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SHIFT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

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SHIFT Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Young People's Green and Digital Skills and Community Engagement

Practical proposals for education, youth and municipal policy

Policy recommendations | Lithuania, Latvia, Greece | October 2026

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About the SHIFT project

SHIFT - Sustainable Habits Initiative for Fashion Transformation, leveraging digital skills - is an Erasmus+ small-scale partnership project in the youth field. The project aims to strengthen the green skills, digital literacy and active participation of young people, especially those with fewer opportunities. It uses sustainable fashion, clothing renewal, community activities and ideas initiated by young people themselves.

The SHIFT methodology helps youth workers act in three areas: textile use and sustainable fashion, digital tools for youth engagement, and community building. Podcasts, videos and local activities give young people opportunities to learn, express their views and act together with others. In these recommendations, project experience is turned into practical proposals for public sector institutions, schools, youth organisations and communities.

Project partners

Balsiai Community (Lithuania), Young Folks LV (Latvia) and Innovation Frontiers IKE (Greece).

Summary

This document proposes how youth, education, municipal and environmental measures can strengthen young people's green, digital and community skills. The main conclusion is that one-off events are not enough. There is a need for regular activities, a clear youth role, small and easily accessible funding measures, premises, tools, language support and specialist involvement in organising activities.

The recommendations are based on SHIFT project experience in Lithuania, Latvia and Greece. In Lithuania, the most important example is a community model that combines textile workshops, visits to social business organisations, podcasts created by young people and other media content. In Latvia, the need for language support, digital identity and a clear role in activities became clear for young people from national minorities, migrant and refugee backgrounds. In Greece, it is most important to connect school and university councils, municipal spaces, NGO experience and clear public information.

The document presents eleven recommendations. Each of them identifies a practical action, a possible responsible institution and a link with project experience. The recommendations can be applied

through existing measures for youth, non-formal education, municipal communities, digital skills and environmental education.

The proposed principle for application is that each measure should clearly indicate the responsible institution, eligible costs, the participant's path, the partners needed and the result that can be checked. In this way, the recommendations become not general aims but an action plan that can be included in calls, municipal programmes or non-formal education measures.

Context of the recommendations

This part explains what project experience, partner insights and European policy directions were used in preparing the recommendations. It helps to understand why these measures are proposed and how they relate to real needs of young people, communities and organisations in Lithuania, Latvia and Greece.

Lessons from SHIFT project activities

The SHIFT methodology combines three themes: textile use and sustainable fashion, digital tools for youth engagement, and community building. Balsiai Community, Young Folks LV and Innovation Frontiers IKE add different practical experience from Lithuania, Latvia and Greece to these themes. Project activities showed that these themes work best when young people receive a concrete task: to repair or adapt an item, prepare a podcast, create a short guide, present a community idea or organise a small-scale activity. In the country descriptions, these practical examples are linked with the support needs named by the partners and help to show what changes public sector institutions could take on.

How to turn project experience into practical decisions

Project experience should be transferred into concrete decisions that help remove real barriers to participation. For example, if a young person cannot come to an activity, travel costs need to be covered. If it is difficult for them to understand a call or registration form, language support or consultation is needed. If an organisation has tools but does not have a person who can maintain them and teach others how to use them, the involvement of a specialist needs to be funded. If young people have an idea but the project application form is too difficult for them, mentor support or a simpler application form is needed.

Different organisations can play different roles. Some can provide learning materials, others can host young people for a visit, lead a session with an expert, help explain the services provided or contribute to podcast and media creation activities. In the Lithuanian SHIFT activities, young people met representatives of an environmental initiative and social enterprises, took part in practical sorting activities, talked with organisation founders and could use this experience when creating podcasts or videos. Latvian and Greek partners also provide examples of what organisations, community spaces and digital learning services could be included in future activities for young people's green, digital and community skills. These examples show that such activities can rely not only on project partners but also on a wider network of local organisations and services. It is important that every visit, guest

session or course is planned in advance, agreeing with a specific organisation on its role, activity content, time, place and required resources.

European policy context

The EU Youth Strategy provides a basis for involving young people in decision-making. The Council Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development and GreenComp support practical sustainability learning. In the SHIFT project, these aims take a very concrete form: participants propose community ideas, repair textile products and discuss consumption habits. [1,2,3]

The Digital Education Action Plan and DigiComp provide a basis for focused digital learning. SHIFT podcasts and videos connect this learning with tasks that matter to participants: preparing questions, interviews and explanations of sustainability topics. The EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles also supports attention to longer use, repair and reuse. [4,5,6]

Lithuania

Experience and learning needs

The five-day youth camp organised by Balsiai Community in Lithuania combined textile-related tasks, media creation activities and community ideas. It began with team activities, conversations about clothing consumption habits and textile artworks. A session with Giedrius Bučas and Eglė Abugelytė-Lukšienė linked responsible consumption with practical textile work. Participants visited social enterprises in Mažeikiai district, learned how unwanted items are sorted, took part in a quiz and helped sort clothes, shoes, books and magazines themselves. They interviewed environmental specialists and social enterprise founders and recorded podcasts. Later, they discussed what the terms 'eco-friendly', 'green' and 'sustainable' mean, sewed from fabric scraps and created an image of an ideal community. This sequence of activities helped participants first raise questions and then pass on to others what they had learned.

