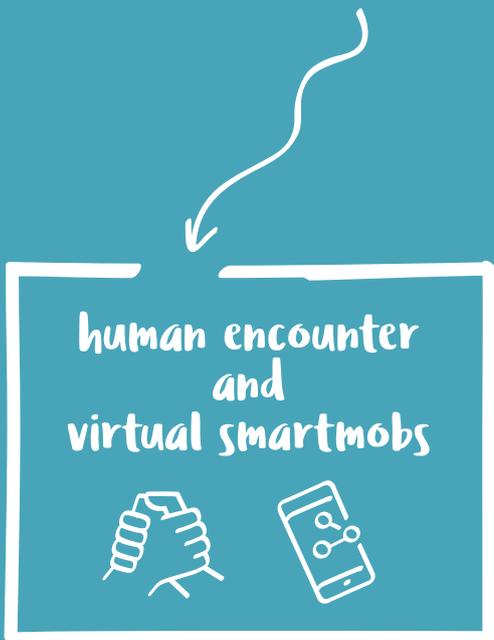




EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Toolkit with Project Ideas
for Schools and Youth Work

Be part of it. Better together!





Climate change, armed conflicts, social inequality – those are only some of today’s challenges for humanity and they show how ecological, social and economic processes are interrelated. With the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the members of the United Nations have agreed on common goals to meet these challenges. School and out-of-school actors can play a crucial role in providing young people with the skills and knowledge to achieve these goals.

The **YoungCaritas in Europe** network has been advocating for justice, diversity and sustainability for many years. We are convinced that education for sustainable development cannot only take place in a school setting but also in volunteering. In this toolkit we present best practice projects from the youngCaritas network and show how they can be embedded and implemented in a school context.

«For me, volunteering is more than just a drop in the ocean. It is a school of life and fun at the same time.»

Sara, youngCaritas volunteer

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INTRODUCTION: THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

Background Information

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

... over **2 billion people** have no access to clean drinking water?¹

... **up to 58,000 animal species** become extinct every year?²

... the **sea level** has risen **by 20 cm** since **1901**?³

THE 2030 AGENDA AS A RESPONSE TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Poverty and social inequality, species extinction, global crises – the world is facing major challenges that can only be solved collectively. The member states of the United Nations (UN) have come to the same conclusion. In 2012, at the Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, they decided to define common goals for sustainable development. In 2015, the 2030 Agenda was eventually adopted. In it, various guidelines were determined to address the most important global challenges.

In 17 areas, the member states want to ensure that our world becomes significantly more just, peaceful, social and sustainable by 2030. The key topic of the 2030 Agenda are **the 17 global goals for sustainable development** (also called Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs for short), which are again divided into 169 sub-goals.⁴

COOPERATION IS KEY

The goals set apply equally to all member states. They are requested to implement the goals nationally as well as globally, according to their resources and possibilities. Here, countries of the Global South and the Global North are equally called upon.

The successful implementation of the SDG's requires the interaction of various actors: States, companies, science and civil society – in other words, each and every one of us can make a contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, even small improvements can make a big difference.

Addressing the Sustainable Development Goals in the Classroom

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The students involved ...

- know the Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- deal with social, ecological and economic challenges in their country and on a global level.
- understand the principle of global solidarity.

EXERCISE IDEA 1: LEARN ABOUT THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

As an introduction to the topic, everyone in the group should think about what the world should look like to become a better place. To do so the students are asked the following questions:

- Where do you see the biggest global challenges?
- What do you think needs to change for a better future?

Based on these questions, each person writes down two or three visions on a card. Afterwards, the icons of the 17 sustainability goals need to be arranged in the correct order. Now, small groups are formed. Each group receives several short descriptions they have to assign to the corresponding icons. Finally, the groups compare the sustainability goals with their personal vision cards and discuss which goals their visions fit best with.

