PyleaMUN 2026

Economic and Social Council

Sustainable Entrepreneurship: Youth in the Green Economy

Proposing Incentives and Capacity-Building for Student-Led Start-ups in Renewable Energy, Circular Design, and Low-Carbon Tech

Chair: Konstantinos Kaimakamis
Vice Chair: Angelos Triantafyllou
Vice Chair: Rafaela Chrysostomidou

1. Personal Introduction

Honourable Delegates,

Here are some things you should know about us.

My name is Konstantinos Kaimakamis, 17, and I will be your chair for this Conference. I am very passionate about exploring the world of entrepreneurship and business. This passion has led me to dive deeper into launching start-ups and innovation, a topic very relevant to this committee's subject. I have participated in 2 other MUN conferences and this is my first time as chair, but I am confident that together our experience is going to be smooth and enjoyable! After all, an MUN conference is an excellent opportunity to learn about a subject, hold your own in a debate and expand your network!

Thus, to facilitate your preparation, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns about the Rules of Procedure, the Study Guides, the Position Papers or any other preparation related issues at konoskaimak@gmail.com. I am looking forward to meeting you all!

Your Chair

I'm Angelos Triantafyllou, 17, a student at the Experimental Senior High School of the University of Macedonia, with a strong passion for business strategy, finance, technology, and innovation. I have served as Deputy CEO & Business Navigator at LoopLab, a student-founded start-up, and I have worked as a Management Trainee at the Porsche Centre Thessaloniki of the Motodynamics Group, gaining valuable experience in organizational operations and strategic development. I am currently a member of the Greek NewSpace Society and have previously been part of the National Robotics Team. My work has been recognized with the PMIEF Best Application of Project Management Award, along with other distinctions for innovation and leadership. I am driven by strategic thinking, strong organizational skills, and a commitment to excellence, qualities that guide my projects and professional growth.

I am open to your questions.

Your Vice-Chair

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Honourable Delegates,

I am Rafailia (Rafaela) Chrysostomidou, a 16- year-old student of the Experimental School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. It is my sheer pleasure to welcome you to PyleaMUN 2026 and particularly to the ECOSOC committee. MUN has granted me the opportunity to participate in several conferences and committees, addressing a wide variety of global issues. Throughout embracing these opportunities, I have enhanced my self-confidence and developed communication skills, as well as a deeper appreciation for diplomacy and cooperation. I hope each of you will also find through this conference the opportunity to develop and share your ideas and gain experiences that will inspire you in the future. Take this conference as an opportunity to inquire, reflect and voice your thoughts. Considering all the above, this year, it is my great honour to serve as Vice-Chair and I'm looking forward to meeting all of you.

At your disposal for any questions and further assistance.

Your Vice-Chair

rafaela_chrys@hotmail.com

2. Introduction to the topic

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six principal organs of the UN. It is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals. It is also responsible for the follow-up to major UN conferences and summits. United Nations.[1]

Sustainable entrepreneurship provides young entrepreneurs a chance to create profitable, socially inclusive, and environmentally friendly business models. Particularly, student-led start-ups demonstrate outstanding potential since they are flexible, innovative, and willing to challenge traditional structures. Considering their potential, young entrepreneurs frequently encounter significant obstacles that prevent them from scaling green solutions, such as a lack of funding, a lack of access to technology and training, a lack of mentorship, and regulatory barriers.

1 https://ecosoc.un.org/en/about-us

Providing incentives to the youth around the world and encouraging them to research and develop new circular and environmentally friendly entrepreneurship initiatives, is crucial. The main purpose of this committee's topic is to address ways of empowering the youth and give them motive to innovate.

Considering all the above, this committee is going to work towards innovation and a brighter future that's led by the youth. All countries should work collaboratively and find motives to inspire everyone to innovate.

