientists targets that they give us.*

*I think the biggest thing should be that they commit to what they sign up to.  
It's like they put it on the back burner. You can't do a massive change overnight...  
they should be working more to move towards it (2030 goals).  
If it's extended it's just going to make it worse  
Gov should have realistic plans for climate change e.g.  
(1 million electrics on roads by 2030= unrealistic)*

---

### Government action to date

The delegates described some of the actions that Government has already taken and the benefits of these policies. These included the plastic bag ban, the support for solar panels, and the introduction of the scheme to support retrofitting homes.

### The need to support transition to sustainable transport

Echoing the discussion within the Transport theme, delegates discussed the challenges facing low-income families to make the transition to more sustainable transport.

---

*Low-income families can barely afford to run a normal car  
let alone purchase an electric car.*

---

Whilst the Government has introduced some action to help with the transition, delegates felt more action is required for people with lower incomes.

---

*Current electric car grants are still not affordable for too many people.*

---

### The need to support farmers/agriculture

Acknowledging that agriculture contributes to high volume of emissions, delegates felt that farmers needed support.

---

*Farmers are very unsupported around [becoming climate conscious]  
but agriculture is harshly blamed for mass production of methane gases.*

---

Delegates discussed how the cost of energy impacts on farmers which adds to the urgency to address some of the barriers they face to transitioning to more sustainable energy sources (i.e. install solar panels). They also need support to make the transition to sustainable farming.

---

*Farmers need to apply for planning permission to install solar panels  
Support farmers that are trying to do better with their emissions around methane  
Farmers don't like it if their opinions/needs are not taken into consideration*

---

### Climate anxiety

In one of the groups the delegates discussed people's concern about the climate and increasing 'eco-anxiety'. This group felt that Government action is needed to ensure people feel included and kept informed on what the Government's plans.

---

*Eco anxiety. Not just naming it – but if the government had a plan to tackle eco anxiety,  
if groups had a way of addressing it. I think it is something that will impact young people*

---

### Youth Voice

One group discussed young people's role in informing Government Goals and Policies, and how reducing the voting age will provide them with a greater opportunity to have their voice heard.

---

*This (consultation) shows we are fluent enough in consultations etc,  
and it should be reflected in voting as well  
Most of those who care about climate action are young people.*

---



### What action might be taken?

Delegates suggestions actions for Government Goals and Policy captured 6 themes

- Action within Government
- Support for people on low incomes
- Education and support for farmers
- Take action with large industry/companies
- Inform and involve the public
- Support vote for 16-year-olds

### Action within Government

Suggestions of actions for the Government included having someone in each Government Department to take responsibility for climate actions.

---

*I looked at a list of ministries in government and it is a topic for every ministry.  
Have one minister in each ministry to educate on climate change.  
To push it forward and educate.*

---

More generally, suggestions of actions included the Government setting and acting on specific goals (short and long term).

---

*Develop renewable energy plans now.  
Reaching the goals - you may also need to set short term goals,  
that the government has to reach every 6 months or every year.  
In project planning you have to set small goals along the way  
Climate action plan needs to include 1.5 degree goal.*

---

### Support for people on low incomes

Delegates felt that people who have lower incomes to move away from fossil fuels. They suggested that 'strong grants to support electric vehicles should be considered' and more charging points should be made available.

---

*Make purchase of electric cars more affordable*

---

### Support for agriculture and farmers

Delegates also discussed the impact of transitioning to sustainable energy for people living in rural areas who tend to be more dependent on fossil fuels for heat and transport. This would be acting on the UN Sustainable Development Goal Life on Land to support sustainable farming.

Suggested actions to support farmers included:

- Educate farmers on renewable methods e.g. how to use wind energy
- Help farmers to transition to climate friendly approaches
  - Grants to farmers who want to swap to more sustainable farming (e.g. peat farmers)
  - Remove the requirement for planning permission to put up solar panels
- Market restructuring. More organic farming pilot schemes.

---

*Support around involvement and education to the farming community on methane gas  
to make informed decisions around the cattle and sheep they decide to own.  
Support the farmers who might not know much about climate change and how they are  
affecting the climate*

---

One group suggested taking away the subsidy from fossil fuels.

---

*Put it in plans now. Some gas plants will be shut by 2023, Corrib gas is running out, we need to put renewable energy plants in place now. Take the subsidy away. Enable local communities to have their own renewable energy. Bring knowledge to the right places.*

---

Suggestions also included actions to encourage farmers and large companies to become 'greener and sustainable'.

---

*Enable them (big companies/corporations) to go green. Sometimes it is difficult for them to stay competitive. And for the government to have some standards and go green. To go green means to use renewable energy, to look at where they get their resources from. Putting in place standards of sustainability in place and human rights Incentivise farmers and fishermen to use more sustainable practices and promote biodiversity on their land and through their fishing methods.*

---

### **Take action with large industry/companies**

Some of the suggestions of Government actions focused on supporting people in general to make better choices, but also the action to regulate large corporations and industry.

---

*I feel very strongly about corporations doing their bit, the governments have put everything in place for the corporations, they now need to regulate them*

---

At a corporate level, delegates' suggestions centred actions to make large industry use sustainable energy, and sanctions if they harm the environment (e.g. carbon caps and quota). In addition to sanctions for pollution in Ireland, delegates discussed the need for tax or reparations for the global south.

---

*Legislation in place for industries in Ireland to prevent them from increasing our carbon footprint. Laws need to ensure these companies are held accountable*

---

### **Informing and involving the public**

Delegates felt that the public need to be more engaged in Government actions and policies.

---

*Remove bureaucracy around renewable energy. enable people to put renewable energy in place by giving people the knowledge, make it more accessible.*

---

Suggestions of ways the Government might inform and involve the public include:

- Introducing a platform to announce community engagement opportunities throughout the country. The platform will consist of consultations, updates on policies etc.
- Include a system that people can sign up to be kept informed on Government policies and consultations (and what happens in response to the consultations)
- Create local forums that include community representatives, counsellors, so communities have a direct link to national decision making that makes them feel they have a direct link. In agriculture, farmers have ways (to connect), they need to have a direct link to decision making.
- In the action plan when consulting with young people, ensure the hard to reach are not left behind.



---

*If they engage with the process they are more like to be engaged.*

---

**Support Vote for 16 year olds**

Delegates also suggested that as young people are likely to most impacted by climate action, they need to be involved and a greater say in what happens. One way of doing this is to lower the vote to 16 to give them a voice on issues important to them.

---

*Lowering the voting age to 16. Work needs to begin now.  
We need to see proof of it, we need to hold government accountable.  
This year and next year are crucial if the goal is to be met.*

---



### 3.3.3 TOPIC 3: JUST TRANSITION

## Summary of Topic 3: Just Transition

### WHY JUST TRANSITION IS IMPORTANT

- Source of emissions come from (50% agriculture, 20% transport)
- The role played by large corporations in carbon emissions
- The cost of being climate conscious. It is expensive.
  - People with lower income can find it difficult to make the changes needed
  - It is expensive to make old buildings more sustainable. Funding for retrofitting isn't accessible and readily available. People can't afford upfront cost of retrofitting – saving returns take too long to incentivise the switch.
- People in rural settings more likely to rely on turf and coal heating.
  - It is not fair to make fossil fuels more expensive when many can't afford to switch.
- Greenwashing. The need to recycle fabric and make informed purchasing decisions.

### WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

- Support farmers and people in fossil fuel industry to make the transition
  - Ensure those involved in fossil fuel industry are reskilled and do not lose their jobs
  - Help for agriculture and farmers transition to more climate friendly approaches
  - Provide education and support to adjust to more sustainable sources
  - Remove requirement for planning permission to install solar panel
- Support people on lower incomes make the transition
  - Subsidise sustainable energy to make it cheaper
  - Government offering incentives e.g., make electric cars more affordable, tax cuts and empowering consumers to 'vote with their wallets' by choosing green
  - Offer subsidies for more sustainable transport (electric vehicles / public transport) & more fast chargers
  - Government to provide support to retrofitting older buildings – make larger grants and loans more accessible
  - Have allowance/adjustments in taxes depending on use of sustainable sources (reduced tax for greener practices)
- Have ways to inform people on how to be more sustainable in their shopping, and that shares information on more sustainable products
  - App that shares information on sustainable product and where to buy them.
- Reduce the harm caused by fashion industry
  - End fast fashion
  - Introduce standards and ECO labels

### WHAT DIFFERENCE THIS WILL MAKE

- More just transition to sustainable energy
  - Just transition – saving money for low-income households.
  - More low-income people make the transition to sustainable energy
- Enable people and businesses to go green (people and industry) – fewer emissions
- Large industry more likely to move to sustainable energy
- Income from tax and fines to be re-directed to supporting sustainable transitions.
- Reduced greenwashing and people will be able to make more informed purchasing.



## WHY IS 'JUST TRANSITION' IMPORTANT?

Echoing the messages from the Government Goals and Policy Group, this group discussed how climate crisis exacerbates existing inequalities, and the need to find solutions that both solve these injustices and the climate crisis.

As we phase out fossil fuels which we must do quickly according to the available science, we need a just transition so that no one is left behind and their voices are represented in the decisions affecting them.

---

*We can't end this crisis of inequalities with more inequality, a just transition means the Government supports people to make changes in their life that suits them and the environment e.g. retrofitting, public transport, charging points, electric cars, renewable energy and so on.*

*As we phase out fossil fuels which we must do quickly according to the available science, we need a just transition so that no one is left behind and their voices are represented in the decisions affecting them.*

*A Just transition also includes climate reparations to countries (especially MAPA- Most Affected People and Areas within those countries) experiencing the climate crisis already that have historically been colonized and exploited.*

---

Delegates' discussions on the importance of Just Transition were captured in six sub-themes.