On the last day, participants presented completed textile works and ideas for community activities, discussed their experience and received Youthpass certificates. In addition to the camp, Balsiai Community organised clothing swaps and community sewing workshops, where young people and residents created textile works and repaired sculptures that had already been made. This showed several ways to use the same practical environment: to extend the life of an item, learn a creative skill and act together in the community.

During the project, young people not only learned about fast fashion, textile waste and environmental protection, but also tried in practice how textile scraps can be used creatively. They sewed, created textile works, made toys for animal shelters, interviewed specialists, created videos and podcasts. Such activities helped develop green thinking, sewing, communication, creative inquiry and digital skills. Importantly, the change did not remain only theoretical: after the project, young people speak more confidently about clothing consumption, exchange clothes with each other more easily and better understand how small everyday choices can contribute to a more sustainable life.

For Balsiai Community, the project helped not only to decorate the environment and carry out creative activities, but also to offer local youth more meaningful activities. The activities showed that young people need practical, creative formats that build togetherness, especially sewing and textile reuse workshops. The project also strengthened local links with other organisations and helped build a positive community image in the field of sustainability.

The Lithuanian experience shows that a strong community example can quickly create a visible result, but project enthusiasm alone is not enough for long-term action. For such activities to continue, municipalities and schools should provide simple support for communities: space, storage for tools, materials, mentor or youth worker time and the possibility to repeat the activity several times a year. Such support would help textile workshops, clothing swaps, visits and youth media tasks become a regular local practice rather than a one-off project event.

Local organisations and cooperation opportunities

Save the Baltic Sea is an environmental initiative that shares knowledge about environmental protection, while Dirbinyčia and Būk su manimi are social enterprises working in textile reuse. [7,8,9] In the Lithuanian SHIFT activities, these partners contributed by leading a session with an expert, providing practical sorting experience and sharing interviews for a podcast being created. These examples can be useful when preparing future sessions. Further cooperation could include workshops, visits to different organisations, discussions and podcasts or videos created by young people.

Balsiai Community identifies municipal youth affairs councils as an existing channel connecting young people, youth organisations and municipal representatives. However, this channel does not always reach young people who are not yet active in organisations, so it is also useful to involve schools.

This question can be turned directly into a policy measure: municipal youth affairs coordinators could have a clear way to collect the opinions not only of organised youth but also of less active young people. Short meetings in schools, libraries, community houses or informal youth gathering places would be suitable for this. It is important that a young person can present an idea or problem without having to become a member of an organisation immediately or speak at an official meeting.

What support is needed

Balsiai Community expresses the need for learning materials in Lithuanian and practical preparation for youth workers who will use those materials. Cooperation with creators and repair specialists would give community organisations learning support when it is needed. Camps could be adapted for different age groups by choosing a suitable task and allocating time to complete it. Work with textiles should be linked to everyday clothing use so that the session has a clear purpose beyond simply making an item. Practical priorities for clothing care are presented in Recommendation No. 3.

As Balsiai Community notes, sustainable development and digital competence already have a place in Lithuanian school curricula. The partner separates this formal basis from the real possibility to practise in youth work. At school, young people could discuss clothing consumption habits, and in community activities they could apply this knowledge in practice: repair clothes, create a short digital guide or take

part in a local clothing swap. Therefore, the Lithuanian priority is continuity between environments, where practical learning is accessible not only in one camp or school lesson.

In practice, this means that a school could provide the thematic basis, while a community or NGO could provide the place, craftsperson, real task and link with local organisations. For example, pupils discuss textile consumption in a lesson, repair or adapt a garment in community workshops, and later prepare a short guide, podcast or video for others. Such a sequence helps connect formal education, non-formal learning and local community activity.

Intergenerational learning in the community

Community workshops also offer a two-way learning model. Residents can share sewing and repair knowledge, while young people can help create a short video or explain how to use digital tools. Each person contributes by teaching another. These exchanges of skills are proposed as a way to build trust through teamwork. In future training, both roles could be made visible so that older residents are not seen only as instructors and young people only as learners.

Latvia

Experience and learning needs

Young Folks LV identifies clothing swaps, repair cafes and upcycling workshops, which in the SHIFT project became a practical way to talk about sustainability and community activity. Before SHIFT, the organisation had not implemented a separate programme on textile waste or clothing consumption. Making, repairing and exchanging gave participants a shared task that required fewer language skills than a discussion-based meeting. The partner also identifies the need to explain local second-hand, donation and exchange practices to newly arrived participants. Even a person who knows how to repair an item may need help finding the right place to exchange or donate it.

The Latvian partner's experience shows that a project can also change the organisation's own daily practice. During the project, textile collection boxes appeared, collected textiles began to be used for handicrafts, and participants became familiar with the Vinted app as one way to reuse clothing. The organisation also began to pay more attention to waste sorting, reduced paper use, chose digital tools and organised some activities in nature. Such practices strengthen the connection with nature and help understand sustainability not as a separate topic but as a way of acting every day.