For more detailed exercise instructions:
youngcaritas.ch/intro-sdg



EXERCISE IDEA 2: TARGET NET

The exercise Target Net is suitable to show and discuss the interrelationships and interactions between the individual SDGs:

- 1) The students form a circle and hold one or more SDG icons in their hands.
- 2) The person with target number 1 reads out the target and holds the beginning of a string in the hand.
- 3) Now, a connection to another SDG is tried to be established. The string is passed on to the person who sees a connection to their own SDG. After briefly explaining the idea, the string is passed again. This is repeated until all participants are involved, and a net has been created.
- 4) For debriefing, this interdependence can be discussed. For example, what would happen to the goals if one person dropped the string?

EXERCISE IDEA 3: WHAT CAN WE DO?

All member states of the United Nations are requested to implement the Sustainable Development Goals globally and nationally. First of all, everybody looks at the situation in his own country. Using an overview of the SDGs, the students check which goals have already been achieved and where they still see potential for improvement. This shows how extensive and ambitious the goals are and that even wealthy countries in the Global North do not yet meet all the targets.

Last but not least, everybody thinks about what they can personally contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The resolutions can then be written down.

To the collection of links
on the topic of SDGs:
youngcaritas.ch/links-sdg



1 Welthungerhilfe, 2020.
2 WWF, 2022.
3 Quarks, 2022.
4 United Nations, 2020.



FOCUS 1: POVERTY AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Background Information

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

... **one in six people** in Europe is at risk of poverty?⁵

... almost **a third** of the people in Europe cannot pay an unexpected bill (e.g. dentist, repair, etc.)?⁶

... the **risk of poverty** is higher for **women** than for men in all age groups?⁷

... the income of the richest 10% of the people in Europe is more than **eight times higher** than the income of the poorest 10%?⁸

The term «poverty» is often associated with images of people from the Global South. However, poverty is a global problem that also affects people in wealthy European countries. According to current data, more than 2 billion people – almost a third of the world's population – live in poverty.⁹ The fight against poverty is therefore a top priority in the 2030 Agenda. However, the Corona pandemic or the current energy and food crises as results of the war against Ukraine are jeopardising the achievement of the goals set. They usually hit the poor particularly hard and increase social inequality – both globally and within Europe.

WHAT IS POVERTY?

There are different approaches to defining poverty. A popular global definition of poverty comes from the World Bank, which uses the term **extreme poverty** for people who have to finance their lives with less than **2.15 US dollars** a day. However, this definition is only partially suitable for measuring poverty, as the costs of living differ from country to country. Therefore, a distinction is often made between absolute and relative poverty to define poverty within a country. **Absolute poverty** describes a situation where the people concerned live below the subsistence level defined for the country and consequently cannot afford basic necessities such as housing, food or clothing. For the concept of **relative poverty**, income is set in relation to the average of a country. People whose income is significantly below the median income of a country are thus considered to be «relatively poor» or «at risk of poverty». For people at risk of poverty, it is not possible to live a life which is normal for most people in that country.¹⁰

POVERTY IN EUROPE

As reality shows, people in Europe are also affected by poverty. In contrast to other countries, nobody dies of hunger or thirst, but an average of **16.6%** of all people in Europe are affected by poverty or at risk of poverty, i.e. **every sixth person**.¹¹ A report from the European Parliament (2016) shows that the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion has increased in most member states of the European Union (EU) since 2008. Particularly at risk are:

- People without completed education
- Single parents
- Single pensioners
- Large families

Contrary to an earlier notion, work no longer protects from poverty. By now, **8.8%** of the working population in Europe are at risk of poverty and are considered «**working poor**». Particularly affected are people who work seasonally or on an hourly wage and do not have a permanent job.¹²

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY

Poverty can basically affect anyone. Often, a **critical life event** leads to poverty. This can be the **loss of a job**, a **divorce** or a serious **illness**. It has also been shown that the parental home has a great influence. Children from families affected by poverty often still suffer from the consequences of this poverty in adulthood and are at a higher risk of being affected by poverty themselves later on.

