

ECO-UNESCO

Ireland's Environmental Education and Youth Organisation



eco
U N E S C O

conserving the environment
empowering young people



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Affiliated to the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Association (WFUCA)

MESSAGE FROM CHAIRPERSON & DIRECTOR



Jamie Cudden
Chairperson
ECO-UNESCO



Elaine Nevin
National Director
ECO-UNESCO

Dear friends of ECO-UNESCO,

2017 has once again been a year of positive growth and development for ECO-UNESCO and we're delighted to present this Annual Report outlining our successes over the past 12 months.

During 2017 we have remained committed to our core work of protecting the environment and empowering young people through environmental actions, education and protecting the natural environment. Through our work we engaged with non-formal and formal education bringing a specialist environmental youth work approach and we continued to focus on youth development and youth action. Youth empowerment remains central to our work, and our Youth for Sustainable Development programme provided young people with the knowledge and skills they need to become peer educators and advocates for sustainable development and we continued to align our work to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our flagship programme, the Young Environmentalist Awards, continued to grow with over 280 groups engaged, over 4000 young people involved directly and indirectly and over 650 young people represented in the Annual Young Environmentalist Awards final hosted in the Mansion House, Dublin in May 2017. We continued to upskill and train people of all ages in sustainable development, environmental education and more. During 2017 we continued to strengthen our international links with UNESCO through the Global Action Programme (GAP) in Education for Sustainable Development and were delighted to host, in conjunction with UNESCO, the European regional GAP Youth Leadership Training with 27 young participants from all across Europe. We also engaged with other international and European programmes including Youth and the Environment Europe and ran a Transnational Youth programme with young people from across Ireland and Europe. Our green employability programmes gave participants the opportunity to engage in a specialist training and development programme to lead onto further education and employment and we continued our partnership with Accenture through their Skills to Succeed programme focusing on the delivery of a Green Skills youth employability programme.

We would like to acknowledge all of the people who are involved with ECO-UNESCO; our members, our young people, our board, staff, interns and volunteers who continue to support and deliver our programmes.

We hope you enjoy reading through the highlights of our work in 2017 and learning about the positive effect that our programmes are having on young people, their peers and communities both around the country and beyond. Into the future we will continue to offer our high quality, non-formal, specialist environmental youth programmes in a fun and safe environment, and will continue to innovate and use our resources in the most effective and efficient ways possible.

We look forward to 2018, to continuing this innovative work and making a real difference in the lives of many young people.

Jamie Cudden Elaine Nevin

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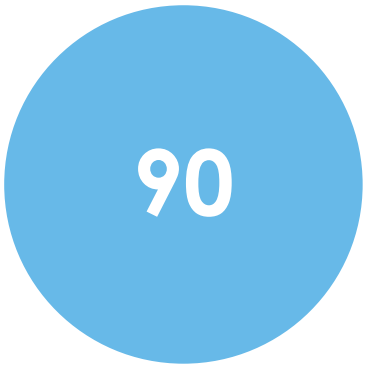
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THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



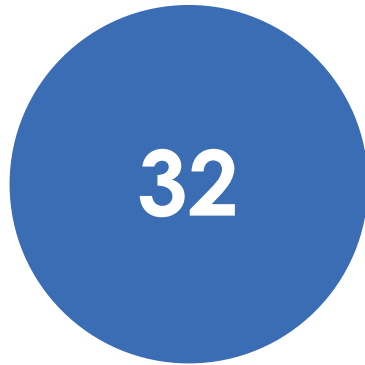
No. of QQI qualifications gained



No. of young people we worked with



No. of events, activities & workshops held



No. of counties we were active in



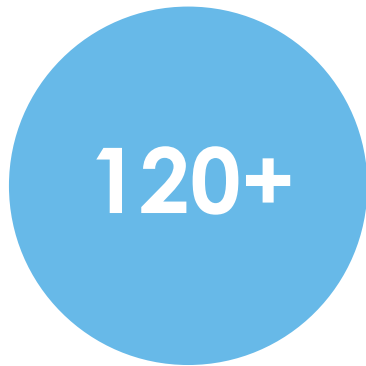
No. of young people that engaged with the YEAs



No. of followers across social media



No. of mentions in local and national media



No. of teachers trained



No. of ECO-Clubs and affiliated groups

2017

IN A NUTSHELL

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017



MARCH

Attended and presented at the **UNESCO International GAP Week of Peace and Sustainable Development International Conference.**



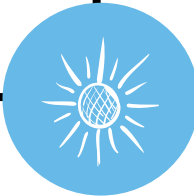
FEBRUARY

Ran in conjunction with UNESCO the **GAP Flagship Youth Leaders in ESD Training** with 27 young people from across Europe.



MAY

Over 4,000 young people took part in the **Young Environmentalist Awards**, with 287 registered projects submitted.



JULY

Ran **Summer Camps in the Phoenix Park with the OPW** in July 2017 which had over 141 participants

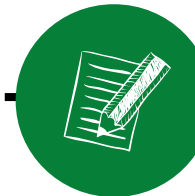


JULY

Secured support from the **Environmental Protection Agency** to develop our **Youth for Sustainable Development (YSD) programme** into a schools module and after-schools programme.

SEPTEMBER

Attended **Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme** in Venice in September 2017. x6 young people from ECO-UNESCO and staff attended and presented at the MAB conference.



SEPTEMBER

Attended and presented at the **World Environmental Education Congress.**

NOVEMBER

With support from Leargas, we ran a **Structured Dialogue** event on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). 'Youth for the Future' was a 4 day summit in Dublin Castle where Irish and other European young people got the opportunity to link them with policy makers.



DECEMBER

Expanded the YSD programme to additional locations in Ireland with launches in Carlow and Drogheda.

ABOUT ECO-UNESCO

ECO-UNESCO is Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation that works to empower young people and conserve the environment. ECO-UNESCO is a key partner of UNESCO's Global Action Programme on ESD and is a QQI accredited training centre.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

ECO-UNESCO works with young people, educators and youth leaders on environmental projects across Ireland, helping to protect and conserve the environment. Each year our programmes, workshops, events and training programmes inspire environmental action at a local level among young people, their peer groups, communities and beyond.

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE

Through our innovative peer education programmes and youthled events, ECO-UNESCO continuously strives to better achieve our mission of using environmental education as a means of empowering young people and supporting positive personal development.

