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YOU PRO CLIMA - YOUlt in PeRipheries fOr CLImate engageMent Actions

Project ID: 2023-1-IT03-KA220-YOU-000155348

WP2 - Research and develop community engagement skills toolkits addressed to youth

leaders and youth organizations

Case study description's guidelines

Please follow the guidelines below and briefly answer the following questions regarding community engagement on the topic of youth activism and climate action in peripheral territories of your country. Ensuring that the document is clear and comprehensive and providing a thorough understanding of the subject matter.

Important Information to answer the following questions:

- **Language & Length:** The answers should be reported in English in approx. 1-2 pages.
- **Sources & Referencing:**
Sources reported must be relevant and reachable. Older and more recent data can be used, which can be useful in order to demonstrate any evolution of the issue over the years.
The material could include websites, articles, links, photos, videos if available.

The activity **A2.2** contributes to the achievement of the S.O.1 of WP2, it means, “to contribute to increase community engagement skills environmental based by developing analytical material on community engagement case studies and specific characteristics on the topic of youth activism and climate action in peripheral territories”.

For the achievement of this objective, all partners have to identify and analyse **8 case studies on community engagement on the topic of youth activism and climate action** and produce an analytical report. They also have to conduct desk research on specific characteristics of youth engagement interventions in peripheral areas.

The expected result of **A2.2** will be an analytical report on relevant practices in community engagement experiences on the topic of youth and climate action finalised.

Introduction:

Please provide an **analytical description** of the case study you selected. Description will have to include information about where and when your case study was conducted. Emphasize the relevance of understanding the specific context within peripheral area you studied and young people's behaviour about the issue. Also, please provide sources from which further information can be obtained (websites, articles, links etc.). If some **photos/videos** are available please add them **by providing references** (links, documents or any others).

We choose as case study the **Mercados Unizar project**, started on 22 October 2023 and still ongoing, which sees young people and zero km food as protagonists. The City Hall of Zaragoza and the University of Zaragoza have joined together to organize an agri-food market within the Campus de San Francisco, a university center that brings together various faculties of studies within it. In the green space located between the Interfaculty faculty and the Law faculty, an agri-food market is held weekly, every Friday, and it offers a wide variety of products coming from all areas of the region of Aragon. The Agroecological Exhibition of Zaragoza, the Association of Gardeners and Producers of Zaragoza and the Association "Put Aragon on your table" congregate to offer all their products for sale.

The food offering comes from producers of Zaragoza city and province too, as well as from Huesca and Teruel. Joining the market represents the right occasion to buy fruits and vegetables, aromatic herbs, preserves, jams, sauces, eggs, bread and pastries, oil, sausages and cheeses, honey, croquettes and fresh pasta, nuts, asparagus, chillies and wine. These foods offer a **greater nutritional quality**, they have a better flavour and a smaller ecological footprint than processed, packaged and transported foods coming from far away. But, the consumption of fresh, seasonal and local foods not only promotes a **healthy and sustainable diet**: by choosing local and seasonal foods, population supports the local economy and rural development, and they promote the cultural and gastronomic diversity of the region.

The proposal of this new market is unique in Spain. The project aims to provoke an **important cultural change for the city and recover its cultural identity**: effectively, through the proposed foods, the cultural identity that future generations need to know is clarified. But the project is much more than being a simple market: it is a great concept loaded with the great responsibility of educating next generations to the sustainability and to a healthy lifestyle. In fact, in addition to a wide range of agri-food products, it proposes a program of informative, training and social, environmental and sustainability awareness activities offered by the University's academics.

The project sees the active and **enthusiastic participation of many young people** who choose to use the services offered by the University of Zaragoza. It provides personal health promotion services in all aspects: nutrition, sports, mental health and many others. Moreover, the participation of young people is also extended to students coming from other universities.