Poverty is not only manifested by a lack of money. In addition to material aspects, poverty also includes social and health factors: **Loneliness** or **illness** can be a consequence or cause of poverty. People experiencing poverty often find it difficult to maintain relationships with other people. One of the main reasons for this is that people cannot participate in activities with friends, as leisure activities often involve expenses they cannot afford. Especially in European countries, people tend to hide their poverty, because it is still very **shameful** and **stigmatised**. Additionally, there is a psychological burden on people affected by poverty. Not knowing how to make ends meet can cause great **stress** and **anxiety**. Moreover, poor housing conditions can add up to the stress.¹³

5 Eurostat, 2019.

6 Focus, 2018.

7 Diakonie Deutschland, 2021.

8 World Inequality Database, 2022.

9 Helvetas, 2020.

10 Aktion Deutschland Hilft, 2020.

11 Federal Statistical Office, 2020.

12 Poverty in the European Union, 2016.

13 Caritas Switzerland, 2022.

Implement your own Project

BEST PRACTICE: «KILO GEGEN ARMUT»

Unfortunately, a healthy meal or a heated home are not a given for people in Europe affected by poverty. There are many ways for a school class or a youth group to get involved with people experiencing poverty.

The «Kilo gegen Armut»-campaign by **youngCaritas Wien** shows how young people are sensitised to the situation of people affected by poverty and at the same time given the opportunity to become active themselves. Within the framework of «Kilo gegen Armut», they collect long-lasting food and hygiene articles. These are then distributed to households affected by poverty.

The goods are collected in different ways. On the one hand, the participants bring products from home. On the other hand, people in selected supermarkets are encouraged to buy an additional product to be donated afterwards.

The collected products are then picked up by Caritas and passed on to people in need via the Caritas food shops around Vienna.



The campaign has been running successfully for several years. In 2022, over 31,000 young people took part in the campaign and collected almost 31 tonnes of food and hygiene items.

More information on the project:
youngcaritas.ch/kilo



LEARNING BENEFIT FROM THE PROJECT

A collection campaign is a win-win situation for both the people affected by poverty and the young people involved. An extra pack of pasta or rice puts little strain on the budget of a wealthy person but can make a significant difference to a person at the poverty line. In addition, the participants benefit personally from the project and learn about the structural and historical backgrounds that lead to poverty and social inequality.

The collections in the supermarket require the participants to approach strangers and ask them for support, which can be very difficult. In this respect, a parallel can be drawn with people affected by poverty, who are often hesitant to ask for help because they feel ashamed.

TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The «Kilo gegen Armut»-campaign can also be implemented in a modified form as a school or youth group. When planning and implementing the campaign, it is recommended to consider the following aspects:

- 1) The access to people in need is a key factor for a successful campaign. Therefore it is highly recommended to collaborate with a social institution (local soup kitchen, food distribution point or relief organisation) that can accept the donations and distribute them to those affected.
- 2) Before the collection, it should be clarified with the institution what goods are needed. Long-lasting foods that do not require refrigeration are usually suitable.
- 3) It is absolutely necessary to have official consent for the collection campaign in the supermarket. In addition, the participants must be able to transparently inform the people about the purpose the donations are being collected for.

Addressing Poverty in the Classroom

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The students involved ...

- understand that poverty is more than just a lack of money.
- learn about poverty as a social problem that also affects wealthy (European) countries.
- can take the perspective of people experiencing poverty and know the challenges they face in everyday life.

EXERCISE IDEA 1: FOUR-CORNERS-GAME

The four-corners-game is a simple exercise which builds on existing knowledge and leads to a discussion about our understanding of poverty. It is therefore an ideal introduction to the topic. For this exercise, the following four statements are hung up in the room:

- 1) We live in a very prosperous country. There is no real poverty here!
- 2) Those who grow up in poverty hardly have a chance for a better life later on!
- 3) Those who really make an effort can achieve something!
- 4) So much for «prosperous country», many people who live here cannot make a living from their work and are poor.