- The major sources of emissions (e.g. 50% agriculture, 20% transport)
- The role of large organisations
- The need to find alternative employment for fossil fuel sector workers
- The role of agriculture and support needs of farmers
- The financial cost of being climate conscious (for the individual)
- The need to recycle and make better purchasing decisions

### **Important to look at the source of emissions**

One group felt it was important to look at where the emissions are coming from to ensure there are Just Transition.

---

*Also looking at where emissions come from. Half of all emissions come from agriculture and 20% from transport. Yes it's about individual responsibility but it's about what the government does and what business does. Maybe don't put the emphasis on individuals and communities, if we want to tackle emissions then needs to be government support and structures – individuals can't make so much of a difference*

---

### **The role played by large corporations in carbon emissions**

Delegates discussed the contributions and responsibilities of large corporations. At a corporate level, large companies responsible for large volume of carbon emission. Delegates felt that some large corporations are taking advantage of Ireland's tax laws and are causing harm to the environment. The tech and fashion industries are causing harm to the environment. Corporations in the global North benefit from having goods produced in Asia, but who is responsible with the harm caused? Government overlooks carbon emissions because these companies bring investment

---

*Countless major companies still deny/downplay climate change - they cannot just be trusted to do the right thing when they still focus on profits over futures*

---

### **Alternative employment for fossil fuel sector and support for farmers**

Similar to the discussions within the Government Goals and Policies, when discussing Just Transition delegates raised the importance to support people involved in the peat industry and farmers when transitioning from fossil fuels to more sustainable sources. Farmers also need to be supported to adjust farming practices to reduce emissions.

---

*Rural Ireland tends to get the short end of the stick in the majority of choices relating to climate change with fuel prices, taxes and alongside the lack of access to any public transport save some exceptions it is hard for rural people to fully embrace climate action*

---

### **The cost of being climate conscious**

Across the groups there were discussions on the challenges (and inequities) for people to the switch to more sustainable ways of living. These challenges are being exacerbated by the increasing cost of living. Discussions centred on the challenges for people in lower incomes to make the changes required to transport and heating. As many sustainable actions (e.g. retro fitting, buying electric cars) are expensive, it is difficult for people with lower incomes to switch.

---

*Places that youth use on a daily basis - homes, etc. - may not have the funds to make themselves greener due to financial pressures  
Cost of living crisis is intensifying and may not go away for quite some time  
Current cost of living crisis is slowing action, and will take a significant time to end*

---

Related to this, some delegates felt it is unfair to make fossil fuel more expensive when not everyone can afford to switch, as this will hit the pockets of people who cannot afford the alternatives. Similarly, many people in rural areas depend on fossil fuels (for heating and travel) and they need to be supported to switch.

---

*Some people will not take action unless they can see a benefit in it for them*

---

### **Greenwashing. The need to recycle fabric and make informed purchasing decisions**

Related to the suggestions raised under Topic 2 - Government Goals and Policies, delegates discussed the need to have mechanisms to fully inform the public on how the items they purchase are produced. They noted that only 2% of fabrics are recycled.

---

*Too much greenwashing (companies and people profit off [by]misleading members of the public [in]to purchasing/doing actions that are supposed to be green but are not).  
Business and companies are advertising that they are protecting the environment without taking any [real] action*

---

### **What is needed?**

Support people employed by peat industry make transition to sustainable energy  
Delegates also discussed the impact of transitioning to sustainable energy for people employed by the peat industry.

- Find alternative employment/income for people employed in peat industry

As part of the Just Transition in the move to renewable energy, delegates felt it was important to ensure that action is taken to ensure those involved in the fossil fuel industry are reskilled and do not lose their jobs.



---

*As you move to renewable energy, important to find transition for people who will lose their jobs  
Invest more into upskilling fossil fuel workers into renewable energy skills, divest entirely from fossil  
fuels (including LNG) & start focusing now on renewable energy, not waiting for 2030  
Support farmers that are trying to do better with their emissions around methane  
Plans and assistance for small-scale farmers in doing their bit of the climate*

---

### **Support people on low incomes**

For a Just transition, people with lower incomes need to be supported. Households need more support than retro fitting, electric cars – e.g. oil and gas are very expensive, but alternatives are expensive as well. The delegates called for more incentives to encourage and support people with lower incomes to take action.

Most of the suggested actions centred on bringing ordinary people /rural people along with the climate action agenda by making it easier for them to adapt to sustainable living. Suggested actions included:

- Government offering incentives e.g., make electric cars more affordable, tax cuts and empowering consumers to ‘vote with their wallets’ by choosing green
- Offer subsidies for more sustainable transport (electric vehicles / public transport) & more fast chargers.
- Government to provide support to retrofitting older buildings – make larger grants and loans more accessible
- Subsidise sustainable energy to make it cheaper
- Have allowance/adjustments in taxes depending on use of sustainable sources (reduced tax for greener practices)

---

*Incentivise renewable lifestyles for people  
Less taxes, more incentives; promote people to act rather than penalise them.  
Stronger grants and loans that the places we interact with can benefit  
Incentives and support for those in the Rural Areas (Transport, EVs)  
Ensuring that those who work in the primary economic sector are not forgotten about  
- preventing animosity towards climate action*

---

### **Reduce the harm caused by the fashion industry**

Delegates highlighted the importance of having standards and labelling to empower people make better decisions with fashion. They called for an end of ‘fast fashion’.

---

*Introduce Standards and ECO labels for food and clothing  
End Fast Fashion  
Mandatory eco labelling- esp. for fashion*

---

The delegates called for action on ‘greenwashing’, calling on the Government to take action against it.

---

*Business and companies are advertising that they are protecting the environment  
without taking any [real] action*

---

### What difference will this make?

- More just transition to sustainable energy
  - Just transition – saving money for low income households.
  - More low income people make the transition to sustainable energy
- Enable people and businesses to go green (people and industry) – fewer emissions
- Large industry more likely to move to sustainable energy
- Income from tax and fines to be re-directed to supporting sustainable transitions.
- Reduced greenwashing and people will be able to make more informed purchasing.

## 3.3.4 TOPIC 4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Summary of Topic 4: Community Engagement

#### WHY 'COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT' IS IMPORTANT

- Climate change impacts on everyone
- The need for community involvement
- The need for information
- Young people feel marginalised pursuing climate action

#### WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

- Educate and inform communities
- Have project and spaces to bring people together
  - Have intergenerational engagement (e.g. projects similar to Tidy Towns)
  - Have guidelines to provide interested parties with advice on how best to set up community groups
- Create online and accessible platform
  - Inform people on consultations and plans
  - Provides people with a direct link to decision makers

#### WHAT DIFFERENCE THIS WILL MAKE

- People will be more informed and involved.
- This will empower them to make better choices.

#### Why 'Community engagement' is important

Within the topic of Community Engagement, the delegates discussed four sub-topics (See Table 5d).

- Climate change impacts on everyone
- The need for community involvement
- The need for information
- Young people feel marginalised pursuing climate action

#### Climate change impacts on everyone

Delegates discussed how climate change impacts on everyone, and as such everyone has a role to play in bringing about positive change.

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*If one community is doing a lot of work and the other is not,  
there is no balance and there is no real change.*

---



### **The need for community**

Across the four groups the delegates talked about the importance of having a community to bring about changes. Some talked about the importance of having a sense of belonging and control. Others talked about the importance of securing a broader community that captures different experiences and perspectives.

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*People want to feel a sense of control in what's happening in their local community, if they don't have control it could affect their mental health.*  
*I remember reading comment earlier - to make a community a global community first make it a local community.*  
*We can do big scale stuff - it starts with the community*  
*It takes more than one person, we need to work together*  
*If you don't get the communities involved you will never get anywhere.*  
*I think in some places there isn't a lot of buy in. Some people are reluctant*

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### **The need for information**

Delegates discussed the need for information to support and empower communities to work together. There was an awareness among delegates that not everyone has access to up-to-date information, and such information is not always available in accessible formats.

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*Connect communities in taking climate action, if we work as a local community we can achieve great things as a global community*  
*More dialogue events like this- but open to more people of more diverse backgrounds.*  
*Citizens' Assembly style*

---

### **Young people feel marginalised**

In terms of barriers faced by communities, one group discussed how being marginalised can act against engagement with climate action.

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*You feel a bit marginalised as you are not being taken seriously, and you could lose interest that you are not getting anywhere.*  
*Sense you are doing something with a group of people, it gives you a sense of having more control.*

---

### **What needs to happen?**

Suggestions of actions to improve community engagement included activities to increase knowledge and awareness, and more opportunities to engage in climate action. Delegates' suggestions captured four sub-topics.

- Educate and inform communities
- Project and spaces to bring people together
- Create online and accessible platform to inform people

### **Educate and inform communities**

Informing and educating people was viewed to be an essential part of the process. Delegates were aware that not everyone has the same level of knowledge. This lack of knowledge was viewed to be a major obstacle to change.

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*If someone is not trying to stop climate change, they don't know enough about it.*  
*We need to be literate about it before we can work together*

---

One group suggested having climate change as a subject for school.

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*Have it on the school curriculum. We do essential development and general philosophy, and there was nothing about climate change in school. Have it as a subject, and find out how kids are feeling, engaging and enabling people in the situation  
There needs to be more time in schools dedicated to sustainability, this could be done by introducing sustainability as a leaving cert subject.  
Implement intersectional climate, environmental, and sustainability education within the curriculum.*

---

However, the importance of having education that extended beyond school education was also discussed. Young people in one of the groups talked about the importance of 'self-education' but also highlighted the importance of education for everyone in society.

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*'when you educate yourself (on climate change) then you know you have to do something.'  
'We need to educate, businesses, charities and workplaces.  
In school the minimum I was taught was greenhouse gases.  
We could have an alternative stream to educate workplaces and communities*

---

The group was aware that not everyone has access to online information to keep abreast with the topic of climate change and made suggestions of approaches to educating and informing the public. These suggestions included building on intergeneration skills and using different ways to reach all generations (e.g. social media, TV, newspapers). One group talked about good practice examples such as UNESCO initiatives and local Comhairle na nOg projects on climate (e.g. Monaghan CnÓg project on climate which looked at fast fashion, waste and different plastics).