3. Definition of key terms

- *Sustainable Entrepreneurship:* Sustainable entrepreneurship is a business strategy focused on increasing value for society, the environment and the company or business.[2]

- *Youth Entrepreneurship:* Youth entrepreneurship refers to young people starting and managing their own businesses, often bringing fresh ideas and innovative solutions to various challenges.[3]

- *Green Economy:* A green economy is defined as low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive.[4]

- *Carbon Footprint:* Carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (primarily carbon dioxide) that an organisation, activity, or product generates.[5]

- *Low-Carbon Technology:* Low-carbon technology means the sum of equipment, methods, knowledge and other modalities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.[6]

- *Start-ups:* A start-up is a new and up-and-coming enterprise that seeks to solve a problem or cover a market need through innovation.[7]

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2 www.igi-global.com/dictionary/sustainable-entrepreneurship/78966#google_vignette.

3 https://childhope.org.ph/youth-entrepreneurship-philippines/

4 https://www.unep.org/regions/asia-and-pacific/regional-initiatives/supporting-resource-efficiency/green-economy

5 https://www.iso.org/renewable-energy/carbon-footprint

6 https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=69366

7 https://www.microbank.com/en/blog/p/what-is-a-start-up-and-how-can-one-be-set-up-.html

- *Start-up Incubators & Accelerators:* Start-up incubators and accelerators are two kinds of schemes created to promote the growth of companies that have just begun operating.[8]

- *Renewable Energy:* Renewable energy is energy derived from natural sources that are replenished at a higher rate than they are consumed. Sunlight and wind, for example, are such sources that are constantly being replenished. Renewable energy sources are plentiful.[9]

- *Circular Design/ Circular Economy:* Circular design is the practice of creating durable, reusable, repairable and recyclable products that generate zero waste to support a circular economy. /A circular economy is an economic system that keeps resources in use for as long as possible. Materials are recycled, reused, made renewable or regenerated to reduce waste.[10]

- *Capacity-Building:* Capacity-building is planned development of knowledge, output rate, management, skills, and other capabilities of an organisation through acquisition, incentives, technology, or training.[11]

4. Historical Background

The need to encourage young entrepreneurs in the fields of sustainable development and carbon emissions reduction has been one of the most important priorities of the UN and other organizations during the past decades, with Goal 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals featuring related clauses. Here **is a quick breakdown of what le**d to the current situation[12]:

4.1. The road to establish the idea of sustainability

The idea of sustainable development and its correlation to the environment can be traced back to the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, where the bond between a sustainable economy and a healthy environment was first addressed**.**

Continuing down this path, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) set the precedent on sustainable development in its 1987 report titled "Our Common Future", also referred to as the Brundtland Report, where it was specified that: "Sustainable development is the one that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of

8 https://www.microbank.com/en/blog/p/startup-incubators-and-accelerators--definition-and-differences-.html

9 What is renewable energy? | United Nations

10 What is Circular Design? — updated 2025 | IxDF

11 Understanding capacity-building/capacity development

12 United Nations Economic and Social Council - Wikipedia

future generations". This definition shows the fundamental correlation between environmental preservation and sustainability.[13]

4.2. The First Steps Towards a Green Economy

Although firstly mentioned in 1989 by the UK government, the prospect of a Green Economy was central in the 2008 proposal of the UNEP to combat the global financial crisis of that period by stimulating the development of environmentally friendly industries, through stimulus packages, to simultaneously boost economic activity and protect natural resources. These policies were proposed as a measure to expedite the revival of the struggling global economy in a sustainable manner, as expressed in the Brundtland Report.[14]

4.3. Youth Participation in Green Ventures

The UN has always recognized the importance of the younger generations in developing a technology and innovation-based economy. ECOSOC, as a fundamental UN body, created the ECOSOC Youth Forum in 2012, as a platform for young people to voice their concerns about economic development and orientation, though it first functioned as a forum to combat youth unemployment.[15]

As the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda target, the role of youth in economic development is crucial:

SDG8 includes: "full and productive employment and decent work for all... including for young people" by 2030 (SDG 8.5) and the global legal framework for youth employment (SDG 8.b).[16]

SDGs 7&17 includes: Shifting political focus towards green technologies that use renewable energy and have low carbon emissions[17]

Similar trends have been spotted at the UN General Assembly where youth entrepreneurship has been highlighted as a crucial factor in economic competitiveness, job creation, technological progress and equal wealth distribution, all while combatting climate change

Therefore, the role of ECOSOC is to establish harmonious coordination between all and other related UN bodies, like UNEP, UNIDO, UNICEF, the IMF and others, to ensure that specific application of the general guidelines voted upon are effective. This way, international cooperation facilitates local governments in implementing UN decisions and aids them in fostering a productive economy.