Afterwards, everyone stands next to the statement they find most appropriate. and are asked to justify their position. This can lead to a discussion of principles, which focuses on the following questions:

- How is poverty defined? What does poverty mean for you?
- Is poverty self-inflicted? Consequently, is it possible to free oneself from poverty?

EXERCISE IDEA 2: WHAT IS QUALITY OF LIFE?

Poverty can be defined in different ways. Thus, our understanding of poverty is something very individual. Likewise, what we mean by «quality of life» as opposed to poverty varies from person to person. In the following exercise, the students look at their own and their peers' priorities:

- 1) The students get a list with different statements.
- 2) From this list, eight statements must be removed without replacement. The remaining ten statements are ranked in order of priority from 1 to 10.
- 3) The students build pairs, compare their lists and have to agree on an order of priorities. Once this is done, two pairs join and debate until the group reaches a consensus.

Collection of statements and the exact exercise instructions:
youngcaritas.ch/life-quality



EXERCISE IDEA 3: PANEL DISCUSSION

A panel discussion is a good way to consolidate knowledge the students have already gathered. Moreover, it sheds light on different problems and difficulties around the topic of poverty and social inequality from different perspectives. Therefore, different roles (moderator, single parent, retiree, jobseeker, economic expert) are distributed within the group. Participants can benefit from the panel discussion in different ways. They get to know different perspectives and gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of a social problem. At the same time, they learn to have objective discussions, to take a stand and to find solutions to different questions within this framework.

Detailed instructions and the role cards:
youngcaritas.ch/discussion-poverty



To the collection of links on the topic of poverty:
youngcaritas.ch/links-poverty





FOCUS 2: MIGRATION AND DIVERSITY

Background Information

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

... **272 million** people do not live in the country they were born in?¹⁴

... there are currently over **100 million** people fleeing their homes? Over **40%** of them are adolescents!¹⁵

... **almost half** of the migration within Europe is labour migration?¹⁶

... it is estimated that **one in twelve** marriages in the EU is binational?¹⁷

Clothes from Bangladesh, bananas from Latin America, our mobile phones produced in China – globalisation has made our world more interconnected than ever. Ideas, information and goods are exchanged worldwide. However, movement and networking between countries cannot only be traced back to this. Humans know the phenomenon of migration for as long as they exist. Migration exists always and everywhere. It can be over long and short distances, sometimes particularly extensive movements are discussed intensively, now and then we observe a country of origin becoming a country of arrival. It is a fact that migration is a reality and the world would not function without it.

*The term **migration** comes from Latin and means «journey» or «relocation». Migration is therefore always used to refer to a long-term change of residence. This can either be voluntary or involuntary. The term **flight**, on the other hand, is defined as «escape from a life situation that cannot be managed». It could therefore be described as «forced migration».*

WHY DO PEOPLE MIGRATE?

The reasons why people migrate are complex. Many people have to leave their homes because of **war, conflicts** or **persecution**. Others are displaced due to **natural disasters** or **poverty** and seek protection and new prospects in another country. In addition to causes that force people to leave their homes, many people migrate to a new place voluntarily. Some realise a dream by building a new life in their country of choice. Others benefit from better education or job opportunities, or they change their place of residence to live with loved ones.