ECO-UNESCO'S KEY ACTIVITIES 2017

ECO-UNESCO's programmes continue to empower and support young people to take action to protect and conserve the environment. Key highlights of our programmes in 2017 include:

ECO-YOUTH

- ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards
- Youth for Sustainable Development and Peer Education Programme
- Environmental youth events, activities and workshops
- ECO-UNESCO Clubs Programme
- ECO-Youth Choices
- Green Trails of Dublin City Centre
- Youth For the Future Summit

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Delivered Green Youth Employment programmes
- In conjunction with UNESCO, ran the European Regional training on Leadership for Sustainable Development with 27 European young people
- Information and support provided to educators, youth leaders and young people
- Discovery Primary Science and Maths accredited organisation
- Training including QQI accredited courses delivered to a wide audience
- Key Partner on the UNESCO Global Action Programme for Education for Sustainable Development
- Key partner on University Educators for Sustainable Development international project

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Development of environmental education resources.
- ECO-Sustainability Award for organisations
- Representation and advocacy for environmental education and education for sustainable development



LINK TO UNESCO

ECO-UNESCO is a Key Strategic Partner of the UNESCO Global Action Programme in Education for Sustainable Development. ECO-UNESCO is affiliated to the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA). Founded in 1981, WFUCA is responsible for informing, coordinating and mobilising its members with UNESCO's support and cooperation. ECO-UNESCO is the WFUCA affiliate in Ireland and supports and coordinates an allisland network of ECO-UNESCO environmental youth clubs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ECO-UNESCO would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of the organisation especially all of our dedicated members and funders as well as our hardworking staff, interns and volunteers.

BOARD MEMBERS: Jamie Cudden, Karen Furlong, Marie Collins, Ann Marie Kilshaw, Tom McGovern, Chris Nolan, Daniel Dockery, Niall Jennings

NATIONAL DIRECTOR: Elaine Nevin

STAFF MEMBERS: Dunchadh Kinane, Ji Hyun Kim, Niall Barrett, Susie Spratt, Lisa Wilson, Kieran Allen, Allison Phillips, Triona Reid, Cintia Marquez Silva, Evanna Craig, Sarah McMahon, Gabriel Ezutah, Justine Kinobe, Lucyna Bak, Sabrina Boccia, Carlos Cases, Luke Molloy

THE YEAR IN QUOTES

"I enjoyed the games of cooperation which helped us all bond together"

**-ECO-Choices Programme
2017 Participant**

"I enjoyed working as a team because we all got to share our opinions on the environmental issue we chose and discuss our ideas on how to approach it. It was very interesting and enjoyable."

**-YEA 2017 Participant from Mercy
Mounthawk Secondary School, Kerry**

"My favourite thing about the YEA project is being able to see what a difference we made to the local community."

**-YEA 2017 Participant from
Presentation Secondary
School Tralee, Kerry**

"I came with a very narrow idea of what I needed to know about ESD for Business Studies, but it was completely eye-opening/ I've now broadened my teaching and see how this could be applied all the way through the junior cycle too."

**-Learning 2 Change Teacher Training 2017
Participant**

"I.. (will use this).. because the knowledge will be important in the next four decades"

**-Climate Action Programme
2017 Participant**

"I feel I will be able to give more advice in the future due to the knowledge I have gained."

**-Food Waste & Home
Economics Programme
2017 Participant**

"ECO-UNESCO gives young people a chance to learn more about the world we live in."

**-Youth for Sustainable
Development Participant
2017**

YOUTH PROGRAMMES

10-18



ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH PROGRAMMES

ECO-UNESCO raised awareness on a broad range of environmental issues through our range of Youth programmes with young people in schools, youth organisations, community groups, and local authorities. The programmes, which include the Young Environmentalist Awards, Youth for Sustainable Development, ECO-Clubs, Learning2Change Our World, ECOChoices, and Environmental events and workshops, provide an opportunity for young people to learn about the environment, develop sensitivity towards nature, and empower them to carry out action projects which benefit the young person, their peers and the community.

CELEBRATING OUR ENVIRONMENT

ECO-UNESCO celebrated key environmental dates, raising environmental awareness through a range of youth events and activities including:

- **WORLD WATER DAY** – In March 2017, over 35 young people celebrated with an event at Europe House, which was facilitated by the Youth for Sustainable Development group. This event focused on 3 SDGs (Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Goal 14: Life Below Water)
- **EARTH DAY** – A UN Earth Day event was held in St. Anne's Park on April 22nd to highlight the environmental issues associated with single use plastic bottles. This event focused on SDG goals 12: Responsible Consumption, 13: Climate Action, and 14 Life Below Water.
- **BIODIVERSITY WEEK** – A series of Dublin City Green Trails were carried out throughout National Biodiversity Week. ECO-UNESCO's Dublin City Green Trail is a 2-hour walking tour exploring cultural and natural heritage, and biodiversity in St. Stephens Green, Merrion Square and Iveagh Gardens. YSD participants were invited to attend as guide assistants and received training on the delivery of the green trails.
- **FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT CAMPAIGN** - Dublin YSD participants engaged in a campaign to advocate for support of the Fossil Fuel Divestment Bill in January 2017. YSD participants joined young people from Trócaire and the Stop Climate Chaos network to launch a social media campaign to contact their local T.Ds to support the Bill.

YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Youth for Sustainable Development (YSD) programme provides opportunities for young people to engage in quality development education/education for sustainable development activities, and strengthen their capacity to take action on global justice issues by empowering them to act as youth leaders and peer development educators. The YSD programme expanded in 2017 with the recruitment of two new Regional Development officers who worked on expanding the roll out 4 YSD regional groups in Drogheda, Carlow, Bray and Kildare .

115

Young people engaged across Dublin

30

Youth participants trained as Peer Educators

70+

Engaged in 10 month Youth Summit



YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GLOBAL YOUTH LEADERS FOR CHANGE

In 2017, 115 young people from across Dublin have engaged with the Youth for Sustainable Development Global Youth Leaders for Change Programme which ran on a weekly basis. Young people were trained as peer educators during a 12 week structured programme and progressed to carry out local action projects which were submitted to the Young Environmentalist Awards. In addition, the young people were involved in many activities throughout 2017 outside of the weekly workshops.