Some delegates talked about small communities and making small changes, others wanted larger communities (e.g. county level) to call for change. A dominant message was the need to inform and empower people to take actions.

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*Empower people- provide them with information  
Accountability on reports - I know there are a lot of reports but the general public don't know what is happening- we need to hold the government accountable and we need to be able to access the reports  
Introduce a platform to announce community engagement opportunities throughout the country*

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### **Projects and spaces to bring people together**

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*Having opportunities to bring communities to meet and discuss the issues was suggested in a couple of the breakout rooms.  
A very important thing is to open up spaces to allow people to talk, to build up social spaces.  
Community centres, or groups of scouts or in school, or sports, tennis clubs.  
These groups are where social and emotional work happens.  
And climate change is dangerous to all parts of our lives.*

---



As noted above, the importance of having intergenerational engagement and discussion was raised in one of the groups.

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*All organisations in the area, cross generation, primary schools may need a separate initiative  
Involves connecting all the generations; young people are really passionate about this issue; other  
generations do not have social media – other mediums could be used like newspaper, television*

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Suggestions of ways of doing this included having initiatives similar to Tidy Towns that bring the community together.

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*Tidy Towns was a really good way to get people involved in the community  
– something similar for Climate Action*

---

Importantly, one group proposed that guidelines should be developed to provide interested parties with advice on how best to set up community groups.

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*One thing can't work for everyone. It would help if someone has a guideline on how  
to set up a community organisation, with information on who you should contact,  
how to get a group together. To take away the stress of forming a new organisation.*

---

#### **Create an online and accessible platform to inform people**

In one of the breakout rooms delegates felt that that communities needed to have more opportunities to link with decision-makers to become engaged. This group suggested the creation of platforms to engage the community and to share information on different opportunities to get involved (e.g. in consultations etc).

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*Zoom has definitely made things more accessible. Not knowing how to contact your minister.  
It gives people at home the opportunity to engage online.  
Creating local forums that include community representatives, counsellors, so communities  
have a direct link to national decision making that makes them feel they have a direct link.  
In agriculture, farmers have ways (to connect), they need to have a direct link to decision making.  
Create accessible (online) platforms so people can access and influence decision makers  
Having a platform for different opportunities. Often people want to put forward their opinion,  
and often people don't realise there are consultations and networks to do so. For example,  
Cork City have a weather warning one. People who want to sign up, that could be enabling,  
and give them a space.*

---

#### **What difference this will make?**

Delegates felt that the actions would help to have a more informed and involved community. This would empower them to make better choices.

## 3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTER

### 3.4.1 Presentations of Recommendations to Minister

Volunteers from each group presented Minister Ryan with two recommendations from each of the four topics (see Box 3).

#### Box 3: Summary of Recommendations to Minister Ryan

TOPIC	DECC THEME	RECOMMENDATION
Transport	Transport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage cycling (e.g. bike to school option, public bike share scheme, bike lanes safer)</li> <li>2. Improve public transport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it affordable, accessible and reliable.</li> <li>• Put on more buses when YP are travelling, and reduce overcrowding.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Government Policy and Goals	Transport Agriculture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. More affordable electric cars – reduce the cost and have more charging points</li> <li>4. Agriculture – sustainable agriculture is an issue, we need to focus on farmers often face blame, We recommend education is offered to farmers. To lower methane gas and CO2 emissions in agriculture.</li> </ol>
Just Transition	Circular economy  Transport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Mandatory standard of eco labelling in food and clothes products. We propose legislation standard mandatory labelling like washing machines for example. Micro plastics in washing. European eco label – you have to apply for it. Allow consumers to vote with their wallet. It is a practical step we could take.</li> <li>6. *Improve the affordability of transition to making better choices for low income families (e.g. fuel choices, transport etc) Make sustainable transport more affordable (e.g. make e cars an affordable option for people who live in poverty).</li> </ol>
Community Engagement	Community, Engagement & Climate Literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Support the vote for 16 year olds</li> <li>8. Community engagement platforms. Introduce a platform for bottom-up engagement and suggestions Accessible to all sites, to promote greater active citizenship. Have consultations in workplaces as well as schools.</li> </ol>

\*This group ran out of time so did not have a formal vote. They agreed that eco-labelling should be main recommendation. Recommendation 6 reflects the dominant messages from discussions and was mentioned briefly in the recommendation to Minister Ryan.



### 3.4.2 Discussion with Minister Eamon Ryan

Minister Ryan addressed the delegates. He talked about the current uncertainty in the world referencing the war in Ukraine and the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report. He also talked briefly about the recent experiences of the lockdown which provided people with a greater sense of our local place. The Minister then turned to the National Climate Plan, saying it will be updated every year and which will provide an opportunity for delegates' ideas to be fed into the plan.

Minister Ryan thanked the delegates for their recommendations and spent some time discussing the recommendations with the delegates.

#### **Community Engagement Platforms – How might these work?**

- The volunteer explained their rationale for this suggestion:
  - Public consultations are not accessible for all. They are online and people don't hear what happens.
  - There should be a system where you get an email with updates on policies. You very rarely hear back from consultations.
  - Often public consultations are given to schools, maybe have them at workplaces as well.
  - In the climate action plan when consulting with young people ensure the hard to reach are not left behind. If they are involved they are more likely to be engaged.

#### **Community Engagement. What's the best example where communities come together?**

- The volunteer suggested having youth and community projects come together as part of the climate action, so the hard to reach are given a space to have their input and are not left behind.
- The group are recommending multi-generational community involvement on different issues is important. The older might need to be reached in different ways if communities were working together to achieve a goal.

#### **Transport: Any good examples on the transport issue?**

- One delegate described their personal experience of overcrowding on the school bus, and suggested providing more buses at times when people are travelling to school and work would make it more efficient.
- Another described the inefficiency and cost of poorly planned transport in the city.
- Cycle to school schemes are really beneficial. People want to cycle to school and bikes can be really expensive.

#### **Just transition: Eco label**

- EU working on the environmental footprint of products. It would be good to have labels to show water use etc. to see what has been involved in the production of the product.
- The delegate described how there is zero regulation on sustainable fashion. There is a lot of green washing in fashion. A government watchdog or agency that can check manufacturing of the companies – enforcing the eco label and help set standards.
- Reduce landfill

#### **Minister Ryan asked delegates their views on ongoing change, did they think they might go back to how they were pre-Covid?**

One delegate hoped that their generation would continue to adopt changes they had made to reduce emissions.

---

*We have improved our carbon emissions as a result of Covid. It opened our eyes. A lot more people are more educated by social media, especially the 14 up age group. It opened our eyes to the dangers if we don't change. On a night out we organised a bus rather than us all getting a taxi. Small things like that make a difference. Young people don't want to regress, we will get there if we work together.*

---

- This delegate felt that Covid experience has transformed rural Ireland, particular the way people work.

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*Rather than a mass commute. There is a demand for small hubs where people can communicate and work effectively. Smaller towns are working well, and it has helped to reduce congestion in Galway.*

---

- Another delegate was less positive.

---

*' I feel my school isn't learning from Covid, we're kind of regressing, going back to old normal. We moved from busy to quiet - to having space to learn and think and reflect. I don't think we learnt much as we're trying to get back to old bustling.*

---

Some felt there wasn't the same level of engagement during the lockdown.

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*With Covid - it has not been publicised as much as before Covid.*

---

Another felt that schools had hindered the climate protests.

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*If anyone wasn't in school we would get a detention. Schools took away students' voices. Support has grown but schools are sort of taking voices away. You need support on a government level to back up young people. To a certain extent it's not about education anymore it's about teaching us to sit in line.*

---

One young person described how their school had compromised and allowed some involvement in the climate protests.

---

*My school met in the middle, we got a 6th year delegation (to go out to protest) Young people in schools are getting involved in climate change. It may not be in the media as much anymore.*

---

Delegates discussed the role of schools to educate people about climate. One described engaging conversations in personal and social education (PSE). Delegates noted the importance of having climate education within an exam subject.

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*When it's in PSE it's not taken as seriously as other exam subjects. When it's put in geography.*

---

Another delegate felt that communities do care and want to do what they can but they need more education.

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*They want to do what they can, whether it is writing or podcasts, they want to be listened to, they want the government to listen to them. Everyone wants to see action, farmers, people in power want to make sure that ...*

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The issue of eco-anxiety was raised. To address this, delegates felt that people need to know that the Government is doing something about climate change.

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*Need more talk, words, make it easy to read, use less academic vocabulary... access to those documents, you don't know how to find them, the government should make an app to find out what the government is doing on different issues. It would be useful in gathering everyday opinions.*

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### **3.4.3 Close of Event**

The event was closed by one of the Youth Advisory Group who thanked everyone and asked delegates to complete the evaluation form (See Appendix 6).