*When discussing the reasons for migration, a distinction is made between Push and Pull factors. **Push factors** describe the reasons that motivate someone to emigrate from a country (to push). **Pull factors**, on the other hand, are the incentives to migrate to a particular country (to pull).*

MIGRATION IN EUROPE

Europe is strongly characterised by immigration and emigration. Until the end of World War II, more people emigrated from Europe than immigrated (**net emigration**). At that time, migration was mainly due to colonial expansion and the slave trade along the Atlantic route. This has changed since the middle of the 20th century and Europe has seen **net immigration**, i.e. more immigration than emigration. Reasons for this are for example movements of refugees and displaced people after the World War II or guest worker programmes (especially in Germany, Austria and Switzerland), which often resulted in the permanent settlement of guest workers and their families. In addition, due to increased demand in the service and industrial sector, many workers from Asia, Eastern Europe and North Africa have migrated to Central Europe.¹⁸

Immigration to Europe can therefore be explained both by **labour migration** and by **people fleeing**. Contrary to widespread prejudices, Europe is rarely the ultimate destination for refugees. Only about eight percent of registered refugees live in Europe. More than half of those seeking protection are fleeing within their home country – so-called **internally displaced people**. Of those who leave their home country, around three quarters live in neighbouring countries.¹⁹

WHY IS MIGRATION IMPORTANT?

Public discourse regularly focuses on the challenges posed by increasing immigration in European countries. It is often forgotten that migration is a basic condition for the functioning of our globalised world and is of great importance, especially for European countries with strong economies.

There is already a shortage of skilled workers in many sectors in wealthy European countries. In some of these countries the medical care system, for example, would collapse without labour migration.²⁰ In the future, this problem will become even more urgent as the working population is declining due to demographic factors. Labour migration, therefore, offers an important solution to address the shortage of skilled workers.

Moreover, migration has a great potential that is often underestimated. Migration connects people with different life experiences, language skills and cultural imprints, which makes our society more diverse and enriches it. It has also been proven to have a positive effect on a country's research, innovation and economic productivity.²¹

14 International Organization for Migration, 2020.

15 UNHCR, 2022.

16 International Labour Organization, 2021.

17 University of Graz, 2014.

18 Migration data in Europe, 2021.

19 UN Refugee Agency, 2022.

20 Tagesanzeiger, 2020.

21 Federal Ministry for Development, 2023.

Implement Your own Project

BEST PRACTICE: «TASTE THE WORLD»

We live in a culturally diverse society that is also characterised by migration and flight. With «Taste the World», **youngCaritas Zürich** provides a very good project example of how the interaction between people with and without refugee experience can take place in a relaxed setting.

«Taste the World» has been running successfully for years and is one of the most popular projects of youngCaritas Zürich. The concept is very simple: Refugees and youngCaritas volunteers meet once a month for a collective cooking day, where around ten volunteers and around 60 participants from the Duttweiler Federal Asylum Centre in Zurich take part. A team is formed from the participants to do the shopping and cooking on the relevant day. The other participants set the tables, decorate the room or play games and exchange ideas with each other. In the end, a large buffet with various dishes



is created – often traditional ones from the refugees' home countries – from which everyone can eat together in the evening.

More information on the project:
youngcaritas.ch/taste



LEARNING BENEFIT FROM THE PROJECT

Cooking days such as those at «Taste the World» are not only valuable opportunities to meet for those involved but also very good learning environments. Through joint activities, people involved learn that it is primarily character traits – and not origin – that determine whether you get on well with a person.

For this purpose, the topic of cooking is very suitable since it is an activity to which people from different backgrounds can relate equally. Cooking together fosters a lively exchange and leads to a reduction of prejudices and an emphasis on commonalities. In the kitchen, it also becomes visible how different cultural influences can merge into something new.

TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In a school class, a sports club or a youth club, there are always young people of different nationalities who can implement the idea of «Taste the World». This gives the chance to organise several cooking days, each focusing on the cuisine from the home country of one or more of the participants. For the implementation, it is recommended to pay attention to the following:

- 1) The participants should be given as much responsibility as possible and do the planning, shopping and cooking independently to a large extent. To achieve this, it is important to set clear frame conditions: e.g., the location, group size, budget, menu requirements etc.
- 2) Especially with larger groups, it is not possible for all participants to help with the cooking. Accordingly, it is important to involve all participants and assign tasks, such as decorating the room, arranging the tables, designing an information poster, etc.
- 3) To put more focus on the learning effect, feedback and learning experiences of all participants can be collected after the meal.