12 WEEK 'YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE' PROGRAMME

A 12 week Youth for the Future Programme took place between October and December 2017 and consisted of 12 x 2 hour workshops on Wednesday evenings. This programme acts as the initial training phase for the YSD programme by introducing participants to Peer Education for Sustainable Development, and aims to build participants communications, teamwork, and project planning skills. A number of different methods were employed to engage the young people in a fun and educational environment, including role play activities, film nights, and outdoor excursions. A total of 46 young people from across Dublin City registered throughout the programme, with a total of 32 returning following the Christmas/New Year school break. This group was then merged into the existing Y-PEP group following a graduation ceremony.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Young people making submissions to public policy such as the Citizens Assembly process and the mid-term review of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development.
2. **World Wise Global Schools Conference:** 8 YSD participants attended the WWGS conference in Croke Park in April 2017. They attended in the role of youth facilitators, leading groups of 10 young people through the days activities. YSD participant Phillip Manifold was also invited to give a keynote speech on his previous YEA winning action project 'Leap 2 the Future'. This action project advocated for the Dublin Bikes scheme to be accessible to young people with a Leap Card.
3. **One World Week:** 9 YSD participants attended the NYCI One World Week event in the Aviva Stadium on 23rd November 2017.
4. **Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign:** Dublin YSD participants engaged in a campaign to advocate for support of the Fossil Fuel Divestment Bill in January 2017. YSD participants joined young people from Trócaire and the Stop Climate Chaos network to launch a social media campaign to contact their local TDs to support the Bill.
5. **NYCI Youth Event:** 10 YSD participants joined over 300 young people from across Ireland at the National Youth Showcase 2017 'Youth Work Changes Lives', on 27th September 2017. The young people in attendance had an opportunity to meet politicians from their local constituencies and showcase the work they have done in their youth groups and in their local communities.
6. **World Water Day:** An event was held to celebrate UN World Water Day in March 2017. This was a youth led event, facilitated by a number of YSD participants who were taking part in QQI training in Peer Education. This event focused on 3 SDGs (Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Goal 14: Life Below Water). This event was hosted by the European Commission in Europe House on the 22nd March and had 35 people in attendance.
7. **Earth Day:** A UN Earth Day event was held in St. Anne's Park on April 22nd to highlight the environmental issues associated with single use plastic bottles. This event focused on SDG goals 12: Responsible Consumption, 13: Climate Action, and 14 Life Below Water

YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

TEEN SUMMER CAMPS

Between June 28th-30th 2017, ECO-UNESCO hosted a teen summer camp, which was open for young people from outside the regular YSD group. Ten young people registered for the 5-day Summer camp and were joined by a number of YSD Youth Leaders who facilitated a number of workshops and lead a number of hikes and visits to nature. A different location was visited each day and participants explored a broad range on environmental and sustainable development issues throughout the week. The teen camp visited Howth Head, Bull Island, Phoenix Park, Barnaslingan Wood, and a number of city parks throughout the 5 days.

YEA 2017

The Young Environmentalist Awards showcase took place in May 2017 and featured 8 projects submitted from the YSD groups, focusing on a range of different topics. The projects were entered into a number of different award categories including climate change, water, Eco-Community Development, Eco-Enterprise and transport. A project submitted by Dublin YSD Group named 'Write to Refuge' won the Climate Change category. The main aim of the project was to establish a pen-pal system between young people living in Ireland and climate refugees in direct provision accommodation centres.

YOUTH SUMMIT

ECO-UNESCO's Environmental Youth Summit is a 10-month long 'Structured-Dialogue' initiative funded under Erasmus+ that comprises of a series of events, trainings and action projects for over 70 Irish and European young people. The aim of this project was to equip young people with the knowledge they need to recognise and harness their power and the tools to influence the achievement of the SDGs. Young people gained the confidence to voice their opinions to decision-makers on how Ireland can respond to present and future challenges. As part of the Youth for the Future project, the motivated young people met in Dublin Castle for a 3-day Environmental Youth Leader Summit from October 31st – November 2nd. This involved 3 days of project work, workshops and discussions, all inspired by 3 of the SDGs; Climate Action, Sustainable Consumption & Production, and Sustainable Cities. During the Summit, young people met with experts on the SDGs and environmental policy. This was a valuable opportunity for young people to speak directly with the experts to get their voices heard on matters that influence their generation. Young people also had the chance to be inspired by Youth Activists who attended the Summit to share their experience of taking meaningful action for positive change. A number of projects formulated at this youth summit have been submitted to the YEA 2018. The young people have also fed into the review of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development; the Citizens Assembly on Climate change and the National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals.

QQI ACCREDITED TRAINING

A total of 30 participants have been trained as Peer Educators through QQI Level 5 accredited training throughout the 2017. The participants attended an intensive training at ECO-UNESCO HQ. Those who have been trained this year have begun their year of action and will continue to act as peer mentors for the remainder of time as participants of the YSD programme.

YSD PROGRAMME EXPANSION

In 2017 the YSD programme was busy building partnerships across the country to support the establishment of YSD youth groups in various areas around Ireland including Drogheda, Bray, Carlow and Kildare. All four regional groups were launched in January 2018.



LEARNING TO CHANGE OUR WORLD

The Learning2Change Our World Programme works with post primary schools throughout Ireland to encourage principals, teachers and young people to engage with a Whole School Approach to Development Education/ Education for Sustainable Development (DE/ ESD). In 2017, the Learning 2 Change programme achieved its objectives through teacher training, regional teacher & student training, in-school workshops, student council training and regional networking all of which were delivered using active learning methodologies and which promoted action project work.



No. of Schools Engaged



No. of Workshops



No. of Teachers Reached



No. of Young People Engaged



No. of Counties Reached

In workshops delivered throughout 2017, teachers and young people explored DE/ESD focusing on themes of sustainable development, sustainable development goals local and global connections and strengthening peer to peer learning techniques. Following the Learning2Change programme, teachers and young people went on to develop possible ways to integrate DE/ESD into their schools and to take action in a meaningful way including raising awareness in their broader communities.

ACTION PROJECTS

A large number of groups who participated in the Learning 2 Change programme entered and won prizes at the Young Environmentalist Awards including two groups from Westport who won prizes for their projects 'Unwrapped' which tackled plastic packaging and HAUS, and in-depth project around the Fashion Industry. Another project, 'Fix Our Flood' also won an award, carried out by young people from Bailieborough in Cavan, which looked at flooding in their local area. As part of this project they young people took great initiative and set up meeting with their local policy makers.



YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Young people from St Michael's Community College Kilmihil, Clare taking part in our Learning to Change Our World programme.

YOUTH EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

ECO-UNESCO's wide range of workshops and programmes for young people continued to be delivered across Ireland throughout 2017.

286



No. of young people
who took part in 11
Creative Recycling
Workshops

72



No. of young people
who took part in 5
ECO-Watchers
Workshops

50



No. of young people
who took part in 15
Fashion Focus
Workshops

A number of our workshops delivered in 2017, many in conjunction with Local Authorities under Local Agenda 21, Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Awareness Grants, including: ECO-WORKSHOPS

We continued to deliver a range of environmental education workshops as part of the Local Authority Environmental Partnership Fund and Anti-Litter Fund and delivered 29 workshops in partnership with 12 County Councils. ECO-UNESCO's flagship series of ECO workshops for young people are a firm favourite across the country with schools and youth groups alike. The ECO-Watchers series includes topics such as Waste, Water, Energy, Climate Change and Biodiversity. Workshops can be tailored to the specific needs of different groups, for different ages, contexts and time available.

SUMMER CAMPS

In 2017 we ran a Summer Teen Camp in June from our offices in Dublin city centre. 10 young people took part in a series of outdoor excursions visiting Howth Head, Bull Island and Barnaslingan Woods where they explored the natural environment and learned about biodiversity. For the month of July 2017, we designed and delivered the Phoenix Park Summer Camp in conjunction with the OPW. A total of 141 children attended over the four-week period.

EUROPEAN YOUTH EVENT, STRASBOURG

A number of young people represented ECO-UNESCO at the European Youth Event in Strasbourg from 19th - 21st of May. The event had over 7,500 participants. The event was based around the Sustainable Development Goals and Integration/Diversity. The event was also attended by members of the European Parliament which provided the opportunity for young people to meet with them and discuss these topics in an inclusive way.

YOUTH SUMMIT – YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE

During 2017 we secured funding from Leargas to run a Structured Dialogue on the Sustainable Development Goals; we ran a 3 day Youth Summit – Youth for the Future with Irish and other European young people linking them with policy makers in Dublin Castle in November 2017. The event took place in Dublin Castle in November 2017.



ECO-CHOICES

The ECO-Choices programme is an innovative health and well-being programme that utilises environmental education, education for sustainable development and peer education methods as a resource for positive personal development in at-risk young people to prevent the misuse of drugs. In 2017, 168 young people participated directly in the programme through 156 workshops, trainings & events delivered by the ECO-Choices team.

ECO-YOUTH CHOICES FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

The participating groups in 2017 were primarily from Drimnagh Castle Secondary School, Pleasants Street Youthreach, Stoneybatter Youth Service, and Stanhope Street Secondary School in Dublin.

Part of the programme involves carrying out local action projects. Young people from Drimnagh Castle Secondary School delivered interactive workshops to first year students in their school on a number of environmental issues, setting a great example of active citizenship to these younger students. Students from Pleasants Street Youthreach took it upon themselves to clear out and spruce up an unloved outdoor space in their centre with contemporary designs and increased plant life to boost biodiversity.

Young people from Stanhope Street Secondary School carried out research on sources of water waste in their school and community, and then carried out an awareness raising and behaviour change campaign in school. Through a blue-themed non-uniform day, which took place on U.N. World Water Day, they raised approximately €150 for an international water charity.

Young people from Stoneybatter Youth Service were interested to learn about the impacts of the fashion industry on workers and the environment and came up with a local and sustainable solution to fast fashion: making their own clothes from fabric offcuts and second-hand materials. They researched the fashion industry, sought out sewing workshops from local dressmakers, sourced materials from fabric stores and charity shops. When they had made their garments, they displayed them in exhibitions in the local area and brought their project to ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards, where they took first place in the Senior Art and Design category!

ACCREDITED TRAINING

48 young people took part in accredited QQI Level 3 training in Eco-Community Development.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

A central aspect of the ECO-Choices programme involves outdoor learning in natural areas accessible from Dublin City, due to the proven mental and physical health benefits. We incorporate physical exercise, through hikes and games, and also give the young people an opportunity to connect with nature through activities that allow them to experience wild places in new ways. In 2017, trips included going to Barnaslingan Woods in the Dublin Mountains, Howth head and a number of parks in Dublin City Centre such as Phoenix Park and green spaces in Dublin 7.

ECO-CLUBS & AFFILIATED GROUPS

ECO-UNESCO Clubs are groups of young people who are in an existing club who undertake environmental activities, or come together to form an ECO-Club and affiliate to ECO-UNESCO. There are 347 ECO-UNESCO affiliated clubs and groups on the island of Ireland who have taken action to support their local environment.

2017 IN NUMBERS

- 13** new clubs were established.
- 11** groups from YEA 2018 signed up as clubs in 2017
- 01** new club from a local community (not affiliated with a school or organisation), by email. From Castletroy, Limerick
- 02** clubs (De La Salle & Ballinteer Community School) set up and given training under Anti-Litter Fund 2017 (Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown) as part of the ECO-UNESCO Environmental Action Programme. Both schools received a range of workshops and both carried out and submitted projects to YEA 2018
- 85** young people from 5 schools were offered a range of subjects via the DLR Club HUB programme including capacirt building and project planning



ECO-Choices at
Stoneybatter Youth
Service



ECO-Choices at
Stanhope Secondary
School



Young people from
Stoneybatter Youth
Service winning their
category at the YEA's

TRAINING & UPSKILLING

PROGRAMMES 18-25

EDUCATION & TRAINING

ECO-UNESCO is a QQI Accredited Training provider, running a range of courses as part of our Youth Employment, Youth for Sustainable Development and ECO-Choices programmes. We run our accredited courses in house and also on a consultancy basis for other training providers.