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13 History of SD · What is sustainable development

14 Green economy .:. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform

15 Engaging Youth | Economic and Social Council

16 A/RES/73/225 General Assembly

17 The role of youth in building sustainable and resilient urban and rural communities- #YOUTH2030 | Economic and Social Council

5. Timeline Of Key Events

Event/Formal Document	Year	Details
Publication of the Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future*	1987	Inserted the ideal for ethical and mindful resource management therefore highlighting the need for youth-focused policy.
Introduction of the UNEP Green Economy Initiative	2008	Irrefutably linked investment in Green Sectors, via economic benefits and stimulus packages, to financial and fiscal revitalization as a response to the ongoing crisis
Birth of the ECOSOC Youth Forum	2012	Recognized the role of youth participation in the formation of UN policies and the sustainable development effort, while providing younger generations with an official platform in the UN system
The 2030 Agenda and its SDGs highlight the UN direction for the future	2015	It clearly and comprehensively expresses the UN goals, with several SDGs supporting youth participation in employment (SDG 8) and economic progress
General Assembly Resolution 71/221 on Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development	2016	It stresses the importance of entrepreneurship and small to medium sized businesses in achieving multiple of the agenda 2030 SDGs, as well as the need for an encouraging legal and regulatory framework regarding business and innovation
ECOSOC Youth Forum Sessions on SDG implementation Strategies	2018	Discussion on SDGs 7, 8 and 17 that took place called for change of direction towards developing sustainable technology as part of youth economic activities[18]
Birth of the Global Alliance on	2021	Formally expressed the support of international and local governments for

18 The role of youth in building sustainable and resilient urban and rural communities- #YOUTH2030 | Economic and Social Council

Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE)		circular design, low waste economies, that focus on resource efficiency and innovation[19]
Emphasis on programs that accelerate green start-up foundation (e.g., IRENA NewGen Accelerator)	2020 and onwards	Sets in place effective and approachable methods that drive capital investments to Youth – created start-ups regarding renewables, clean technology and waste disposal, via accessible seeding rounds[20]

6. Current Situation

The main problems that modern youth entrepreneurs face is business overregulation, especially on expanding sectors with space for innovation, as well as lack of funding and communication with potential investors. Despite that, there are many efforts to counteract these problems.

6.1. UN backing

The expansion of state-of-the-art technology is creating a trend where entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly easier and feasible for young people. At the same time, the need to lower carbon emissions on an industrial level to comply with regulations opens opportunities for youth-led green start-ups that either facilitate the transition or compete with the outdated companies.

This trend is supported by several UN-backed organizations such as the UNDP, which runs programs aiming to expand communication and technology grids and provide suitable enterprise infrastructure globally. Other organizations, like IRENA support innovation through their accelerators and incubators, while including young people in policy shaping of the future regarding energy access and other related topics.[21] [22]

6.2. Circular economy shaping

Material scarcity and related industrial concerns urge businesses to turn to renewable or sustainable energy and resource sources. The industrial complex globally is already turning away from non-reusable and non-recyclable materials and more towards bio-manufactured resources. This has an effect of up to 35% reductions in carbon emissions, providing

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19 United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

20 IRENA Youth engagement

21 Entrepreneurship for sustainable development - Report of the Secretary-General

22 Advance unedited version - Ecosoc - the United Nations

incentive to businesses to adopt such methods so to remain regulation – compliant and thus creating opportunity for new companies in this renovated supply chain.[23] [24]

New tools that regulate sustainability and track resources' life cycles (LCA tools), often based on AI applications can provide useful information to industries as they highlight unnecessary waste and therefore contribute to cost and emission reduction. These green technologies not only steer the production sector towards a more circular practice, but also create openings in it for young, highly skilled tech-oriented workers that will develop and maintain them.