Addressing Migration and Diversity in the Classroom

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The students involved ...

- can reflect on their own identity and understand that every person is individual.
- raise their awareness of cultural diversity in their environment.
- deal with the challenges and decision situations that migrating people encounter.

EXERCISE IDEA 1: IDENTITY ONION

In this exercise, the involved students deal with their own identity and the diversity within their group/class. To visualise identity, the principle of an onion with all its layers is used.

- 1) Each student receives a worksheet with the onion model (see link). Next, they have the task to label the onion with everything that makes up their identity.
- 2) Afterwards, they compare their labelled «identity onions» to find as many similarities among themselves as possible.

The aim of this exercise is to make people aware that everyone has their own identity and cannot be reduced to their origin, religion or any other characteristic. Nevertheless, many common characteristics can be found.

Detailed exercise instructions and a copy template:
youngcaritas.ch/identity-onion



EXERCISE IDEA 2: MY OWN MIGRATION STORY

Migration is by no means a new phenomenon. Families and individuals have migrated throughout human history. Accordingly, it is likely to have people with a history of migration within a group of young people.

- 1) Everybody investigates at home whether someone in their family has a migration experience. If this is not the case or lies too far back, they can also look for a potential person in their neighbourhood or among friends.
- 2) The involved students talk to the person in question to find out more about their migration story. What was their journey to the new country like? Did they encounter any challenges or difficulties on the journey? What were the reasons for migration and how difficult was it to settle down in a new country?
- 3) The information collected is then recorded in a table. In addition, the migration routes can be drawn on a map.

EXERCISE IDEA 3: DECISIONS ON THE RUN

The aim of this exercise is to understand the perspective of people who have had to flee their home country at once:

- 1) The students are given the following starting situation and are asked to write a packing list: «There is a war going on in your city and you suddenly have to leave your home. What do you pack?»
- 2) With the help of the online simulation *Syrian Journey* (see link), the students put themselves in the shoes of a family who has to flee Syria and is faced with several decisions. In the process, they note their route and their decisions on paper.
- 3) In a group discussion, everybody shares their experiences and compare their approaches. Possible guiding questions are: How did you feel during the exercise? Which decisions were particularly difficult? What do you take away from this exercise?

About the online simulation *Syrian Journey*:
youngcaritas.ch/syrian-journey



To the link collection on the topic of migration & diversity:
youngcaritas.ch/links-migration





FOCUS 3: SUSTAINABILITY AND CONSUMPTION

Background Information

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

... Europe and the USA alone are responsible for **over 80 % of** excessive CO₂ emissions?²²

... around **one third of** food is wasted on its way from the field to the plate?²³

... **more than half of** the clothes produced each year end up in the waste after one year?²⁴

... food causes **more than a quarter of** the total environmental impact?²⁵

The world has developed rapidly in recent years and decades. Due to the constantly **growing world population** and with **limited resources**, the question arises of how the living needs of nine billion people can be met in the future. It should be noted that we influence both the economic and social situation of people and the environment through our **consumption behaviour**. Accordingly, it is important to question our lifestyles and responsibility in consumption.

THE ROLE OF EUROPE

It must be noted that we live very privileged lives in many parts of Europe. At the same time, we expend a lot of **resources and energy** with our lifestyle. We cause a lot of greenhouse gases compared to the rest of the world's population and therefore contribute significantly to global climate change. If we add the «grey emissions» that result from importing products from abroad or climate-damaging investments by banks, the picture becomes even clearer. Studies have shown that Europe, and the USA are responsible for over 80 percent of excessive CO₂ emissions.²⁶ On the other hand, it is the poorer countries that suffer the most from the consequences of climate change. Accordingly, in terms of **climate justice**, wealthy countries have a particular obligation to play a leading role in combating the climate crisis.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

The climate crisis and its **social and environmental consequences** are a complex issue. In order to make our world more sustainable, we need the interaction of different actors and changes at the political level. At the same time, we should not underestimate the impact we can have by adjusting our consumption behaviour. By questioning our lifestyle and being willing to change, we can make a big difference together. There are several aspects of consumption that we can address. The greatest potential lies in adapting our consumption habits concerning **food and clothing**. **Sustainable** consumption does not necessarily mean renunciation, but rather a change to resource-saving behaviour.