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*The establishment of the National Youth Assembly on Climate is a significant milestone in the delivery of the NDCA and the beginning of a yearlong programme of engagement activities involving people from across the country on climate action.*

*Today young delegates embraced this challenge, gave of their time to shape our future, and will play a key role in defining how we make the transition to a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable future. Minister Ryan (Press Release)*

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Membership of Project Group

Name	Organisation	Role on day
Eileen Leahy	DCEDIY	Facilitator/Presenter
Rob Mooney	DECC	Observer/Presenter
Brenda Durkan	DECC	Observer
Justina Corcoran	DECC	Observer
Renagh Hayden	National Participation Office	Facilitator
Suzanne Byrne	National Participation Office	Facilitator
Mark O Dwyer	National Participation Office	Facilitator
Stephaine Cook	National Participation Office	Facilitator
Alexis Carey	National Participation Office	Facilitator
Gavin Byrne	Foróige	Facilitator
Mary Glacken	Foróige	Co-Facilitator
Siobhan Hennessy	Foróige	Co-facilitator
Andy Neary	Foróige	Co-facilitator
Deirdre Fullerton	Insights Health and Social Research	Report writer/Note taker
Maria Herron	Independent Consultant	Note taker
Sheena McGrellis	Independent Consultant	Note taker
Maisie Cooper	Independent Consultant	Note taker



## Appendix 2: Counties and Youth based organisations represented at the Assembly

Counties	Organisations
1. Carlow	1. Candle Community Trust
2. Clare	2. Carlow Regional Youth Service
3. Cork	3. Catholic Guides of Ireland
4. Donegal	4. Climate Assembly Ireland
5. Dublin	5. Cloyne Diosiean Youth Service
6. Galway	6. Cork City Comhairle na nÓg
7. Kerry	7. Cork Comhairle na nÓg
8. Kildare	8. Crosscare
9. Laois	9. EcoUnesco
10. Leitrim	10. EEU An Taisce
11. Longford	11. Eurodirect Letterkenny
12. Mayo	12. Foróige
13. Meath	13. Fridays for Future
14. Monaghan	14. Irish Girl Guides
15. Offaly	15. Kerry Comhairle na nÓg
16. Tipperary	16. Kildare Comhairle na nÓg
17. Waterford	17. Localise Youth Volunteering
18. Wicklow	18. Longford Comhairle na nÓg
	19. Love Leitrim
	20. Mayo Comhairle na nÓg
	21. Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg
	22. Offaly Comhairle na nÓg
	23. Ogras
	24. Scouting Ireland
	25. Spunout
	26. Tipperary Comhairle na nÓg
	27. YMCA
	28. Youthwork Ireland Laois

## Appendix 3a: Preparation for the National Youth Assembly on Climate & Questions for the Minister

To prepare the delegates and build their capacity and knowledge ahead of the Assembly, in February 2022, the DCEDIY and National Participation Office hosted a preparation session with all the invited delegates. This event was co-designed by the Youth Advisory Group (YAG). The YAG had three meetings with the National Participation Office and DECC to design and test the methodologies, to plan the preparation session (e.g. guest speakers etc.).

The preparation session was hosted online on Saturday 19th February 2022. It was attended by 26 of the Youth Assembly permanent delegates and five guest delegates. The function of the meeting was to build capacity and knowledge on the topic and to prepare the delegates for the Climate Assembly, to meet the other delegates, to hear from the different Government Departments (DECC and DCEDIY), and to hear from invited experts on climate.

Three members of the Youth Advisory Group welcomed the delegates, introduced speakers, and closed the event.

The speakers included Eileen Leahy (Assistant Principal Officer DCEDIY) who outlined that the role of the DCEDIY (and of the National Participation Office) to ensure that young people's voices are heard and are given due weight.

Dr Robert Mooney, Assistant Principal Officer with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications also addressed the group and highlighted the importance of the Youth Assembly and its role in feeding into the Climate Action plan.

### Climate Change ... ... The Evidence



- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report sets out the most up-to-date physical science basis for our understanding of climate change.
- The current **changes in the planet's climate are transforming the world.**
- Each of the **last four decades** has been **warmer than any since 1850.**
- Global average temperatures **increased by more than 1°C** since **pre-industrial times.**
- **Evidence** of human influence in **warming** our climate system is **beyond dispute.**
- **Without urgent action**, global warming is likely to be more than **2°C above** pre-industrial levels **by 2060**, and **5°C** above pre-industrial levels by the **end of the century.**

### The NDCA Engagement Activities



#### National activities

- Youth Climate Assembly
- National Climate Stakeholder Forum
- Climate Conversations: Public Consultation on Climate Action
- Climate Conference, Climate Lecture Series & Support Workshops

#### Local Activities

- Local Climate Conversations
- Network and capacity building between organisations
- National Climate Conversation on Local Action



## Empowerment through co-creating solutions ... ... Climate Conversations



- In 2021, DECC held a series of Climate Conversations capturing the views of over
  - 3,800 members of the public
  - 200 individuals from 16 PPNS
  - 100 young people from 12 Comhairle na nÓg groups, and
  - 70 in-depth conversations.
- Climate Conversations articulated a public who are responsive and feel a sense of urgency.
- Enthusiasm to work with the government.
- Identified where people are making changes and where they feel they lack information, knowledge, resources, or capacity
- Asked for 'joined up thinking' and 'ambitious policies' to be reflected 'where they live'.



8 An Roinn Comhshaoil, Aeráide agus Cumarsáide | Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

### Four guest speakers made short presentations.

**Emeritus Professor John Sweeney** from Maynooth University. He has taught courses in Climatology, Biogeography, Geomorphology and Environmental Resource Management. He has served as the President of the Irish Meteorological Society and the Geographical Society of Ireland. His presentation provided the delegates with some facts about climate emergency before posing some questions and suggesting areas for action.

#### Some facts

- Everyone produces a ton of CO<sub>2</sub> per month
- The main source of the problem with climate are the developed northern countries.
- Many of the victims of the impact of climate change will come from developing countries.
  - People dependent on water
  - People living on Islands (lower sea levels)
  - These people will become refugees
- Ireland is a mirror of the Global situation
  - Continue to see rising temperatures
  - Rainfall changes in the West Ireland
  - Problems with rainfall in East Ireland
- Driving to school 170kg of greenhouse gas
- Impact of fossil fuels on wildlife
  - Curlews in bogs

#### Some questions

- Why are the projected reductions only 4.8% per year?
- Why is Ireland subsidising fossil fuel? €2 billion per year
- When will we stop using fossil gas to generate electricity?

#### Possible Actions

- Plan our landscapes to take CO<sub>2</sub> out of the air
- Stop 'GreenWashing'
- GET ACTIVE AND MAKE NOISE

**Dr Cara Augustenborg**, Assistant Prof in Landscape Studies and Environmental Policy in UCD, is an environmental scientist and media personality. She is a member of Ireland's Climate Change Advisory Council and a member of the President of Ireland's Council of State. She is also a former chairperson of both Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth Ireland.

Dr Augustenborg recorded her presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuhnuxwLMdk>

- Phase out subsidies for fossil fuel industries (use tax payers money for climate action rather than causes of climate change)
- Offer grants to change how companies operate and assist homes and industries. Rather than telling companies to change, offer financial support using tax payers money that has previously been used on fossil fuels
- Money used for fossil fuels could be used to develop sustainable transport e.g. a cycle to school scheme like the cycle to work scheme, ensure it would be available large scale (accessible for rural and urban areas)
- Invest in more cycle lanes and improve transport to reduce the heavy reliance on cars as a mode of transport
- Develop high speed-rail (make it as efficient as cars)
- Make public transport as time and cost efficient as cars
- Introduce regulations that ensure clothing that says they are sustainable, really are sustainable (similar to food sustainability labelling)
- An independent government run organisation should be introduced that ensures the sustainable labelling on clothing is trustworthy

**Finlay Thomson** is a transition year student, a climate activist and musician from North West Donegal. He is an active member of Foróige's eCollective and has helped to bring to life two seasons of their podcast series - Future-Proof Living. He contributed to Madam De Temmerman's report on "Inaction on climate change: a violation of children's rights" and also presented at the first ever "Network meeting of Contact Parliamentarians for a healthy environment" meeting which was held online.

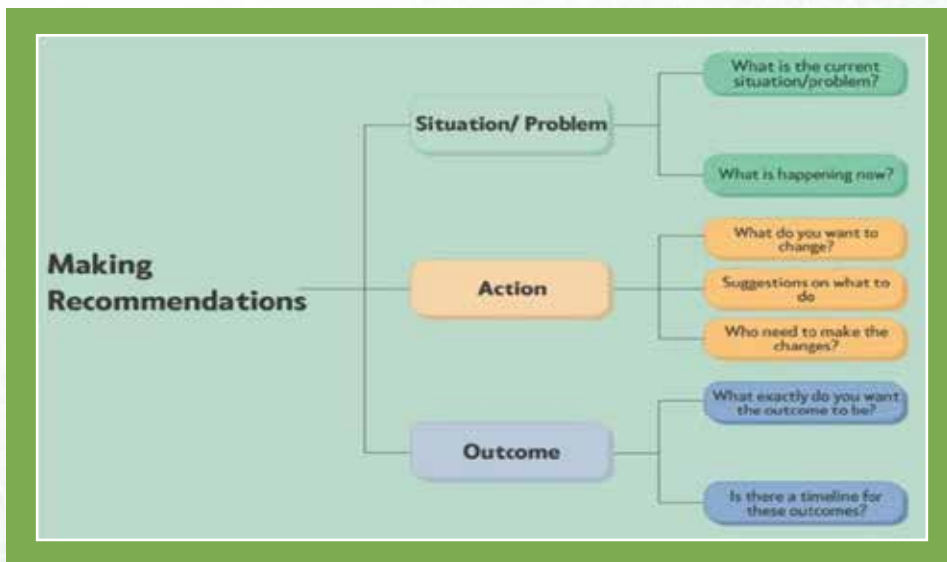
**Treasa Cadogan** is the UN Youth Delegate for Ireland. She is currently a fellow with One Young World. Treasa co-founded the UCC Fighting World Hunger Chapter, an initiative to raise awareness and create action around access to affordable, nutritious food on campus. In 2020, Treasa was awarded the Climate Ambassador Outstanding Achievement Award for her contribution to Climate Action in Ireland.

**Finlay and Treasa** gave inspirational presentations which emphasised the importance of hearing from young people and encouraged delegates to use their voice to make change. Finlay cautioned that change takes time but starts at the individual level. Treasa provided examples of different types of decision makers to influence

- Local development cooperatives (e.g. agricultural co-ops)
- Local councillors
- County councillors
- TDs etc.