ACCREDITED TRAINING N 2017

- 131** people completed QQI training in 2017
- 007** certified in Work Experience Level 5 (5N1356)
- 009** certified in Sustainable Development Level 5 (5N5905)
- 101** certified in Community Participation Level 3 (3N2908) -
- 011** certified in Growing Vegetables Level 5 (4N0671)

NON-ACCREDITED TRAINING

We also run non-accredited training on a range of environmental and sustainable development topics, particularly aimed at teachers and youth leaders. In 2017 we delivered:

UNESCO GLOBAL ACTION PROGRAMME IN ESD TRAINING

During 2017 we hosted the European Regional Training of the UNESCO Flagship Global Action Programme in ESD in conjunction with UNESCO. The training was held with support from the Department of Education and Skills and Irish Aid, ran with over 27 young people, who post the training have worked with over 1,020 additional young people throughout Europe. The programme was supported by UNESCO as part of the Global Action Programme in ESD.

LEARNING 2 CHANGE OUR WORLD

We continued to run the Learning2Change Our World programme, with 27 schools visited and 30 workshops delivered to embed a whole-school approach to ESD. This included delivered regional training, in-school workshops for 124 teachers and 1063 young people. Learning2Change was supported by Irish Aid through the World Wise Global Schools programme.

ECO-SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

The ECO-Sustainability Award aims to encourage youth and community organisations to become more sustainable by providing organisations with training, ongoing support and a practical toolkit based on the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2017 Sunbeam House Bray received the silver ECO-Sustainability Award after engaging in a huge amount of work to make their facilities more environmentally friendly.

EDUCATION & TRAINING (CONTINUED)

UNESCO GLOBAL ACTION PROGRAMME (GAP)

ECO-UNESCO is a Key Partner of UNESCO's Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development under Key Priority Action 4 – Mobilising and Empowering Young people. GAP Key Partners were selected by UNESCO due to their significant contributions to ESD and ECO-UNESCO works alongside 80 other Key Partner organisations internationally promoting and supporting ESD locally. During 2017, the GAP programme started a review process and a new global ESD programme will be implemented from 2020 onwards.

JOINT FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME ON ESD

ECO-UNESCO Club of Ireland in conjunction with UNESCO, ran the 2 day GAP training on the 21st and 22nd February 2017 for the European region. 27 young people from 10 countries attended. The training was supported by the Irish Ministry of Education, which provided the training space as well as publicising the initiative. The Irish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Irish Aid) also supported the programme and hosted an evening reception for participants. Participants also attended the post-workshop excursion to the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve on North Bull Island in Dublin Bay to learn about its significant ecological value.

Of those who attended:

- 59% were female and 41% were male
- 55% were aged between 21 and 25; 30% were between 26 and 30 and 15% were between 31 and 35
- 45% came from the NGO sector (incl. youth organisations, community groups); 51% Student union/Student network/university and 4% from the UN
- 33% were resident in Ireland; 37% in the UK (including Northern Ireland); and 33% in other EU countries
- There were 10 nationalities 33% from Ireland; 22% from UK; 26% from other EU incl. Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Greece, Sweden; 8% came from outside EU incl. Argentina and South Africa

ADDITIONAL WORKSHOPS

Post the 2 day GAP training, the Youth Leaders went on to deliver over 33 additional workshops to 1020+ additional young people in 10 countries including Ireland, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, Greece, Finland and South Africa have been given as a result of the GAP ESD training to date, with Ireland and Belgium having the highest level of participation.

The workshops covered a wide range of issues related to sustainable development including the Sustainable Development goals, sustainable food consumption; biodiversity etc.

There was a wide range of topics and issues covered including:

- Sustainable Sharing
- Green Lancaster UNESCO-ESD Workshop
- March Inbound - Green Lancaster International Student Activities
- Co-ops Get Creative
- Leadership Training for Education for Sustainable Development
- Leave No One Behind Conversation SDG's
- Sustainable Peer Leadership
- Youth Sustainability Leaders South West
- Sustainable Dinner; How Can we Collect Food that is Being Wasted from the Local Market?
- Building a Sustainable Community
- What is Young Activism?; Non Violent Direct Action (NVDA)
- 2030 Sustainable Goals
- Bangor's Biodiversity - How we Help
- Sustainable Development Goals Awareness
- Facilitation Practice for ESD
- Mov'in Europe Future
- What it Takes to be a Young Activist/Youth Ambassador
- Active Citizen for a Sustainable Future; World Water Day Event
- Sustainable Development Goal



GREEN YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

In 2017 ECO-UNESCO continued to build on the success of its previous Green Youth Employment programmes by running a variety of employability courses including a 12 week Green Steps programme (funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund) and x2 10 week Green Skills programmes (funded by Accenture) all in Dublin City Centre. ECO-UNESCO also rolled out its first 10week Green Skills programme in Bray Co. Wicklow (also funded by Accenture) in the Summer of 2017.

IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY

In 2017, 108 unemployed people, primarily from socially and economically disadvantaged areas attended a variety of modules including: Sustainable Development (QQI Level 5); and Work Experience (QQI Level 5), Outdoor Vegetable and Crop Production (QQI Level 4) and Eco Community Development (QQI Level 3). At the end of these modules participants gained skills in critical thinking, team work and increased their knowledge and understanding of current global issues and sustainability. Furthermore, they have grown in confidence and have raised self-esteem. For many the programme has proved key in their own personal development and guiding them towards the next step in their career.