Sustainable Nutrition

Food is a major contributor to climate change. The cultivation and processing of food are very resource-intensive, and particularly animal products have a significant impact on the personal carbon footprint. In addition to production, the behaviour of end consumers also has a major influence. In Europe, up to one kilo of food per person is thrown away per day²⁷, which could easily be avoided. With the following tips, you can make your diet more sustainable:

- Eat regional and seasonal fruit and vegetables
- Prefer fresh and unprocessed food
- Reduce the consumption of animal products
- Use leftovers and avoid food waste

Sustainable Clothing

Sustainable consumption concerns the purchase of various products of daily use. There is great potential for optimisation in the fashion industry, as the textile industry is responsible for an enormous use of resources. In fact, clothing production almost doubled between 2000 and 2014. This is also due to our unecological purchasing behaviour. Nowadays, clothes are only worn for half as long as they were 15 years ago.²⁸

«Fast fashion» is not only questionable from an ecological but also from an ethical perspective. Most of the clothes we can buy in Europe are produced in countries like China, India or Bangladesh. The textile workers often work under very poor conditions in terms of working hours, salary, but also health protection. It is therefore important to be aware that we can counteract «fast fashion» by shopping more consciously. It is worthwhile to follow these tips:

- Buy less, but make sure the clothes are of high quality.
- Prefer labels that guarantee fair working conditions.
- Buy high-quality second-hand clothes instead of «fast fashion».
- Donate/give away clothes that are in good condition instead of disposing them.

In addition to food and clothing, there is great potential for optimisation in numerous other areas, such as mobility, energy, or waste disposal.

More tips for sustainable living:
youngcaritas.ch/sustainable-lifestyle



22 The Lancet Planetary Health, 2020.

23 Federal Environment Agency, 2022.

24 SRF, 2022.

25 WWF, 2022.

26 The Lancet Planetary Health, 2020.

27 Federal Office for the Environment, 2019.

28 Greenpeace, 2019.

Implement your own Project

BEST PRACTICE: «FASHION FRESH»

We are living in a throwaway society. Consumption has an important role in our everyday lives, and we exhibit wasteful and environmentally harmful behaviour patterns. A clothes swap event is ideal to set a countertrend and sensitise young people to sustainable resource consumption.

The project «Fashion Fresh» by **youngCaritas Berlin** offers young people the opportunity to exchange well-preserved clothes and find new pieces for their own wardrobe. The organisers place great importance on the clothes being in good condition, clean and of high quality. The items brought along are therefore received and checked by youngCaritas volunteers. Depending on the type and quality of the garments, the participants receive a certain number of buttons as an alternative currency. These can then be exchanged for new items.

In order to provide participants with additional background knowledge, a panel discussion with representa-



tives of the textile circular economy takes place as part of the clothes swap event.

More information on the event:
youngcaritas.ch/fashionfresh



LEARNING BENEFIT FROM THE PROJECT

The organisation of a clothes exchange shows how *learning through engagement* can succeed. By organising a clothes swap event, the volunteers actively work for a sustainable society and future and thereby gain valuable learning insights.

When cleaning out their own wardrobe, the participants realise that they possess many items of clothing they have never or rarely worn. This automatically leads to a reflection of their own consumer behaviour and they ideally revise their opinions. At the same time, the social, economic and ecological impacts of the textile industry can be explored in depth in class.