She talked about the importance of using opportunities to build up skills (e.g. CNÓG, National Youth Council of Ireland, Foróige) to bring your ideas and encouraged change for future generations. She talked about the Next Generation Commissioner in Wales.





## Appendix 3c: Questions Posed to the DECC after the Preparation session.

### ■ Climate Literacy

1. Is there a plan in place to incorporate climate literacy into schools?
2. Can environmental issues/climate be added into the leaving certificate?

### ■ Shannon Airport

3. Given the US Military emits a similar amount CO<sub>2</sub> to many developed nations such as Denmark and Portugal, what is the government plan to end the use of Shannon airport as a place for the US Military to refuel their planes?

### ■ Shipping and Aviation

4. Does the government plan to include shipping and aviation emissions in climate targets and emissions tracking?
5. What is the government's plan to decarbonise aviation?
6. Will Eamon Ryan support the bill to ban LNG (Liquified Natural Gas) terminals in Ireland?

### ■ Fuel Poverty

7. What is the government plan to replace fossil fuel subsidies for those in fuel poverty with green fuel alternatives?
8. Does government have any plans/ideas for making climate action more cost inclusive for poorer communities?
9. How does the government plan on catering to all communities in Ireland e.g. poorer communities rural Ireland built up areas because their needs are so different?
10. Money will be the overwhelming deciding factor in Climate Action. The sustainable, and ecological option will be far more expensive than the current option. The same subsidies that were once applied to fossil fuels need to be applied to all sorts of ecological necessities. The people with the least will be hit hardest in all countries. Organic, local products should be continued to be promoted.

### ■ Subsidies for Fossil Fuels

11. Why are you promising to reduce carbon emissions but still using taxpayers money to subsidise fossil fuels?

### ■ Reducing Carbon Emissions

12. What measures have been put in place to reduce carbon emissions in public transport?

### ■ Climate Change Events

13. What are the events happening/ topics discussed relating to climate change in the near future?

### ■ Labelling of sustainable products

14. Why is there no regulations for companies labelling products with sustainable?
15. Does the government plan on preventing major companies unsustainably "passing on" their climate responsibilities onto individuals?
16. Is or will clothes and WEEE electrical waste be included under the waste sector of emissions - to include emissions from fast fashion etc?

### ■ Rural/Just transition

1. What is the minister doing to ensure rural areas are not left behind with initiatives? Lack of links/services?

### ■ Biodiversity

2. Biodiversity is a key aspect that should be included in the climate action plan constantly. Will biodiversity and biodiversity goals be brought into the plan more often e.g. banning hare coursing, setting up wildlife corridors around Ireland, protecting endangered species etc?
3. What are the goals being made in National Development Plans to increase biodiversity?



## ■ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

4. What is being done by the Irish government in connection to the SDGs set out by the UN, individually as a country?
5. Is reaching the 17 sustainable goals realistic in the next 8 years. If yes then what plans have the gov got in mind. If no should there be a "fine" for not reaching these goals by 2030

## ■ Climate Action Plan and Policy

6. Will timing of goals be brought forward - net zero by 2050 is too late
7. Policies as a whole take quite a while to implement however with regards to Covid, policies were implemented as fast as possible due to the direct urgency. How come this type of action is not implemented with regards to climate? It has been proven that the excuse of time does not apply anymore if we effectively use our time and resources so how come we are focusing our time and efforts elsewhere when we can tackle this issue quicker and more effectively?
8. Are there clear steps in the climate action plan which show how the reduction of 1.5 degrees will be met?
9. How do you go about you making the decisions for the climate action plan? What are the steps?

## ■ Greenwashing

10. What measures are going to be implemented to prohibit and prevent greenwashing?

## ■ Eco-anxiety

26. Eco-anxiety-will the policy consider the impact of eco-anxiety on young people?
27. Young people engaging in environmental youth work organisations are experience eco anxiety, by being overwhelmed from the individualistic responsibility on them, will a programme for tackling eco anxiety through engaging with nature and biodiversity for wellbeing be drafted alongside the climate action plan?

## ■ Alternative energy

28. Why does Ireland not use more ocean wave power when we are an island and this could be a largely effective renewable source of energy?

## ■ Agriculture

29. All actions that are taken in response to the Climate Emergency should take into account how they will be implemented. Namely (from the Rural Perspective) as bogs and peat production are being shut down, coal and peat supplies are still needed, and they are forced to be imported from other countries, causing even more pollution with transport. The same applies with the agri-industry; from conversations with Teagasc and the Galway Grasslands association, the current agri-food industry in Ireland is very efficient, compared to other nations. As we try to reduce the emission from the sector, we should not annihilate a per-established and efficient system. New innovations are being developed, and more should be done to work with agri innovators and improve literacy among small farmers in what they can do to help the cause. When dealing with the Agri Food industry, worse case scenario would be cutting down the herd rapidly, while importing food from less efficient systems that will be more polluting overall. People will still need to be fed. Action must be quick, but it must be measured and efficient.

## ■ Retrofitting

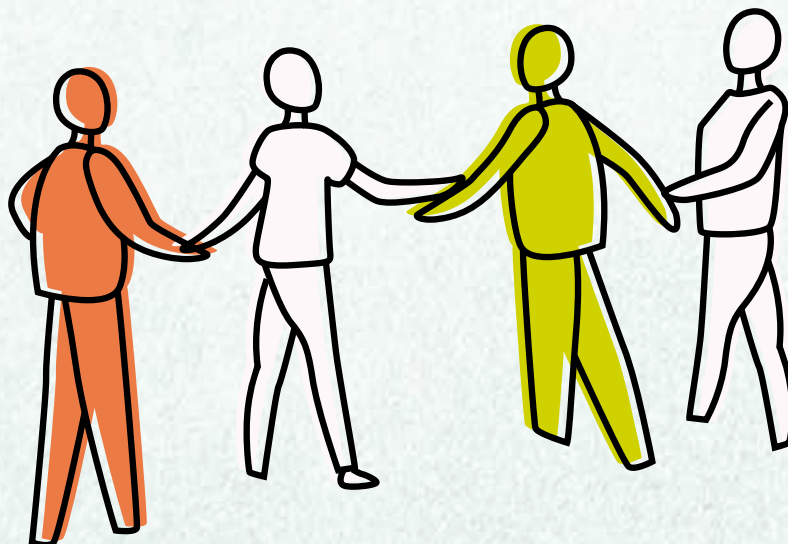
30. Getting solar panels for homes doesn't require planning permission, yet it is required for schools. The reduced costs for schools from heating oil, and the reduced emissions from burning this fuel create a win - win scenario or the environment and schools. How can we go about getting rid of this barrier, and when can we expect it to be gone?

## ■ Marine Legislation

31. How far out is the legislation for marine protected areas from being introduced and implemented?

## Links

- Climate Action Plan 2021: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Climate Action Plan 2021 \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- Climate Action Plan 2021 Annex of Actions: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Climate Action Plan 2021 \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- Programme for Government: Our Shared Future: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Programme for Government: Our Shared Future \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- The National Dialogue on Climate Action: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [National Dialogue on Climate Action \(NDCA\) \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- Biofuel Obligation Scheme: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Biofuels Obligation Scheme \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- EU Emissions Trading Scheme: [EU Emissions Trading System \(EU ETS\) \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)
- ReFuel EU Aviation: [ReFuelEU Aviation | European Economic and Social Committee \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)
- Fuel EU Maritime: [FuelEU Maritime | European Economic and Social Committee \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)
- Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation: [AFIR - zero 2050 \(cero2050.es\)](http://cero2050.es)
- International Maritime Organization: [International Maritime Organization \(imo.org\)](http://imo.org)
- The International Civil Aviation Organization: [Home \(icao.int\)](http://icao.int)
- The National Economic and Social Council: [Home | The National Economic and Social Council - Ireland \(nesc.ie\)](http://nesc.ie)
- Corporate Sustainability Reporting: [Corporate sustainability reporting | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)
- UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: [21252030 Agenda for Sustainable Development web.pdf \(un.org\)](http://un.org)
- Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Climate Action and Low Carbon Development \(Amendment\) Bill 2021 \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- National Planning Framework: [Ireland 2040 Our Plan - National Planning Framework \(npf.ie\)](http://npf.ie)
- The European Green Deal: [A European Green Deal | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)
- Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan \(OREDPA\) \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- Maritime Area Planning Act: [Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 - No. 50 of 2021 - Houses of the Oireachtas](http://gov.ie)
- The National Residential Retrofit Plan: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [National Retrofit Plan \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)







## THE NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

**Date: Wednesday 2 March 2022**

**Time: 11am – 3.05pm**

**Young People to Log on at 10.50am**

<b>11am</b>	Welcome and Housekeeping
<b>11.10am</b>	Roderic O’Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
<b>11.20am</b>	Icebreaker Session
<b>11.30am</b>	Open Space Activity - Climate
<b>11.45am</b>	Identifying Priority Areas
<b>12.15am</b>	LUNCH - 30 minutes
<b>12.45am</b>	World Cafe - Discussions on Priority Areas
<b>1.30pm</b>	Preparing Recommendations
<b>1.55pm</b>	Comfort Break - 5 minutes
<b>2.00pm</b>	Address to the Assembly by Eamon Ryan Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications and Minister for Transport
	Recommendations on 4 themes presented to Minister Ryan by Rapporteurs and conversation
	Minister Ryan’s closing remarks
<b>3.00pm</b>	Youth Participation in 2022 and closing remarks

## Appendix 4: What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland (Screenshots of Padlets)

### Appendix 4a: Room 1

**Room 1: What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland?**

**Transport**

- sustainable transport**  
get to school safely and sustainably is bike sharing, cycle to school, a better bus system because our public transport system is very bad
- Actions to improve public transport**  
More public transport  
Investment in rail  
Investment in electric and hydrogen buses
- Sustainable Public Transport**  
Investment in electric and hydrogen buses
- Climate Friendly Transport and Energy Affordable and Accessible to all**  
Encourage more people to purchase hybrids and electric cars
- Hybrid and electric cars**  
Trying to encourage more people to purchase hybrids and electric cars
- Support cycling**  
Cycle to School Scheme  
Bike sharing schemes  
Cycle only lanes
- more public transport
- Investment in Rail
- Sustainable Transport**
- Bike Sharing Schemes
- Development of Cycle only lanes**