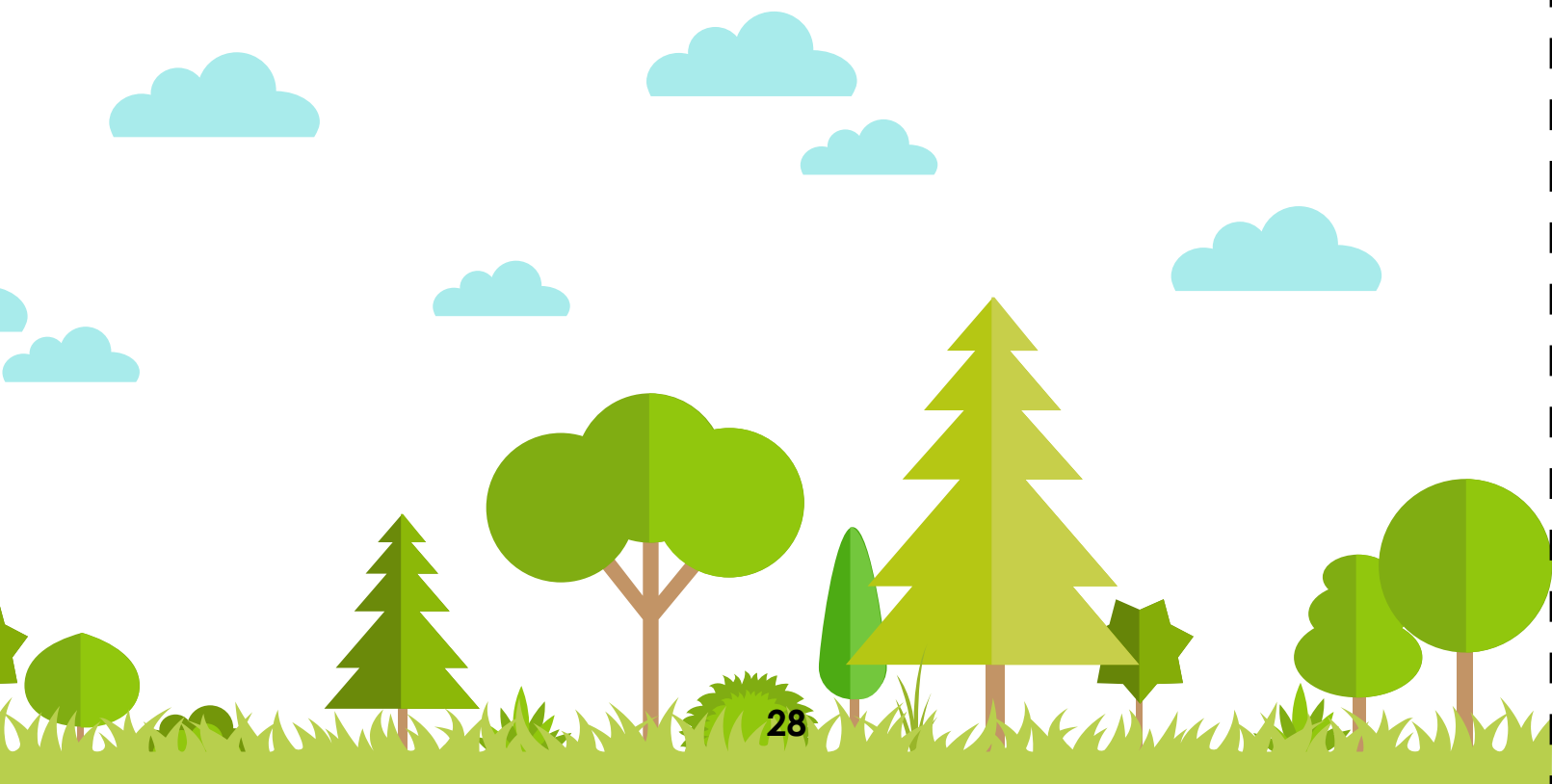
42% of participants (64% identifying as male & 36% identifying as female) who completed the 12 week Green Steps programme have now progressed onto employment, training or education. Some participants have returned to school, others have joined government supported employment programmes and the remainder have progressed on to third level education, training or employment. Overall success in the Green Skills programme was similar with 52% of participants securing paid employment, joining government supported employment programmes, returning to school or commencing further training. 52% of participants on the Green Skills programme identify as male, the remaining 48% identify as female.

The delivery of Accenture's online training platform, Skills 2 Succeed Academy also exceeded expectations with an overall reach of 176 participants across Youth Employment, ECO Choices and YSD programmes. ECO-UNESCO's user to learner conversion rate on S2S Academy is 98%, this was the highest rating of any of Accenture's partners globally in 2017

OUTDOOR VEGETABLE AND CROP PRODUCTION

In 2017, the Green Youth Employability gave participants the opportunity to gain a QQI Level 4 qualification in Outdoor Vegetable and Crop Production.

The purpose of this award is to equip the learner with the knowledge, skills and competence to produce a crop of outdoor vegetables under supervision



YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST

AWARDS

4,000+

No. of young people that engaged with the YEAs

287

No. of projects registered for the YEAs

+600

No. of young people that received the 6 Steps to Success Training Workshops

FUNDERS & SPONSORS

ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards 2017 was supported by Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Environmental Protection Agency, Dublin City Council, Trócaire, Concern Worldwide, Irish Aid, and Enrich. The ECO-Dens were supported by 13 local councils in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) programme continued to grow, empowering young people to become better citizens, build awareness of environmental issues and promote simple lifestyle changes to improve the environment.

In 2017, over 4,000 young people from across Ireland took part in the Young Environmentalist Awards Programme, with 287 groups from primary, secondary schools and youth/community groups entering their innovative, passionate, and inspiring projects to improve their environment and raise awareness about local and global environmental issues.

YEA 2017 projects registered were spread across the country in Connaught (x24), Ulster (x20), Munster (x109), Leinster (x131). Of the 287 registrations, 166 (58%) of the entrants were new to the programme, and there was good participation from the non-formal youth sector (30 registered groups).

6 STEPS TO SUCCESS TRAINING

ECO-UNESCO delivered 31 free '6 Steps to Success' training to young people, teachers, and youth leaders. The training is designed to help young people become well-equipped to carry out their very own environmental action project and to provide support and advice in developing project ideas, exploring what is involved in project management.

In 2017 training was delivered to approximately 600 young people nationally. This year, we saw high quality projects (especially high quality project reports) coming from the groups who took part in the YEA training sessions.

ECO-DENS

The ECO-Dens are regional 'Dragon's Den' style judging events where YEA groups are given the opportunity of pitching their project to a panel of expert regional judges. The ECO-Dens were a great success with 105 groups attending one of the 6 regional ECO-Dens. They took place in March 2017 at key regional hubs within each province in Ireland: Ulster (Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Armagh); Connaught (The Institute for Lifecourse and Society of NUI Galway, Galway); Munster (University College Cork, Cork); and Leinster (European Commission Representation in Ireland, Dublin). The ECO-Dens also received support from 13 different local authorities.

SHOWCASE AND AWARDS CEREMONY

The YEA Showcase and Ceremony was held on 23rd of May in the Round Room of the Mansion House, Dublin. It was the largest YEA Showcase and Awards Ceremony to date with 84 quality finalist projects on display.

This was a high-profile youth focused event. In attendance were over 650 young people, teachers, youth leaders and members of the public as well as high profile guests including Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Denis Naughten, Lord Mayor of Dublin Brendan Carr, UNESCO Programme Specialist Philippe Pypaert and RTE Presenters Ande Gray and Clara Murray as Masters of Ceremonies.