Young Folks LV works with language minorities who have lived in the country for a longer time and with recently arrived young people from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia and other countries. The organisation notes that some of them are at the same time learning to participate in Latvian-speaking schools and use public services while trying to build a circle of local peers. Part-time work, caring for siblings and helping parents translate texts from Latvian can reduce the time left for youth activities. Uncertainty about how long the family will stay in the country can also make long-term commitment more difficult. The partner notes that podcasts and videos helped interest teenagers who liked practical activities, while clothing swaps built links between different language and ethnic groups.

The information provided by the Latvian partners shows that the problem of participation is not only a question of young people's motivation. Existing participation channels often operate in Latvian and are based on the assumption that a young person already knows the system, knows how to contact an institution and feels safe enough to speak publicly. Therefore, policy measures should clearly provide active invitation through trusted organisations, multilingual information and preparation before meetings, not only publish a general invitation on a municipal website.

Local organisations and cooperation opportunities

For further local cooperation, Zaļā brīvība (Green Liberty) offers experience in sustainable consumption, textile waste and environmental information. Latvijas Dabas fonds (Latvian Fund for Nature) has prepared Nature and Climate School recordings and learning materials that connect environmental learning with school subjects. Pasaules Dabas Fonds WWF Latvia is another named environmental organisation whose activities could be linked with wider community activity. Schools and youth service organisations could contact these organisations for expertise or resources suitable for SHIFT-type activities. [10,11,12]

The partner identifies structured dialogue coordinated by the National Youth Council of Latvia, school and university student councils and informal meetings such as 'Coffee with Politicians'. Its concern is that these routes often assume self-confidence, fluent Latvian and knowledge of public institutions. A young person may not take part in a consultation simply because no one contacted their group. Therefore, Young Folks LV asks that organisations of national minority, migrant and refugee youth have a permanent place in public dialogue, and that preparation take place in a language participants can use.

What support is needed

The question of digital access in Latvia is linked not only to equipment but also to administrative barriers. Young Folks LV notes that some recently arrived families do not have a Latvian electronic identity (eID) or bank identity needed to register for online services or courses. Therefore, providing only a laptop or a translated course does not solve this problem. Young people may need practical help using state e-services, e-signatures, job search platforms, banking and other official systems. Youth organisations can help with simpler digital tasks, such as registering for an activity, preparing a document or finding information, but issues of eID, bank identity or official accounts should be addressed by the responsible institutions. Therefore, digital skills activities should start from the question of what concrete action the participant will be able to perform independently after the training.

Latvian partners also draw attention to differences outside Riga, especially in Latgale: in some areas there may be a lack of equipment, internet access, textile collection points and clothing exchange opportunities. Therefore, when planning clothing or digital skills activities, it is important to assess in advance what services, spaces, equipment and help are actually available in a specific municipality. A model that relies on easy access to city services is unlikely to meet the needs of all youth groups.

This gap can be turned into a municipal task: to prepare a simple local map showing textile collection points, exchange opportunities, repair services, publicly available equipment and contacts that can help a youth group start an activity. Such a map should be updated, because young people cannot use links to services that no longer actually operate or operate only in the capital.

The participant's first contact with the programme

Young Folks LV believes that it would be useful to have information and training materials in Latvian, Russian and Ukrainian. This relates both to the first invitation and to learning during the session. The message should explain what participants will do, whether the activity is free and how to ask questions before registering. The partner also asks for staff training for work with mixed-language groups and support that takes into account the needs of young migrants. NGOs can help a young person come to an activity for the first time, understand what to expect and feel more confident asking questions. This matters when the young person does not yet feel ready to contact a municipality independently or organise an activity themselves.

This multilingual access could be formulated as a condition of public funding. If a programme is intended for young people and is publicly funded, the call should make clear whether information is available in several languages, who can help complete registration and how a participant can ask a question before coming to the activity. Such a condition is especially important where the aim is to include national minority, migrant and refugee youth.

Greece

Experience and learning needs

Innovation Frontiers IKE notes that in Greece young people have several formal participation channels. Schools have student councils: five-member councils are elected in classes and fifteen-member councils in schools. In universities, students elect their representatives and can participate in student union activities. At municipal level, youth councils are another participation route, but the partners note that they lack stronger support.

These structures could also be used to raise practical sustainability ideas, for example to propose clothing reuse activities, request repair workshops or draw attention to the lack of services in a certain area. However, this requires young people to know where to turn, be able to prepare a proposal and receive a clear response.

Migrant, refugee and Roma youth are often prevented from taking part in activities by language barriers, bullying, racism and financial difficulties. Some young people start working early or help their families, so they have less time to participate in school, university or municipal activities. Others avoid speaking publicly about their problems because they fear possible consequences related to work, housing or family circumstances. Therefore, municipal activities need safer forms of participation. Young people should be able to express their views and needs, but should not be forced to speak publicly in a meeting about private or sensitive circumstances.

This point can be turned into a concrete policy requirement: municipalities and schools should not only have youth representation structures, but also plan how young people who usually do not participate in them will be invited. The Greek partner notes that the participation of migrant and internationally protected children in the formal education system is made more difficult by delays in enrolling them in schools, transport problems and insufficient language and integration support for newly arrived pupils. Therefore, participation measures should include language support, mediation through trusted NGOs and a safe way to express opinions without disclosing private family or legal circumstances.