**Youth Climate Leadership Roles**

- Youth Leadership**  
To have something like this assembly but for more young people so we gather all young peoples thoughts on climate and work together to make sure climate change is slowed down, when young people make it, they are more willing to follow it
- lobbying**  
getting large corporations to do things and cut down on pollution
- Reduce packaging**  
less packaging  
Better ways to distribute water to students  
better way to distribute water to students

**Sustainable Lifestyle Changes**

- Actions for climate that can be taken individually/locally**
- Facilitating more medium or long term changes in lifestyle to more eco-friendly options**
- sustainable eating**  
learning how to eat sustainably- learn how to cook vegetarian meals, learn solutions etc
- Recycling**
- Pollution**  
overflowing public bins
- Fast Fashion**  
taken actions to reduce fast fashion and all the waste that comes with fashion
- dumping rubbish behind walls and closed spaces

**Renewable Energy**

- Energy**  
Try to switch over to renewable energies
- Homes**  
Try to cut down on the amount of energy used in homes
- Solar Panels**  
Removing the Planning requirement for solar panels on schools, public buildings and other premises  
Enable support schemes for farmers to add solar panels to their sheds and enable them to sell the power back to the grid
- More Investment in Wind power**
- Redeploy & train staff from fossil fuel companies to renewable energy companies**
- Enable support schemes for farmers to add solar panels to their sheds and enable them to sell the power back to the grid.**

**Climate Education in school**

- Climate Education in Schools**  
A school subject specifically used to educate young people (UC students mainly) about climate change, its effects, solutions, causes etc  
Incorporate an number of CSPE hours to climate literacy and solution brainstorming
- Establishing clubs/organisations focusing on climate issues**
- TV project competition with a focus on Climate Literacy and Solutions**
- incorporate more climate change education into subjects such as science, geography, home etc along with solutions**  
teach about different climate change aspects in regards to the subject as well like in business learn about consumerism, circular economy and the solutions. in home etc, teach about sustainable living-vegetarianism, how to recycle clothes, impacts of foods, etc
- Incorporate an number of CSPE hours to climate literacy and solution brainstorming**

**Societal changes**



Appendix 4b: Room 2

**Room 2: What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland?**

*24th August 2022*

Incentivise sustainability	Local Environment	Education and Involvement	Corporate Responsibility	Government Goals and Policies	Mental Health	Social Issues	Climate Justice
<p>Accountability/transparent climate action</p> <p>Renewable life style</p> <p>More and affordable access to transportation especially in rural areas</p> <p>Stronger supports</p> <p>Finance that youth can use in a better future - financial, etc. - that not have the funds to make themselves greener due to financial pressures</p> <p>Greater loan and grant schemes?</p> <p>Increase sustainable transport options. More public transport, more accessible, increase the number of safe cycle ways.</p> <p>support farmers that are trying to do better with their emissions.</p>	<p>The quality of water itself has brought been important due to frequent storms and droughts. It puts stress on farm work and animals being outdoors.</p> <p>Corrected communities in taking climate action, if we work as a local community we can achieve great things as a global community.</p> <p>Improve green spaces in both rural and urban areas</p> <p>Combining economy</p>	<p>Evaluate an climate action</p> <p>Factor informed paper</p> <p>More youth engagement in decision making on climate action</p> <p>acknowledging the increase of non-awake in young people</p> <p>Control</p> <p>Many youths cannot vote due to age - lack of sense of control in the world</p> <p>Appropriate ways to let youth have greater control need to exist</p> <p>vote or not?</p> <p>education on climate in school</p> <p>Corrected communities in taking climate action, if we work as a local community we can achieve great things as a global community</p> <p>More awareness for the effects of climate change which the world is facing and which we will be facing.</p>	<p>make less climate efficient business pay a tax?</p> <p>cutting greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p>Putting more stress on large corporations</p> <p>support farmers that are trying to do better with their emissions around welfare</p> <p>Trust Levels</p> <p>Climate-heat companies are responsible for climate change - they cannot not be held to do the right thing when they still have in profits over failures</p> <p>Laws need to ensure these companies are held accountable</p>	<p>Can avoid from reality plans for climate change e.g. if carbon sectors are made by 2030+ unrealistic</p> <p>Strong Support</p> <p>Current cost of being green is coming online, and will take a significant time to end</p> <p>Stronger grants and loans that the prices are linked with cost benefit</p> <p>Ensuring that those who work in the primary economic sector are not forgotten about - promoting economy towards climate action</p> <p>Climate Justice</p> <p>Always better</p> <p>Support developing countries be struggling with the effects of climate change which developed countries were the main cause of.</p> <p>More action taken to prevent arrangement of climate rights</p> <p>Ensure that there is a just transition</p> <p>Ensuring that those working in the primary economic sector are not forgotten about - promoting economy towards climate action</p> <p>Control</p> <p>Many youths cannot vote due to age - lack of sense of control in the world</p> <p>Appropriate ways to let youth have greater control need to exist</p> <p>vote or not?</p> <p>Copying other government's approaches to the future</p> <p>The focus should climate change originate from local following</p> <p>An approach like the 'Intergenerational' or 'Generational Approach' which links of future generations being impacted is an example of a policy that would be great to replicate</p> <p>cutting greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p>Putting more stress on large corporations</p> <p>support farmers that are trying to do better with their emissions around welfare</p> <p>Not as a country to achieve the SDG as a member of the United Nations</p>	<p>Acknowledging the increase of non-awake in young people</p> <p>Planning for action not action - affects mental health</p>	<p>Trust Levels</p> <p>Climate-heat companies are responsible for climate change - they cannot not be held to do the right thing when they still have in profits over failures</p> <p>Laws need to ensure these companies are held accountable</p> <p>End Fuel tax</p> <p>end carbon trading</p> <p>prevent greenwashing or take action against it</p>	<p>Not as a country to achieve the SDG as a member of the United Nations</p> <p>Support developing countries struggling with the effects of climate change which developed countries were the main cause of.</p> <p>Accountability/transparent climate action</p> <p>More and affordable access to transportation especially in rural areas</p> <p>Stronger supports</p> <p>Cost of being green is coming online and may not go away for quite some time</p> <p>Finance that youth can use in a better future - financial, etc. - that not have the funds to make themselves greener due to financial pressures</p> <p>Greater loan and grant schemes?</p> <p>support farmers that are trying to do better with their emissions</p>



Appendix 4b: Room 3

public

Room 3: What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland?  
One idea per card

Renewable Energy	Initiatives	Climate Action/Literacy	Engagement	Transport	Just Transition
More use of sustainable energy	Eliminate unnecessary packaging (cancel individuality packed cheese)	Climate Action develop and increase charging points around the country	Raise more awareness eg. Make a powerful ad on tv	more fast-chargers for EVs	<b>Just Transition</b> The climate crisis exacerbates existing inequalities (eg poverty, gender inequality, heterosexuality, racism, sexism etc), so we need solutions that both solve these injustices and the climate crisis.  As we phase out fossil fuels which we must do quickly according to the available science, we need a just transition so that no one is left behind and their voices are represented in the decisions affecting them. We can't end this crisis of inequalities with more inequality, a just transition means the gov supports people (including farmers and fishermen working with the land and nature, particularly etc) to make changes in their life that suits them and the environment eg retrofitting, public transport, charging points, electric cars, renewable energy and so on.
ban on Liquid Natural Gas infrastructure being built	More bins in towns/public places	roll out the jc climate action short course to more schools	more dialogue events like this- but open to more people of more diverse backgrounds, citizens' assembly style	public transport in rural areas- more available, reliable and affordable	A just transition also includes climate reparations to countries (especially MARN- Most Affected People and Areas within those countries) experiencing the climate crisis already that have historically been colonized and exploited.
	Continued Support for Innovation on a small scale	mandatory ecolabelling- esp. for fashion		more bike paths to make cycling safer	<b>More accessibility to making the change to renewable energy</b>
	More incentives and support for those in the Rural Areas (Transport, EVs)	Legislation in place for industries in Ireland to prevent them from increasing our carbon footprint.		more street lights, make it safer for people to walk especially in winter.	electric and eco friendly adjustments affordable for working class people
	Clear plans and assistance for small-scale farmers in doing their bit of the climate			Decentralisation could help transport concerns in rural areas; instead of commutes to big cities, shorter distances to local hubs	<b>Improve market structures for organic farmers</b>
	Less taxes, more incentives, promote people to act rather than penalise them.				