On October 6, "**Healthy Universities Day**" is celebrated throughout the national territory, promoted and coordinated by the Spanish Network of Health Promoting Universities (REUPS). The University of Zaragoza, as a member of the REUPS, joins this call and the different actions that have been organized in Spanish universities on the occasion of this day. Within the framework of "**Unizar**

Saludable" project, the institution aims to be actively involved in disseminating and raising awareness among the entire population linked to the university community about the achievements achieved and the pending challenges for health promotion in the university context. The main objective is to develop the healthy campus project both in the university and in society in general, through participatory, collaborative and dynamic processes, which make healthier options easier, incorporating health promotion as an institutional and promoting the exchange of experiences between public health organizations, community institutions and national and international universities.



<https://mercados.unizar.es/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4tPra4ZNmY&t=35s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzhnJjFyXPk>

Adherence at three main areas of participation:

At which **level of community engagement** does your case adhere? Take into account that there are three levels, namely:

- **horizontal** (tools for community involvement);
- **vertical** (tools for dialogue with policy makers);
- **transversal actions** (techniques and experiences of awareness raising on climate issues).

Please provide information about the adherence of your case at one or more of these three areas. They can be useful to provide in order to develop the digital toolkit addressed to youth leaders living or operating in peripheral territories

The case study proposed adheres to the **horizontal and transversal level**.

Unizar market represents the right tool for young people to participate to the climate and environment preservation.

Eating is one of the greatest pleasures ever and eating **local and seasonal products** means ensuring food safety: thanks to the small displacement, producers do not need to use chemical products and fertilizers to preserve the freshness of the food and consequently the flavor and nutritional characteristics remain intact. Also, buying **Km zero products** has its advantages for the environment: thanks to the reduction of transports, carbon dioxide emissions are reduced, energy is saved and plastic and cardboard packaging are significantly eliminated.

Choosing zero Km food represents the **rediscovery of tradition**: the distance between producer and consumer is reduced to a minimum and this contributes to protecting the territory and its identity, encouraging the local agricultural economy and, consequently, creating new job opportunities. These products, which are *direct to consumer*, that is, which arrive directly in the hands of the final consumer without passing through third parties, without intermediation, marketing and transport costs, are cheaper too!

Also, **Mercados Unizar** project adheres to the transversal level. The activities proposed by the university aim to educate young people and their social circle to respect the environment. Having a respectful and resilient approach to the ecosystem improves the quality of our life and that of those around us. Every month a day is dedicated to **training programs** in the areas of **nutrition, sustainable displacement and mental health**. Young people receive constant stimuli and their knowledge, skills and competences on community engagement for environmental action increase.

Sport is a central topic of the programmes: many jobs today require little energy and place stress on the same muscles over and over again. For this reason, the lessons raise young people's awareness of **sustaining dynamic rhythms** not only by practicing a sport, but by replacing means of transport with healthy walks or long bicycle rides. It's not just enough to practice sports from time to time. Everybody should **avoid a sedentary lifestyle**, that is, remaining in a sitting position for hours without moving, habit that is harmful to the body and the mind.

The University of Zaragoza, for this purpose, created **UNIZAR MOVE**, a tool that helps the users to take care of their health and the environment with their movement. UNIZAR MOVE proposes

actions and strategies to increase physical activity in 3 key moments of daily life: commuting, work time and free time.

Moreover, always with the aim of becoming a healthy university from all points of view, UNIZAR has created **UNIZAR THE CUIDA**, a program that provides students with information, resources and activities so that they can take care of their health and that of the community. It teaches the students how to prevent and deal with the most common diseases, how to manage emotions and stress, how to promote healthy habits and how to support people who need it. This way, students can enjoy the university experience with health and well-being.

Best practices:

Which are the **best practices** in Youth engagement and climate action that your case study analizes?

Please provide some examples of best practices you tested to use in order to increase youth activism to climate change issue.