Local organisations and cooperation opportunities

In Greece, environmental education activities and learning materials are offered by organisations such as WWF Greece, Arcturos and the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature. [13,14,15] Innovation Frontiers IKE also mentions the Eco-Schools programme and environmental education centres that build links with schools. Cooperation could be very practical: a teacher or youth worker would use already prepared environmental materials, an NGO would contribute through a guest invitation or visit, and young people would link this experience with a textile task, interview or short media work. Before starting a joint activity, the school, youth organisation and partners should clearly agree who is responsible for what.

Serafio in Athens is an example provided by the partner of an active municipal space with educational and sports events. It is a possible model of space for further youth work. In the information provided on digital learning, the Citizens' Digital Academy, online courses such as digitalliteracy.gr and publicly available equipment support programmes are named. Digital learning in general and vocational education schools is also described: from word processing and online safety to programming and network installation. Greece's priority is to connect youth work with suitable existing opportunities while addressing equipment and staff needs where they remain.

The information provided by the Greek partner also shows that more public measures already exist in the field of digital skills than in sustainability or youth participation. Therefore, it is important for policy makers not to create a completely new digital system, but to connect youth, sustainable fashion and community activities with existing digital literacy programmes. For example, existing online courses, equipment support programmes or digital academies could be used when preparing podcasts, videos, clothing repair guides or invitations to organised activities.

What support is needed

The Greek partner stresses that NGO environmental work should be more visible to schools, municipalities and the wider public. Information about such activities should be published through national and local channels, as well as through schools and, where appropriate, through public television. It is important not only to announce that a programme exists, but also to state clearly who organises it, what age group it is for, where it takes place, whether it is paid and whom to contact to participate. Continued workshops in schools and communities would help use the project methodology, podcasts and videos after the first presentation.

The Greek partner's experience also shows that sustainability principles should be applied to the organisation of events themselves. When planning activities, organisers can provide sorting bins, choose vegetarian food, offer tap water, avoid excessive printing and invite participants to bring their own water bottles and cups. For travel, less polluting options should be chosen where possible. In digital activities, sustainability can also be practical: files are kept in order, unnecessary copies are deleted and excessive material is not used.

In the field of youth participation, the main gap lies between formal structure and supported activity. School and university councils already provide an organised environment; municipal youth councils and NGO work need a stronger link with local decisions. The partner proposes national initiatives, competitions and resources for existing programmes, with the participation of the Ministry of Education and municipalities. The essence of the proposal is to strengthen and connect these routes, including young people who are no longer in the education system, rather than expecting a school programme to reach everyone.

Textiles should not be limited to recycling

Innovation Frontiers IKE asks that environmental education examine reducing purchases, reuse and repair, as well as the wider reasons why waste is generated. The main point is that the learner should be able to ask questions about garment quality, advertising and available services, as well as personal habits. Workshops could discuss when repair is worthwhile and why a cheap garment may be difficult to repair. A media task could compare a seller's environmental claim with the information actually provided. These are proposed examples of training that connect individual action with questions for business and public services.

This is especially important because recycling should not be presented as the main or only sustainability solution. The recommendations should clearly include a three-step logic: reduce purchases, use existing clothes longer and repair what can be repaired. Only after these steps should sorting or recycling be discussed. This emphasis helps young people understand that sustainable fashion is not only waste management, but also a question of consumption habits, product quality, advertising and opportunities to repair, exchange and reuse clothing.

Direction 1. Youth participation and leadership

Recommendation No. 1. Define what decisions are made by young people

Municipalities, youth centres, schools and NGOs should state in advance what decisions young people can make in an activity. This may be the activity topic, date, target group, exchange rules, choice of guest, form of communication or final result.

A simple rule is recommended: every publicly supported youth activity should have at least one clearly named decision made by young people themselves. An institution that receives a youth proposal should respond in writing or at a meeting: what will be supported, what needs to be clarified, what decision is still needed and within what time the answer will be given.

Lessons learned from the project

The ideal community task in the Lithuanian camp gave participants a way to express what they would like in their environment. Latvian partner experience shows that some youth groups need support even before participation: an explanation of how consultations work, what language can be used and how to submit a proposal. In the information provided by Greece, voting through existing youth structures is identified as a possible way to involve young people in decisions.

The experience of these three countries shows that participation requires more than inviting young people to an event or meeting. It needs a clear question, an understandable form of participation and a person or organisation that helps formulate the idea.

Practical application in policy

Municipalities could apply several linked decisions. In Lithuania, municipal youth affairs coordinators could collect the views of less active youth through schools, libraries, community houses or other spaces close to young people. In Latvia, the National Youth Council and relevant youth institutions could consider permanent representation of national minority, migrant and refugee youth organisations in structured dialogue, including the partner's proposal to provide reserved places in working groups. In Greece, schools and municipalities could use youth voting on a clearly defined local topic, enabling contributions in person and providing a public response explaining the result. These measures would support the EU Youth Strategy. [1]

For young people to participate meaningfully in consultations, working groups or youth councils, they may need preparation and support. A representative may need help reading the agenda, talking with their group and explaining the proposal. Public support measures could cover this work through a trusted NGO, while leaving the position itself to young people. The representative should be able to return with an answer to peers in a form they understand.

Recommendation No. 2. Include participation costs and gradual leadership in funding

Funding measures must allow real participation costs to be covered: travel, meals during longer activities, translation, individual support, necessary materials and staff time for the first contact. This is especially important for young people with fewer opportunities, weaker local language skills or first-time participation in an activity.