A swap event also focuses on the consumption of resources and makes people aware of the added value of the principle of «swapping instead of buying», as all resources for the production, transport, packaging or disposal of products can be saved. The participants are thus given a **«win-win» experience by getting** new clothes and doing good for the environment at the same time.

TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The concept of a clothing exchange can be easily implemented by a school class or youth group as a one-off event or a recurring series of events. It is worthwhile to keep the following tips in mind:

- 1) To make the clothes swap event a success, clear quality criteria should be defined for the clothes, e.g. *in good condition, clean, of high quality, no socks and underwear.*
- 2) An appealing space and the attractive presentation of the clothes (e.g. on shelves or clothes rails) contribute a lot to a good atmosphere.
- 3) In order to sensitise the visitors, information posters with facts about clothing consumption can be designed or a lecture by an expert can be organised.

Addressing Sustainability and Consumption in the Classroom

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The students involved ...

- examine their consumption behaviour based on their ecological footprint.
- can make self-determined, sustainable and socially responsible decisions regarding their consumption.
- recognise that everyone can make a contribution to combating human-made climate change.

EXERCISE IDEA 1: ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Every human being leaves his or her mark on the earth through his or her way of life. The ecological footprint indicates how many resources we consume and how much pollution we cause. With the help of the following exercise, the students should look at their own footprint:

- 1) The students are given the task of thinking about their resource consumption and assessing themselves in comparison to the national average.
- 2) With the help of an online calculator, everybody determines their own ecological footprint and saves the result.
- 3) Pairs of two compare their outcome with each other and analyse in which areas they have the greatest potential for optimisation. In addition, they research the ecological footprint of their country and check their initial assessment.

To the online calculator:
youngcaritas.ch/footprint



EXERCISE IDEA 2: THE PATH OF MY T-SHIRT

The following exercise focuses on the production chain of our clothing and the resulting ecological and social problems.

- 1) The students check the labels on their clothes and note in which countries they were made. They then do research and draw the stages of a t-shirt, from cotton production to sale, on a world map.
- 2) Everybody estimates how much money the involved parties earn from a t-shirt that is sold in the shop for 10 euros. The following stations are to be considered: Cotton production, spinning and weaving, sewing, transport, sale and profit of the fashion label. They then compare their estimates with information from the internet.

Exercise instructions incl. copy templates:
youngcaritas.ch/t-shirt



EXERCISE IDEA 3: SHARING INSTEAD OF BUYING

Due to our consumption, we own many things that we rarely or never use. The following exercise aims to discuss the resulting waste of resources on the one hand and the principle of sharing as a solution on the other hand.

- 1) The students should think about the things they have at home that have not been used for a long time. These things are then merged on a common list.
- 2) As a group, the advantages and disadvantages of the principle of «sharing instead of buying» are discussed. In particular, the ecological aspect is addressed.
- 3) Each pupil works individually with an item from the list and considers what resources are needed for its production. Afterwards, it is collectively assessed to what extent the items would be suitable for joint use.

Link collection on the topic of
sustainability & consumption:
youngcaritas.ch/links-consumption



THE YOUNGCARITAS IN EUROPE- NETZWERK



youngcaritas Deutschland
youngcaritas.de



youngcaritas Luxemburg
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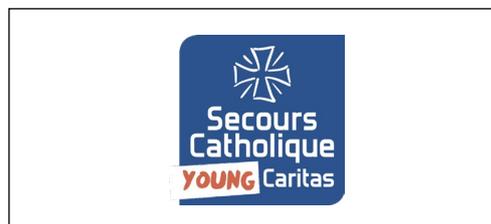
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In 2014, seven partner organisations from France, Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, Switzerland, South Tyrol and Vienna launched the **YoungCaritas in Europe** network to further develop and disseminate the idea of YoungCaritas. With financial support of Erasmus+ and Movetia foundations, we are committed to global solidarity. We offer young people across Europe the opportunity to network with each other, participate in social action, act across borders, and stand up for themselves.