The best practices for involving young people are certainly the activities periodically organized by the University of Zaragoza: these are days completely dedicated to dissemination on topics relating to environmental sustainability and the promotion of an eco-sustainable lifestyle. An example of a strategies to encourage the purchase of products at the market were:

- To establish **prizes** for every 10 euros spent. The prizes up for grabs are tapas or other agri-food products.
- To organize a **trivia game** with gifts, delivery of illustrated postcards of organic products and a raffle for a recipe book.
- To organize an **interactive activity** to explain why soil is a vital natural resource.
- To establish an **active listening station for podcasts on environmental topics**, prepared by the students of the degree in Journalism with the participation of IUCA researchers, within the framework of the teaching innovation project "The podcast as an element of science dissemination and skill acquisition communication skills in students and researchers beyond the degree in Journalism" 2022-2023.
- To celebrate the **World No Tobacco Day** with the establishment of an Information table with informative activities on the components of tobacco and a collection of signatures in support of the proposal for a smoke-free Parque Grande.
- To celebrate **World Bicycle Day** with a fun mobility circuit, skill tests to practice different manoeuvres on the bicycle, crossing obstacles and following direction signs.
- To organize **concerts with local artists**.
- To celebrate in 2023 the **Terra Madre Day** with the Slow Food organization, simultaneously organizing local actions to celebrate together good, clean and fair food for all. 2023's theme was "**RegenerAction**". This occasion represented a way to reconnect with the world around us and act to recover our ecosystems, communities and our health. For that occasion, students could win a voucher to rescue every spending €5+. The prizes could be aprons, spoons, tapas, agri-food products etc...

Added value of practices:

Which is the **added value** they bring to the empowerment, connection and engagement of young people from peripheral territories as active practitioners/change makers in climate protection?

Examine benefits and outcomes of relevant practices concerning community engagement. Discuss how these activities may foster youth participation and activism, considering factors like enhancement of their capacities, self-confidence and the creation of opportunities to actively fight climate change in their communities with concrete local initiatives.

Operating with a view to sustainability by the practices listed certainly makes possible to safeguard the environment by the awareness of young people to the issue of climate change and the gained feeling of being **part of the community** and an **active body** for change. The activities proposed by the project Mercados Unizar provide the students with a **radical rethinking** of the way of producing and carrying out any activity.

The activities proposed teach the students to have a respectful and resilient approach to the ecosystem to improve first of all the quality of their lives and then to improve the quality of the world they live in. As individuals we have the opportunity to have a real impact on the environment through our daily choices and habits. It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the environmental challenges we face and often think that our contribution isn't really that impactful. The activities proposed by the project have the result of making understand that through small changes in our daily habits anyone can make a big difference.

Nutrition plays a fundamental role in our health and overall well-being. Opting for **0 km foods** allows you to enjoy the freshest and most nutritious products. Local fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products take **less transportation** and **storage time** than those that are imported from greater distances. Furthermore, purchasing local products can encourage **social interaction** and the creation of bonds in the community. Markets and local fairs become **meeting places** where people can meet farmers, learn about where their food comes from and share cooking tips. This also means **developing greater food awareness**, knowing the distribution of **nutritional values** that each food brings to the body and therefore encouraging the pleasure of the table and of food, understood as **nourishment**. The project Mercados Unizar promotes a slower lifestyle compared to the frenetic rhythms of daily life which, for convenience, push young people to consume fast food offered by new international chains which end up offering food of less quality and inculcating incorrect eating habits. Km 0 foods, on the other hand, promote the creation of a more **equitable and sustainable food system**.

Bringing young people closer to a healthy lifestyle is the first objective to achieve a radical change in society as they are the **true drivers of innovation**, even in the family environment which is too often poorly informed regarding the topic of sustainability. They can encourage friends, family and classmates to adopt green habits, share the information they learn and inspire others to make changes in their lives. Creating a network is essential to have a real impact on the environment. By raising awareness, each young person will be able to act as a healthy bearer of good practices.