Leadership must grow gradually. The first role can be small: preparing materials, helping arrange the space, welcoming participants or asking one question during an interview. Later, the same person can lead part of the activity, present an idea to the municipality or contribute to preparing a project application. This path should be described in the funded activity plan.

Lessons learned from the project

In the Lithuanian camp, young people first became involved through practical and creative activities: team tasks, textile works, visits, podcast creation and community ideas. This showed that it is easier for a beginner to participate when they have a clear task and can contribute not only through public

speaking. Young Folks LV stresses that youth workers need training on how to work with mixed-language groups and how to support young people who have recently arrived in the country. The Greek partner identifies exclusion and fear of speaking publicly as reasons why some young people remain silent and do not get involved in activities.

The experience of these three countries shows a staff skill that equipment cannot replace: helping a beginner participate without putting them in an uncomfortable situation, rushing them or judging them for needing support.

Practical application in policy

State and municipal programmes that fund youth activities should provide funds not only for the event itself, but also for staff work before and after the activity: inviting the participant, explaining what to expect, keeping in touch and providing personal support if needed. Municipal services and NGOs should agree who welcomes new participants, who helps address bullying or exclusion and who helps contact the responsible institution or specialist if additional help is needed. A workshop leader may need another staff member to support a participant or explain the task in another language; this work should be included in the activity budget. Travel, meals or other participation costs should be covered before the activity so that limited funds do not prevent a young person from coming.

The first clothing repair or upcycling session should be easy for a new participant to access. It can begin with a short demonstration, then offer a simple practical task, leaving discussion as an optional part. A young person who is not yet confident in their language skills or does not want to speak in front of the whole group could work with a peer and ask for help individually. Later, the organiser could offer another, slightly more active role, such as helping prepare the next session, inviting a friend or contributing to a short presentation. In this way, practical activity becomes a safe first step towards more active participation.

Direction 2. Green skills and sustainable fashion

Recommendation No. 3. Turn clothing repair and reuse into a regular learning activity

National and municipal education, youth and environmental programmes should support regular clothing care, repair and reuse sessions. They should take place not as a one-off action, but as a recurring learning cycle, for example once a month at a school, library, youth centre or community space.

The practical sequence should be simple: garment care, small repair, reuse, creative adaptation and sharing the result. Participants could learn to read care labels, sew a seam, sew on a button, deal with a stain, prepare for a clothing swap or create a short repair instruction for others.

Lessons learned from the project

Lithuanian activities included textile art, sewing from scraps and repairing existing community sculptures. Young Folks LV organised clothing swaps, repair cafes and clothing upcycling as practical ways to introduce a topic they had not previously offered in a separate programme. The Greek partner

stresses that sustainability education should not be limited to recycling, but should help young people understand reduced consumption, reuse and repair.

The experience of these three countries shows that a shared practical task can help a beginner get involved by making, repairing or helping others before joining longer discussions or more active activities.

Practical application in policy

Municipal support should include maintenance and storage of shared tools, not only their purchase. A specialist is needed who can teach how to sew or repair a garment, and enough time should be allocated for the learner to complete the work. Free sessions in community or youth spaces would help those who cannot buy equipment or pay for a course. GreenComp and the Council Recommendation on green learning provide a basis for linking these tasks with wider learning. [2,3]

The session should clearly show the meaning of the task. Clothing care and repair skills become more meaningful when a young person can bring their own garment and learn to care for or repair it. Creating a decorative item can also teach a skill, but it should not completely replace clothing care. A repeated session allows the participant to bring an item again, ask why a repair did not work and try again with support.

Recommendation No. 4. Link learning with textile repair and reuse services

Municipalities should help youth and community organisations build links with repair craftspeople, reuse organisations, sorting points, social enterprises and environmental groups. This cooperation should be practical: visits, sessions, joint workshops, interviews or short service guides explaining where to turn and how to use a specific service.

The organisation leading a visit or session should show the whole path of an item: what can be repaired, what can be reused, what is no longer suitable and why. Young people should be able to ask where still usable items are passed on, how sorting works and where the limits of responsible consumption are.

Lessons learned from the project

The Lithuanian visit to social business enterprises combined an explanation of sorting with a quiz, practical activity and interviews with the founders of social enterprises. A useful feature of this visit was that participants could check what they had heard by observing work on site. Young Folks LV identifies a separate need for newly arrived families: to understand local second-hand, donation and exchange practices that other participants may already know. Greek partners stress that links between NGOs, schools, municipal spaces and environmental education organisations should be more visible and easier to use in learning activities.

The experience of these three countries shows that young people need not only a general message about reuse, but also a concrete explanation of where locally they can repair, exchange, donate or responsibly pass on unused items.