During the Showcase, the 84 finalist groups exhibited their brilliant ideas, which range from exploring the linkages between climate change and gender to creating vibrant bio-diverse habitats for bees. An expert panel of judges visited each group and discussed their project. With an opportunity to voice their achievements and concerns with regards to their environmental projects, young people gained confidence and furthered various skills such as communication skills, planning and project management skills. In addition to the exhibition of the projects, there were several zones where young people could engage in fun and interactive environmental activities such as the Biodiversity Zone, Swap Zone, Sustainability Zone, and more. At the Awards Ceremony, 2 Overall Awards, 22 Category Awards, and 11 Special Awards were presented to celebrate young people's achievements in their environmental endeavours.

EXHIBITION

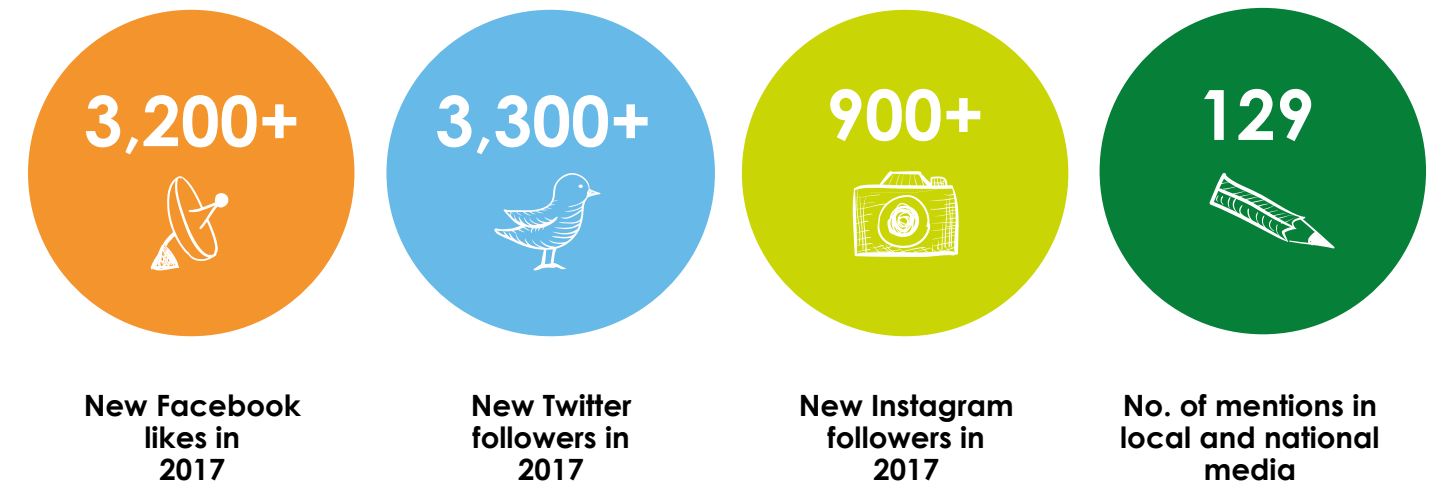
Following the YEA Showcase and Ceremony, the finalist projects were exhibited in European Commission Representation in Ireland throughout August 2017, allowing members of the public to view the projects.

HOW WE OPERATE

COMMUNICATIONS & REPRESENTATION

MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

ECO-UNESCO events received substantial coverage in both regional and national media, including print, TV and radio. ECO-UNESCO's work was promoted through magazines, e-newsletters, external websites and event guides throughout the year, with a focus on the environmental, youth and education sectors. We put a lot of work into growing our social media following, and got the following results:



NEWSLETTER AND E-BULLETIN

ECO-UNESCO has kept our Members, programme users, schools, funders, volunteers, Clubs, among other external stakeholders up to date with key events and activities through our Annual Newsletter 2017-18, disseminated in the annual direct mail campaign to over 1500 secondary schools, libraries, ETBs, and at all external events. We also produce a monthly E-bulletin for our supporters.

PUBLICATIONS

In 2017, ECO-UNESCO continued to develop its range of resources and publications. Some of the published highlights from 2017 include:

- YEA 2017 Finalist booklet
- ECO-UNESCO Newsletter 2017-18
- Produced a wide range of informational and marketing material to promote our programmes and educational resources for key environmental days

REPRESENTATION & ADVOCACY IN 2017

ECO-UNESCO remained active in:



The Advisory Group for the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development



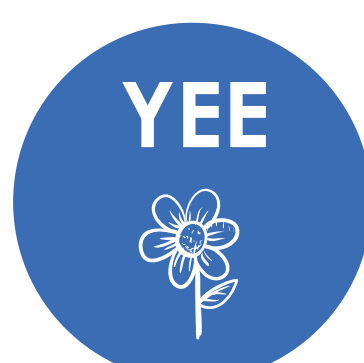
Coalition 2030 - a coalition of civil society organisations promoting the SDG's



The Advisory committee of the Environmental Protection Agency



The National Youth Council of Ireland



Youth and the Environment Europe

COLLABOARTIVE WORKING

We partnered with the IEN, World Vision and Social Justice Ireland on a successful European wide DEAR funded project to promote and build awareness of the SDG's in Ireland. In particular ECO-UNESCOs is working to promote awareness of and action for the SDG's in young people through our Young Environmentalist Awards and Youth for Sustainable Development programmes.

UNESCO & INTERNATIONAL WORK

YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT EUROPE (YEE)

YEE are a Europe wide network of over 40 environmental youth organisations across 26 countries. ECO-UNESCO has been a full member of the network for over 20 years and has played a very active role in the last year. ECO-UNESCO attended the YEE annual meeting in Helsinki, Finland in July 2017. Niall contributed to YEE's annual implementation plan and strategy and was elected to the board of YEE in the capacity of their External Relations Officer.

UNESCO MAN AND BIOSPHERE PROGRAMME (MAB)

ECO-UNESCO attended the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Youth Forum in Venice in September 2017 and was represented by 4 young people and staff. The Youth Forum provided an opportunity to learn about the importance of Biospheres and the importance of engaging young people. Dublin Bay is a Biosphere and ECO-UNESCO highlights the Biosphere in our work with young people; it also uses Bull Island as an outdoor education location for our youth programmes.

WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CONGRESS

ECO-UNESCO attended the World Environmental Education Congress in 2017 which was attended by Environmental educators, practitioners, researchers and experts from around the world. The Congress provided an opportunity to learn about the latest developments in environmental education and to highlight the work of ECO-UNESCO. ECO-UNESCO presented on work in youth empowerment and engagement through our innovative approaches with a particular focus on. Action-based learning and how it engages young people in planning and taking action on environmental and sustainability issues.

NORTHERN IRELAND

ECO-UNESCO is committed to working with young people across the island of Ireland.

In 2017 ECO-UNESCO worked closely with environmental and youth organisations to deliver workshops and trainings as well as shared strategies for providing environmental education in Northern Ireland.

In YEA 2017, the Ulster ECO-Den was supported by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, and Mid Ulster District Council.

GAP WEEK OF PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

In 2017, ECO-UNESCO attended the GAP Week of Peace and Sustainable Development Conference in Ottawa and presented on our work on engaging and empowering young people in actions for sustainable development. This highlighted our Youth for Sustainable Development peer education and training model and our Action project work under Young Environmentalist Awards as key tools for engaging and empowering young people. The Conference also included the annual GAP meeting where we met with GAP Key Partners from around the world.

COLLABORATIVE WORK

Throughout 2017, ECO-UNESCO continued to develop links and partnerships with agencies, organisations and businesses to provide environmental education, youth programmes and teacher and leader trainings in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. ECO-UNESCO actively engaged on an ongoing basis with young people, youth leaders, educators, external organisations and other key target groups. This engagement included collaborative work, focus groups and surveys to ensure that all ECO-UNESCO programmes remained responsive to the needs of young people in particular, as well as the general environmental, educational and youth sectors.

A sample of our collaborative work from 2017 includes:

- Collaborative work with institutions including Local Authorities, National Libraries and Secondary schools throughout the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, Youthreach Centres, Youth Groups and Youth officers.
- ECO-UNESCO continued to have a presence with young people in schools throughout Ireland in a non-formal capacity through extracurricular activities and project work such as the YEA, DPSM, environmental workshops, and ECO-UNESCO Clubs.

GAISCE

We became an official challenge partner of Gaisce, the President's Award.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

ECO-UNESCO works with Local Authorities nationwide through funding from the Environmental Partnership Fund. The fund allows ECO-UNESCO to work with communities, fulfilling important aspects of the Local Agenda 21 remit. ECO-UNESCO builds the capacity of young people, teachers and leaders to address environmental issues. In addition, through the ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards a number of Local Authorities supported the regional ECO-Dens through sponsorship, venue sponsorship as well as representation on the judging panels.

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL IRELAND

ECO-UNESCO proactively engages with the National Youth Council of Ireland; it is represented on the National Youth Council of Ireland Board and chairs their Specialist Organisation Network.

YOUTHREACH

ECO-UNESCO further developed its links with Youthreach in 2017 in order to provide training to early school leavers. Participation in the YEA by Youthreach Centres also increased in 2017.



LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT

The following local authorities supported our Young Environmentalist Award ECO-Dens in 2017:

- Monaghan County Council
- Galway City Council
- Galway County Council
- Clare County Council
- Wexford County Council
- Cork County Council
- Longford County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Donegal County Council
- Westmeath County Council
- Meath County Council
- Mayo County Council
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

FUNDING

ECO-UNESCO is funded by a variety of national and European agencies contributing to both the overall development of the organisation and project specific work. ECO-UNESCO also receives funding from corporate sources, consultancy and membership and programme fees.

IN 2017 ECO-UNESCO'S MAIN CORE FUNDING CAME FROM:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs
 IEN Core Funding
 Department of Community and Rural Development under SSNO
 Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
 Department of Foreign Affairs – Irish Aid

ECO-UNESCO RECEIVED FUNDING FROM:

The Environmental Protection Agency
 DCYA administered through City of Dublin Youth Service Board
 Local Authorities nationwide under the Environmental Partnership Fund and Anti-Litter fund
 Erasmus+

ECO-UNESCO RECEIVED A RANGE OF FUNDING RELATED TO SPECIFIC PROJECTS INCLUDING:

Dormant Accounts Fund / Pobal
 Worldwide Global Schools from Irish Aid
 Phoenix Park Summer Programme: Office of Public Works
 Accenture
 Trocaire
 Concern
 UNESCO
 UNIDO

Our Audited Accounts for 2017 are available to download from our website www.ecounesco.ie

GOVERNANCE

ECO-UNESCO is governed by a voluntary board of Directors made up of members. A good gender balance and diversity of appropriate skills is in place, ensuring that the board can meet its aims in oversight and policy development.

LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS IN 2017 INCLUDE:

Jamie Cudden
 Karen Furlong
 Marie Collins
 Ann Marie Kilshaw
 Tom McGovern
 Chris Nolan
 Daniel Dockery
 Niall Jennings

In 2017 there were 5 Board meetings held, with 1 Special Strategic Planning Meeting; there were 2 meetings of the Audit, Risk and Finance sub-committee and 3 meetings of the HR sub-committee. A special Building Sub-committee was established. The AGM took place in December 2017.

Appropriate financial policies and procedures are in place, complying with statutory requirements and ECO-UNESCO's audited accounts are available on our website.

GOVERNANCE CODES

ECO-UNESCO is a signatory of the Dochas code of images and messages; is signed up to the Governance Code; complies with Quality Assurance from the Quality and Qualifications Ireland and reports to the Charities Regulatory Authority.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021

We also undertook the development of a new four year Strategic Plan running from 2018 to 2021.

ECO-UNESCO made submissions to the following:

- Department of Education and Skills for the Mid-term review of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development
- Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment for the development of first Irish National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Citizens Assembly on Climate Change

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORK (NQS) QUALITY STANDARDS

ECO-UNESCO is implementing the National Quality Standards for Youth Organisations and has completed a 3 year cycle. In 2016 it began a second 3 year cycle and completed an organisational review and the development of a Continuous improvement plan and liaises with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs Standards Officers.

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eco

U N E S C O

conserving the environment
empowering young people



An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs

ECO-UNESCO is supported by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs with support from the National Lottery Fund.



Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaíthe
ar son na hAeide & Comhshaoil
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment

ECO-UNESCO is part-funded by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment through the Irish Environmental Network

IEN 
Irish Environmental Network

ECO-UNESCO is a registered Irish charity no. CHY 7225