Room 4: What are the main priority areas in climate action for young people in Ireland?  
One idea per post

Community Engagement	Education	Just Transition	Government Support/ Reaching targets	Biodiversity
<b>Inter-Community Engagement</b> Multiple towns contracting and liaising with each other to form organisations, associations and other groups to achieve the change they desire and seek out in a larger combined platform rather than smaller more isolated platforms.	<b>Education</b> education	<b>Just Transition</b> more liveable societies more connected communities, less air pollution, free public transport, public & green spaces, better healthcare	<b>Educate and incentivise farmers and fishers to use more sustainable practices and promote biodiversity on their land and through their fishing methods.</b>	<b>Sustainable Packaging</b> With climate anxiety levels rising, and greenwashing concerns profiting off this, there needs to be more information on product packaging about what conditions things were made.
<b>Community Engagement</b>	<b>Education Curriculum</b> There needs to be more time in schools dedicated to sustainability, this could be done by introducing sustainability as a leaving cert subject.	<b>Create local forums that include councillors, union reps, and community leaders to discuss the future of the region(s) that have lost revenue/capital over the loss of a polluting industry.</b>	<b>Government support</b>	<b>Biodiversity</b>
<b>community engagement</b>	<b>Alternative forms of Education - access for universities, workplaces, organisations, businesses, and more non academic communities</b>	<b>Train all sectors to transform into a circular economy system - create sustainable communities</b>	<b>Support the bill to decrease voting age to 16.</b>	<b>biodiversity and eco systems</b>
<b>More access to decisionmaking spaces for communities (local communities, schools, universities, workplaces, organisations)</b>	<b>Implement Intersectional climate, environmental, and sustainability education within the curriculum</b>	<b>Phase out fossil fuels &amp; expand into community energy and renewable energy</b>	<b>Legally commit to protecting and managing at least 30% of terrestrial and marine areas by 2030, while having proof of action.</b>	<b>Providing incentives to plant more flora/ native plants on land</b>
<b>Grass roots Organisations</b>	<b>Help with eco anxiety</b>	<b>Rural Ireland not Being left Behind</b> Rural Ireland. Tends to get the short of of the stick in the majority of choices relating to climate change with fuel prices, taxes and alongside the lack of access to any public transport save some exceptions it is hard for rural people to fully embrace climate action	<b>live up to the targets and reach 1.5</b> a social just CO2 budget renunciation of gas projects build a renewable energy infrastructure now instead of later	<b>Encourage them to not use pesticides. Instead promoting biodiversity in their area that acts as natural pesticides.</b>
<b>All for one common goal</b> Everyone takes accountability and action	<b>Get a climate section in every department of government Get each minister educated on the climate crisis</b>	<b>a lot more reparations for the most affected countries</b>	<b>More public transport</b> Better Dublin/metro systems to stop traffic and decrease carbon emissions	<b>Rewilding parts of the land to what originally was there &amp; increased transparency in bycatch and net usage.</b>
<b>engaging within communities and young people in socio economic disadvantaged areas around climate justice</b>		<b>find a way to tackle the emissions from agriculture in a just way</b>	<b>Prepare for future generations more effectively and efficiently</b> Promote more environmentally friendly infrastructure and habits.	<b>Biodiversity</b> Take care of wildlife on land and in water all over Ireland
<b>Introduce a platform to announce community engagement opportunities throughout the country.</b>			<b>climate action that leads up to what protects the people from all damaging and catastrophic effects that we can prevent</b>	<b>creating green spaces and encouraging interaction with nature</b>
<b>Grassroots organisations</b> More funding and facilitation for community groups such as tidy towns that are working on the ground.			<b>Invest more into upskilling fossil fuel workers into renewable energy skills, divest entirely from fossil fuels (including LNG) &amp; start focusing now on renewable energy, not waiting for 2030</b>	
			<b>having renewable infrastructure in place when gas plants and the Corrib gas field run out</b>	
			<b>treating climate change as a global and encompassing risk</b>	
			<b>enable and force companies and businesses to go green</b>	

Table 5(a) In depth discussion on Transport

Topic 1: Transport	Sub-topic	Detail
<b>What makes transport so important?</b>	High emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport is responsible for high emissions (2nd or 3rd worst environmental offender in the country).</li> <li>• Pollution from traffic</li> </ul>
	Poor public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of public transport in Ireland.</li> <li>• Inefficient public transport                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inefficient – not connected /lack of direct routes/ not enough at peak times</li> <li>• Unreliable – cancelled at last minute</li> <li>• Unappealing - overcrowded, poor social etiquette, littering</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Easiest option not always the best for the environment</li> <li>• Poor access to public transport in rural Ireland</li> </ul>
	Barriers to cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycling can be expensive</li> <li>• Barriers to cycling                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of safety (in urban and rural areas)</li> <li>• Cost of bicycles</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lack of bike racks (bikes are easily stolen or vandalised)</li> </ul>
	High cost of sustainable options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barriers to adopting sustainable transport options                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electric cars are expensive</li> <li>• Not enough charging points</li> <li>• (High cost of public transport)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Wi-Fi Broadband	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor connectivity – not reliable broadband to work from home</li> </ul>
<b>What can be done to solve this? (Action)</b>	Improve public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on sustainable public transport-not just electric cars but also electric public buses. Investment needed in Electric/hydrogen rail. No green washing this needs to be done right</li> <li>• Address the barriers to using public transport                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more bus routes.</li> <li>• Plan public transport to match need e.g. school/college starting times (e.g., change timetables/more buses)</li> <li>• Have more logical systems of public transport. Connect the suburbs without the need to travel to the centre of towns/cities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Promote cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve cycling infra-structure (e.g safe bike lanes in urban and rural areas)</li> <li>• Introduce incentives e.g. cycle to school scheme</li> <li>• Bike sharing schemes throughout Ireland (not just Dublin) which are close to bus/train stations</li> <li>• More bike racks in schools and public places.</li> </ul>



Topic 1: Transport	Sub-topic	Detail
What can be done to solve this? (Action)	Support sustainable transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have grants for electric cars</li> <li>• Have more charging points</li> </ul>
	Wi-Fi - Broadband	Improve broadband/internet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster / reliable broadband - efficient</li> </ul>
What difference will this make? (Outcome)	Using sustainable transport options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will reduce emissions</li> </ul>
	Promotion of public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people use public transport now. If this is properly improved, they will be encouraged to keep using public transport in the future rather than getting more cars on the road</li> <li>• If people use public transport, fewer private cars on roads will lower emissions</li> <li>• Air quality will be improved.</li> </ul>
	Cycling Interconnected bus systems	Health benefits of walking, cycling, and having affordable interconnected public transport-people in cities can go for a hike/get into nature
	Wifi/ broadband	Reduce the need to commute to work - reduce traffic - emissions.

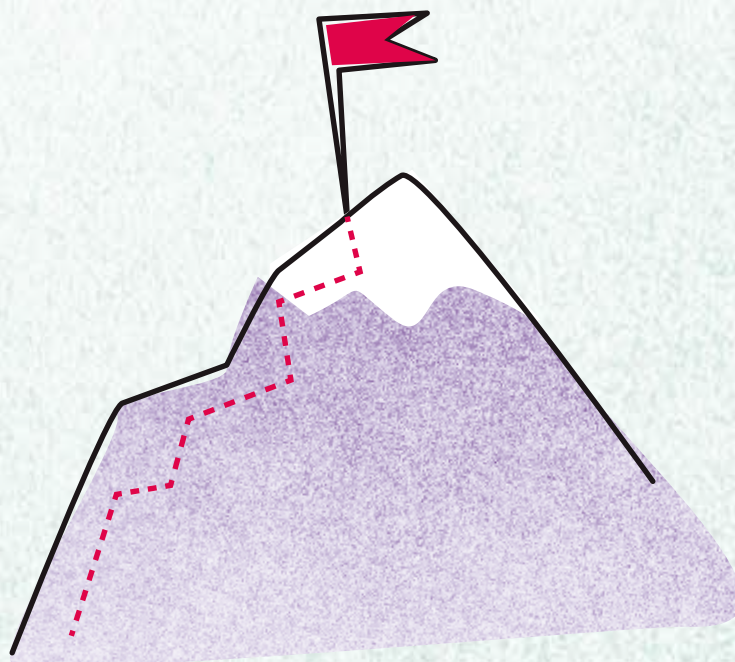


Table 5(b) Summary of Topic 2: Government Goals and Policy

Topic 4: Government Goals and Policy	Sub-topic	Detail
<b>What makes Government Policy and Goals so important?</b>	People leading the way but Government has the power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governments has most power to make changes.</li> <li>• People are doing a lot – getting on top of initiatives, government are lacking, responsibility falls on them the most</li> <li>• There is only so much that individuals can do</li> <li>• We will be more affected by what the government doesn't do – rather than what they do. It will affect us for the next 50 years.</li> <li>• If it is going to be expensive, so it is important to know how the government will react to this crisis</li> </ul>
	Examples of what government has done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar panels</li> <li>• Plastic bag ban</li> <li>• Introducing scheme to reimburse home owners for some costs of retro fitting their homes</li> </ul>
	Climate anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It affects how we think about our own futures</li> <li>• Acknowledge the increase of eco-anxiety in young people</li> <li>• Justice for all - animals, nature, everyone</li> </ul>
	Importance of youth voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many young people cannot vote due to age – there is a loss of control as a result</li> <li>• Appropriate ways to let youth have a greater control need to exist.</li> </ul>
	<b>What can be done to solve this? (Action)</b>	Inform public on Government use of income from Taxes All gov depts to take action
	Specific actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy on single use plastics</li> <li>• Introduce use of symbols on packaging to provide consumers with information (e.g. carbon footprint rating)</li> <li>• Add solar planning without need for planning permission (Planning and Development Solar Planning Amendment 21)</li> </ul>
	Deliver on goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act on goals</li> <li>• Act on a short and long term goal strategy</li> </ul>
	Carrot and stick approach to large corporations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support large corporations to follow regulations set by Government and to go green</li> <li>• Sanction organisations e.g. climate court for pollution</li> </ul>
	Legislate for the vote at 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give more young people the opportunity to vote to have a say on their future</li> </ul>



**Topic 4: Government Goals and Policy**

**Sub-topic**

**Detail**

**What difference will this make? (outcome)**

Informing and involving the public

- This will inform and involve the public in decision making at Government level. It will empower the public
- Government to have an app so people can access their climate related policies etc. in a user friendly language and in one space