Practical application in policy

Support should cover the organisation's preparation for the visit and transport when the visit is needed for learning. In remote areas or regions where repair, exchange and textile collection opportunities are harder to find, the municipality could help prepare a simple local guide. It would provide checked information about concrete opportunities in that area: where clothes can be repaired, where clothing swaps take place, where textile collection points are and who accepts still usable items. The guide should also state whom to contact about items left after the event so that the organiser does not have to search at the last minute for how to deal with them responsibly. This would connect learning with the EU textile strategy's attention to longer use. [6]

Direction 3. Developing digital skills

Recommendation No. 5. Link digital access with a clear practical task

Funding for digital learning should not be used only to buy computers or other equipment. It also needs to fund what allows young people to actually learn: internet access, suitable software, staff support and a clear practical task that the participant could complete independently. The task may be preparing interview questions, editing an audio recording, creating a short repair guide, preparing an event invitation, registering a participant or checking information.

A phone is not always suitable for learning, especially when it is necessary to prepare a document, edit media or store files safely. Therefore, youth centres, schools, libraries and community spaces should provide access to shared computers, recording tools and a staff member who can help complete a specific task. If possible, equipment could be lent.

Lessons learned from the project

In the Lithuanian activities, young people created podcasts and videos and interviewed representatives of environmental protection and social business. This showed that a digital task becomes more meaningful when it is linked with real experience: a visit, interview, textile sorting or repair activity. Young Folks LV notes that digital content creation interested young people who found it harder to become involved in usual theoretical activities. Greek partners stress that videos, podcasts and the methodology can be used as learning resources in schools and youth activities.

The experience of these three countries shows that a digital task should have a clear aim and several different roles. For example, creating a repair guide can include choosing steps, photographing or filming, preparing text, recording audio and editing. This also allows a young person who does not want to be filmed or record their voice to contribute.

Practical application in policy

Funding for digital skills development should include not only schools but also youth organisations working in non-formal education. The Latvian partner stresses that some young people need help using e-services and developing digital skills in Russian or Ukrainian. For such activity, the first live contact is important: a young person should be able to start learning even when it is difficult for them to register

online independently. If a specific service requires eID, bank identity or other official access, staff should explain this requirement and help the young person understand which responsible institution to contact.

The Greek example shows that youth organisations should be included in existing digital literacy measures. Funding could allow youth workers to participate in existing digital training, use publicly available learning platforms and receive equipment support when digital work is linked to a specific youth task.

The Lithuanian partner proposes assessing digital learning according to what the participant can do independently after the activity. For example, they can save and find a file, edit agreed material or share it through a chosen channel. This would help the youth worker understand what support is still needed. Frequent phone use should not be treated as proof that a young person already knows how to perform these tasks. DigiComp can help choose learning objectives for such tasks. [4,5]

Recommendation No. 6. Teach safe and critical digital content creation

Youth media activities should teach not only filming, recording or editing, but also responsible use of information. When young people create a podcast, video, guide or social media post about sustainable fashion, they should check whether the claims they use are accurate. For example, before calling a product or activity 'eco-friendly', 'green' or 'sustainable', it is necessary to explain what this claim is based on: whether it concerns materials, production, longer use, repair, reuse or lower consumption.

When creating content, it is also important to ensure participants' safety and right to choose. Before taking photos, filming or recording a voice, the organiser must explain where the material will be used and what choices the participant has. A young person should be able to contribute to question preparation, sound, editing or text even when they do not want to be seen or heard in the final work.

Lessons learned from the project

In the Lithuanian camp, young people discussed what the terms 'eco-friendly', 'green' and 'sustainable' mean and created media content about sustainable fashion. This showed that digital content creation can be used as an information-checking task: the participant not only repeats a message they have heard, but also learns to present it through a specific example. Young Folks LV stresses the importance of critical media skills for young people who receive information in several languages and from different sources. The contribution of Greek partners also shows that sustainability topics should not be presented only as general slogans.

The experience of these three countries shows that media activity can help young people raise questions about sustainability, advertising and responsible consumption. Therefore, it is important to teach not only how to use apps, but also how to understand what a young person is claiming in the content they create.

Practical application in policy

State and municipally funded youth programmes should allocate time not only to create content but also to check information. Staff training should cover two things: technical content preparation and

checking claims. Staff should be able to help participants record clear sound, prepare subtitles, use readable text, adapt content in different languages and check claims about sustainability. In workshops, roles can be clearly divided: one participant checks whether information matches the source, another checks whether the text is clear to the audience, and a third takes care of sound, image or editing.

The media content created should provide the viewer with enough context. For example, a short clothing repair demonstration should show what garment is being repaired and what problem is being solved. An interview about a service should name the organisation and the date when the information was checked. This helps distinguish a specific practical example from a general claim about all products, services or sustainability solutions.

Direction 4. Youth-initiated community activities

Recommendation No. 7. Introduce a small grants model for youth ideas

Municipalities and public youth funders should create small grants for implementing youth ideas. A first attempt often needs only a few hundred euros if reliable support is also provided. Funds could be used for materials, premises, transport, translation, a guest's participation, communication or meals for participants during a longer activity.

The application must be short and understandable. It could ask five things: what young people want to do, who it is for, where it will take place, what help is needed and how the work will be shared. A mentor or host organisation should help turn the idea into an application, but decisions about the activity must remain with the youth group.

Lessons learned from the project

The Latvian partner draws on wider experience with Erasmus+ KA210 grants and stresses that first-time youth groups need simple applications and easy reporting. The Lithuanian partner invited participants at the camp to create community ideas, so a small grants model could help continue one of such ideas after project activities. The Greek partner also proposes national competitions, prizes and support for youth initiatives so that good ideas can become real activities in schools or municipalities.

The experience of these three countries shows that it is important for young people not only to participate in organised workshops, but also to have a clear path for implementing their own idea: an understandable application, small financial support, mentor help and simple reporting.

Practical application in policy

An informal group should be able to act through a supporting organisation that handles agreed payments and reservations, while young people make the main decisions. Balsiai Community proposes advance funding so that participants do not first have to pay themselves. Reporting could ask for a short description of the activity, proof of agreed expenses and the group's learning. Municipalities should decide what is proportionate for a small grant and explain this before the application, naming one contact person for questions.

The Latvian partner proposes separate funding for ideas led by national minority, migrant and refugee youth, especially in remote regions. Municipalities could consider special grants or support within an existing measure, providing language support before application submission. This should be chosen according to local access needs. A group should not have to become part of an NGO only to ask for materials for a first small community activity.

The Greek partner proposes national competitions, prizes and support for youth initiatives. This experience shows that small grants can be linked not only to municipal funding but also to competitions or other public initiatives, if it is clearly stated how the selected idea can be implemented in practice.

For a first-time group, a few hundred euros, a free space, materials, help with communication and a very short report are often enough. The application should not require complex project language. When assessing such ideas, attention should be paid not only to the number of participants but also to whether the activity reaches a group that usually does not participate in municipal youth programmes.

Recommendation No. 8. Make community spaces easily accessible for youth activities

Municipalities should publicly announce what premises and equipment can be used for youth activities. The information must be simple: whom to contact, when the space is free, whether it is free of charge, how to reserve it, what tools are available on site and who helps use the space.

Textile activity requires a table, safe tools, space for materials and the possibility to leave unfinished work until the next meeting. Media activity requires a quiet place for recording, a computer or other suitable equipment. It is not necessary to have everything in one place, but participants must know where and when they can continue their work.

Lessons learned from the project

The sewing activity organised by the Lithuanian partner brought young participants and community residents together for creation and repair. It showed two-way learning: a resident can explain a repair method, and a young person can help film or describe it. The Latvian partner notes that clothing swaps helped build links between different language groups. The Serafio example in Athens provided by the Greek partner shows that municipal spaces can become places for educational, community and youth activities.

Practical application in policy

Municipalities should appoint a clear space contact who can help with access and agreed supervision. The group and space hosts should agree how unfinished work is stored and when participants can return. The Greek partner's Serafio example provides a starting point for considering how a municipal space could support further youth work. A municipality considering a similar proposal should ask which youth groups already use its spaces and whether an informal group can get a reservation without knowing the system in advance.

The proposal should make clear what remains the responsibility of the space hosts and what young people can choose. Space hosts can ensure supervision and help use equipment, while the group plans the activity and invites participants. Naming these roles can reduce the concern mentioned in Lithuanian partner experience that adults will take over the youth idea. It also gives a new organiser a person to contact when a practical problem arises.

Direction 5. Funding and continuity

Recommendation No. 9. Allow funding for activities that combine youth, education, environmental and digital skills aims

National and municipal funding measures should allow youth, education, environmental, community and digital skills aims to be combined in one activity. For example, one programme may include a textile repair session, a visit to a local partner, recording a podcast and creating a short digital result.

Such an activity needs more than a budget for one event. Preparation, partner cooperation, inviting participants, language support, staff time between meetings and adapting results to other groups need to be funded. Therefore, some organisations need multi-year funding or an ongoing municipal agreement.

Lessons learned from the project

The Lithuanian camp showed that one programme can combine several activities: creation, local visits, podcast creation and community ideas. Such a model needs more than one event day. It requires preparation, partner coordination, clear tasks for participants and a person who maintains the link between activities.

The Latvian partner's experience shows that work with national minority, migrant and refugee youth requires a consistent relationship. For such work, publishing an invitation is not enough. An organisation is needed that can reach young people, explain the meaning of the activity, help them get involved and keep in touch after the first meeting. The Greek partner's experience shows another need: good NGO programmes must be more clearly connected with schools, municipalities and public information so that more young people learn about them.

The experience of these three countries supports a funding model that supports not only a separate event but also preparation, partnerships, inviting participants, maintaining contact and continued work after the activity.

The project was also useful for staff and volunteers. Partners learned from each other: some had more experience in sustainability, others worked more strongly with digital skills or building youth communities. This helped test new methods and strengthened project management and intercultural communication skills. It also became clear that the involvement of the implementers themselves and their belief in the idea are very important for the success of activities, because only then is it easier to pass it on to young people, partners and the local community.

Practical application in policy

State and municipally funded youth programmes should clearly state which costs are eligible for funding. In addition to the activity itself, it should be possible to fund preparation, cooperation with another organisation, language support, use of shared tools across several sessions and staff learning. This would allow organisations to plan not only one event but the whole activity process.

When an activity connects a school, NGO, municipal space or another partner, it should be clear who is responsible for the joint proposal and funding issues. A youth group should not have to understand the procedures of several institutions or be sent from one institution to another. One clear contact would help understand more quickly what support is available and what actions are needed.

Longer funding should also include work between activities: communication with participants, help getting premises, preparation for the next session, maintaining contact with the group, translation or mediation with a school or municipality. This is especially important for organisations working with harder-to-reach youth, because one short project or one public event is not enough to build trust.