Open up public consultations

- Open up consultations to workplaces



Table 5(c): Summary of in-depth discussions on Topic 3: Just Transition

Topic 3: Just Transition	Sub-topic	Detail
<p><b>Why Just Transition is important?</b></p>	<p>Main source of emissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture and transport</li> </ul>
	<p>Need for alternative employment for fossil fuel sector workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When people move to renewable energy options important to find transition for people who will lose their jobs from closure of fossil fuel sector</li> </ul>
	<p>Individual responsibility not as effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We used to focus on individual responsibility. Now we need more. Government is sugar coating and avoiding the topic</li> </ul>
	<p>Greenwashing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporations are keen on being green because it attracts business</li> <li>• 81% of consumers don't trust companies</li> </ul>
	<p>Large companies responsible for large volume of carbon emissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporations are taking advantage of Ireland's tax laws and are causing harm to the environment</li> <li>• Tech/fashion industries are causing harm to the environment</li> <li>• Corporations based in global North are benefitting from exploitation.</li> <li>• A lot of goods produced in Asia but are imported to Ireland. Who is responsible for the harm caused?</li> <li>• Government overlooks carbon emissions because these companies bring investment</li> <li>• Big corps have the resources to move away from fossil fuels already.</li> <li>• Unfair that ordinary people take the blame for emissions</li> </ul>
	<p>Agriculture contributes to high volume emissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers need to be supported to make transitions to sustainable farming.</li> </ul>
	<p>Energy is becoming more expensive for farmers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers need planning permission to install solar panels</li> </ul>
	<p>The expense of being climate conscious</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable choices and products can be more expensive</li> <li>• It is unfair to make fossil fuel more expensive when not everyone can afford to switch.</li> <li>• People in lower income households [need more support than] retro fitting, electric cars - eg oil and gas are very expensive, but alternatives are expensive too</li> <li>• Need to bring ordinary people / rural people along. Make life easier to adapt to sustainable living</li> </ul>
	<p>Limited access to sustainable shopping/products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not many eco shops</li> </ul>



**Topic 3:  
Just Transition**

**Sub-topic**

**Detail**

**What can be done to solve this?**

Gov. to support sustainable actions

- Government to incentivise renewable sustainable actions.
  - Gov. offer incentives e.g., make electric cars more affordable, tax cuts
  - Empower consumers to ‘vote with their wallets’ by choosing green
- Retrofitting older buildings – make grants and loans more accessible
- Subsidies for more sustainable transport (electric vehicles / public transport)
- Have allowance/adjustments in taxes depending on use of sustainable sources (reduced tax for sustainable)
- Tax breaks for greener practices

Government to support people with lower incomes

- People in lower income households need more support than retro fitting, electric cars – e.g. oil and gas are very expensive, but alternatives are expensive too

Support fossil fuel sector workers during the move to renewable energy

- Find alternative employment for people who will lose their jobs

Support farmers

- Help farmers to transition to climate friendly approaches
- Grants to farmers who want to swap to more sustainable farming (e.g. peat farmers)
- Educate farmers on renewable methods e.g. how to use wind energy
- Remove the requirement for planning permission to put up solar panels
- Market restructuring. More organic farming pilot schemes

Corporate accountability

- If companies harm the environment they should be charged Carbon caps and quotas to prevent over-pollution. Certain quota untaxed similar to PAYE. Any emissions above quota taxed.
- Make them [corporations] use sustainable energy
- Carbon tax for corporations/climate reparations for global south
  - Use the money to help climate justice and action e.g. electric vehicles for low income families
- Don't allow companies to trade their quotas
- Rebalance corporate tax system. Delicate balance. Don't want to push too hard that investors are put off.

Greenwashing Reducing harm caused by Fashion industry

- Enforce eco-labelling in food and fashion

Support poor countries

- Support poorer countries who are feeling the effects now

Topic 3: Just Transition	Sub-topic	Detail
<b>What difference this will make</b>	Supporting low income people to make transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More low income people make the transition to sustainable energy</li> <li>• Fewer emissions</li> </ul>
	Actions to support farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable them to go green</li> </ul>
	Action to support people employed in the peat industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More just transition to sustainable energy</li> </ul>
	Tax & fine large industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large industry more likely to move to sustainable energy</li> <li>• Income from tax and fines to be re-directed to supporting sustainable transitions.</li> </ul>

Table 5(d): In depth discussion on Topic 4: Community Engagement

Topic 2: Community Engagement	Sub-topic	Detail
<b>What makes this so important?</b>	Climate change impacts on everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change is dangerous and impacts on all our lives</li> </ul>
	Importance of community (start local)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People want to be part of a community. This makes it more enjoyable and less daunting.</li> <li>• People need to be given a sense of control</li> <li>• It takes a community to work together to bring about change</li> <li>• If there are no communities, it's hard to get involved.</li> </ul>
	People need to be informed People are informed about consultations (see Topic 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YP feel marginalised</li> <li>• Not enough places for young people to hang out and discuss topics generally (and are not adult led)</li> </ul>



Topic 2: Community Engagement		
	Sub-topic	Detail
<b>What can be done to solve this?</b>	Include climate change in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have climate action as a subject</li> </ul>
	Inform people and raise awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of the importance of climate – include this in climate education in schools</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the available opportunities to get involved via schools/teachers etc</li> <li>• Signpost available groups</li> <li>• Have groups (e.g. environmental councils in local communities)</li> </ul>
	Provide spaces for engagement  Projects to bring communities together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create community spaces for interaction and engagement.</li> <li>• Provide funding to youth organisations (not sport organisations) and more opportunities / activities in rural areas.</li> <li>• Opportunities for the different generations to inform each other</li> <li>• Use of different media to reach different generations</li> <li>• Universal approaches</li> <li>• Projects to get community involved e.g. something similar to Tidy Towns.</li> </ul>
	Support and advise groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance on setting up climate action groups</li> </ul>
	Create accessible (online) platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create online platforms so people can access and influence decision</li> </ul>

Topic 2: Community Engagement		
	Sub-topic	Detail
<b>What difference this will make?</b>	Informed and engaged community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People will be more informed – and empowered</li> <li>• People will be more engaged</li> </ul>

**Appendix 6: Delegates' evaluation of Space, Voice, Audience, and Influence**  
(completed by 20 young people)

Detail		1 ★	2 ★	3 ★	4 ★	5 ★
Space	I felt comfortable giving my opinions			1	6	13
Voice	I got the chance to give my opinions			5	3	12
Audience	I know who wants to hear our opinions		2	2	9	7
Influence	I think what we said today will be taken seriously	2	3	4	8	3

**Open Comments**

**The best thing about today was:**

**Meeting Minister Ryan**

- Networking with like minded members and getting to speak to Minister Eamonn Ryan
- The difference between this event and others, was I feel that our ideas were really listened to by government change makers. I really enjoyed meeting the ministers and having conversations with them
- Having a chance to meet Minister Ryan
- Speaking to Minister Eamon Ryan
- The conversation at the end in the main room where everyone gave their opinions and recommendations and Minister Ryan had the chance to feedback
- Get to give our recommendations to the minister

**Expressing our opinions & hearing different viewpoints**

- Everyone was given a chance to speak, no favouritism was shown towards any candidate.
- Hearing different perspectives
- Getting to learn and hear from other young people with different experiences to mine (e.g. rural, BIPOC, etc) and the climate solutions they suggested.
- Brainstorming ideas with passionate young people and having a chance to speak with Minister Ryan
- The pool of information from all the delegates and the opportunity to hear new voices and collaborate. There was also great room for innovation to take place which allowed for creative ideas and thoughts
- The large amount of people who gave their input.
- Seeing other teens and hearing what they have to say
- I enjoyed listening to some of other delegates as they seemed to know a lot of information regarding the climate crisis and it was nice to hear what other people think.
- Getting a chance to share our opinions with others our age and hear our opinions.
- Talking to other like-minded people and engaging with the minister.
- The best bit about the day was getting to voice our ideas and hear others.



## Open Comments

### The best thing about today was:

#### The approach

- The world cafe because we got to cover a lot of topics in a short time
- The discussion in the breakout room.
- The groupwork
- Doing the words (the Mentimeter exercise)

#### Having our views recorded

Having the note takers so all our opinions were being heard and getting to meet the ministers

### One thing you'd change from today's event

#### Timing

- The fact we ran over time, not that I was in a rush to leave or anything but I just found my focus really slipping
- How the recommendations were discussed in the breakout rooms
- More time with group provided to finalise recommendations there was too little time to come up with the recommendations and evaluate things, maybe extending future assemblies by around 30 minutes
- I would have liked if more people could have shared their opinions be that may have been due to lack of time.
- Have more time when discussing our ideas to fix certain issues
- Give it more time
- I would change the timing. It was too rushed. I would make sure that people had the chance to speak up and there was more focus on making it comfortable to speak up
- I would maybe have a bit more time for icebreakers
- Seems a bit rushed when it comes to group sessions.
- in my breakout room it felt very rushed and it seemed to lack a lot of structure in terms of creating the proposals. this was disappointing for me because I felt like we could have made much better use out of the little time we had.

#### In-person meetings

- Have the meetings in person rather than over zoom.
- Having the meeting in person.
- It's not something that I would necessarily change about yesterday's Assembly but I was wondering if there will be any meetings that will take place in real life rather than over a zoom call.

#### More information/preparation

- More information about different climate initiatives for people to educate themselves would have been a good idea. Information beforehand about the Assembly methods so people could prepare (recommendations were rushed). A formal write up of the recommendations would have been a good idea. More diverse participants in term of age and ethnicity.

#### More young people/wider representation

- I think more young people e.g. 100-150 should've been included and it should have been open call for anyone to join (the only reason it should've gone through a nomination process would've been to ensure diversity and that different groups are strongly represented in numbers)
- I would also have had more representation as I felt everyone around me was around the 16 years old and there were only a few younger and older.

#### More recommendations

- I would've chosen to give more recommendations than just two per group.

#### Nothing/It worked well

- Nothing. Really well organised like the idea of the break out rooms and world café definitely the best virtual experience I have been a part of so far !
- I was very happy with today
- I think working in smaller groups really worked well on zoom as we got to know each other better and had a better chance to talk. When meetings are in person however, I feel that it would be important for some time to be spent getting to know all of the members.







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Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# REPORT OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE

MARCH 2022