Recommendation No. 10. Ensure that the SHIFT methodology is used after the project

Youth and education institutions should help use the SHIFT methodology after the end of the SHIFT project. Sharing a link alone is not enough. A short explanation is needed of which part of the methodology is suitable for a school, youth centre, library or community, what tools are needed and how long the activity takes.

Practical use could be as follows: an organisation chooses one part of the methodology, links it with a textile task and plans in advance what the participants' result will be. A municipality or national institution could appoint a contact person who helps choose the right activity format.

Lessons learned from the project

The Lithuanian partner's experience shows that the methodology becomes more useful when it is linked with a specific activity: a textile workshop, visit, interview, podcast or community idea. The Latvian partner values the methodology and the model of continued workshops, because staff in smaller NGOs may not be specialists in textile or digital fields. The Greek partner proposes distributing the methodology to educators at different levels.

The proposals of these three countries show the same practical need: it is important not only to make the methodology public, but also to help a person understand which part to choose, how to adapt it and what tools will be needed to implement the activity.

From the perspective of continuity, it is important that project results do not remain only in the archive of a completed project. Partners plan to continue clothing swaps, sewing workshops, creative textile activities and making toys for animal shelters. The digital communication skills gained can be applied in other projects and initiatives, strengthening the visibility of community activities.

Practical application in policy

National youth and education institutions, municipalities, schools, libraries, youth centres and NGOs can help project materials reach more people. They could include the SHIFT methodology in training, project activities, youth sessions, library education or community workshops. It is important that the

material is presented not as a completed project result, but as a tool that can be adapted to a specific activity: clothing repair workshops, swaps, a podcast, a video or a discussion about consumption.

Municipalities could help connect interested organisations with local specialists, community spaces, schools or NGOs that already have similar experience. Schools and youth centres could use a selected part of the methodology together with a practical task, while libraries or community houses could provide a place, equipment or help in communicating the activity.

When communicating project materials, it should be clearly stated how they can be used in practice. The announcement could direct an educator, youth worker or community representative to a specific contact, activity example or continued workshop. Simply announcing that the methodology has been prepared is not enough. It is necessary to show what activity can be organised, who it is for, how long it lasts and what tools are needed.

Recommendation No. 11. Include textile, sustainability and digital content tasks in formal and non-formal education

Education institutions should encourage schools, vocational education institutions, higher education institutions and non-formal education organisations to use tasks that combine textiles, sustainability and digital content. This can be integrated into citizenship, technology, economics, media, environmental or project-based learning activities.

The learning result must be clear and checkable: the participant explains a garment choice, applies a care or repair method, checks an information source, prepares a short media work or presents a community idea. Such a task makes it possible to assess not only knowledge but also practical action.

Lessons learned from the project

The Greek partner proposes cross-subject work and continued workshops in schools. The final reflection and Youthpass certificates from the Lithuanian camp are an example of how to help participants describe their learning. Young Folks LV asks for broader recognition of skills gained through non-formal learning. These points support the link between the activity and what the learner can explain or use later, without treating school attendance as the only path to learning.

The Latvian partner also proposes that skills gained through non-formal education should be more widely recognised. In practice, this could mean a Youthpass-type certificate, a project activity recognised by a school or a clear description of the participant's achievements. In this way, textile repair, media creation, event organisation or work in a mixed-language group would not be seen as a one-off activity, but as skills that a young person can show at school, at work or in another programme.

Practical application in policy

Education institutions and municipalities should agree how the school curriculum can include local community participation and cooperation with NGOs. A school could consider recognising a clothing repair task, media creation or a role in an event as learning according to its own rules; any formal recognition would require approval by the responsible institution. This cooperation would be based on the Council Recommendation on green learning and the Digital Education Action Plan. [2,4]

Competitions could invite young people to submit practical works related to textiles and sustainability: a clothing repair guide, podcast, video or community idea for reuse. It is important that the competition does not end only with an award. Organisers should explain in advance what may happen with selected ideas after the competition: whether they can be presented at school, tested in a youth centre, implemented in a community or continued with mentor support.

In this case, the competition becomes not only a one-off task but also part of learning. A young person not only submits an idea but also understands how it could be applied in a real environment.

Conclusions

The main decision for policy makers is clear: green and digital learning must become a regular local offer, not a one-off project activity. This requires three conditions: a participation path that young people understand, activities funded in a practical way and organisations able to continue work between events.

In Lithuania, it is recommended to strengthen community textile workshops, local visits and intergenerational learning. In Latvia, it is most important to ensure language support, digital access and a simple first step for national minority, migrant and refugee youth. In Greece, it is important to better connect school and university representation, municipal spaces, NGO experience and publicly available information.

In the Lithuanian case, it is especially important that continuity of community activities is included in municipal youth, education and community programmes. This would allow good project experience to be transferred into a more stable model in which it is clear who provides space, who helps with tools, who invites young people and how the activity can be repeated after the project ends.

The recommendations can be implemented through measures that already exist: municipal youth programmes, funding for non-formal education, school project activities, services provided by libraries and communities, digital skills training and environmental education initiatives. The most important point is that the measure clearly funds not only the event, but also preparation, participant support, practical tools and continuity.

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