6.3. Suppressing Regulations or Lack of Adequate Legal Frameworks

Youth-oriented businesses must follow the latest environmental and financial regulations, something that often causes a competitive disadvantage compared to established corporations, able to not disclose, forge or selectively provide information to regulatory bodies while being unpunished. This widespread issue, exacerbated by corruption in highly competitive or less supervised areas, is a major roadblock in the effort for a younger, greener entrepreneurial sector.[25]

Outdated legal framework can also function in the same way, especially in highly regulated sectors, since it does not provide clear instructions for emerging, ground-breaking businesses that employ new green tech, forcing them to navigate an incomprehensible legal environment that requires expensive counselling and lengthy processes, thus slowing down or completely hindering their success. Such legislation is sometimes backed by existing, rival to the green sector companies through extensive lobbying, as they have the resources to back this activity.

This environment highlights the failure of the current system to set in place an affordable, simple and regulatory compliant path for new businesses to follow without the need for specialized counselling, litigation risks or deep legal knowledge regarding Intellectual Property and Foreign Investment criteria.

6.4. Financial inequality

Global disparities, especially in developing countries, cause problems for new companies that must compete in a globalized economy. LDECs allocate annually 4 trillion less in total to support sustainable development, of which 2 trillion is allocated in the energy sector. A large number (30) of countries, have never reported a single renewable energy application, due to lack of investment capital to implement such infrastructure work. A total of 60% of the world's youth does not have access to funding programs for green energy solutions.[26]

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23 Sustainable Innovation 2025 | University for the Creative Arts

24 5 Trends Shaping Circular Design in 2025 - Devera

25 DISMANTLING ROADBLOCKS TO A SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION | Stanford Law School

26 Unsdg | Developing countries face staggering $4 trillion investment gap in SDGs

To combat these disparities, often caused by investor uncertainty over the concerned less developed areas, such as the MENA region, there need to be implemented internationally coordinated education and post-conflict support strategies, to aid them in catching up to the technology adaptation of the rest of the world, as well as specialized funding for local innovation. Not only does this solve social and financial disparities but can yield large profits to foreign investors.

7. Major Parties Involved

- *United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):* The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the international agency of the UN, is responsible for protecting the environment and spearheading efforts to address the planet's triple climate crisis. UNEP places the highest importance on the participation of the emerging youth through collaboration with international organizations, specialized programs and private foundations. Through these collaborations, it encourages young people to remain involved in decision-making that concerns the environment in which they live. It also promotes their involvement in issues of sustainable entrepreneurship, green innovation and climate-resilient development.[27] [28]

- *United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO):* The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) aims to promote sustainable industrial practices and clean technologies. Through dedicated tools such as Green Industry Platforms and Clean Technology Innovation Centres, UNIDO offers to young entrepreneurs technical support, mentoring and access to exceptional technologies. Finally, through UNIDO's collaboration with specialized universities and private institutions, it helps to develop research into action.[29] [30]

- *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):* The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) plays a key role in developing and empowering young people as agents of innovation. Through initiatives such as the Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Climate Promise, UNDP supports emerging entrepreneurs in acquiring skills, accessing resources and contributing to climate action. It also provides political and economic guidance to student start-ups active in renewable energy, circular design and low-carbon technologies. The United Nations Development Programme also collaborates with over 170 governments to foster green economic growth.[31] [32] [33]

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27 Youth, education and environment | UNEP

28 About the United Nations Environment Programme | UNEP

29 UNIDO

30 Green Industry Platform

31 Youth4Climate | UNDP Climate Promise

- *International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA):* The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is one of the leading organizations promoting the global transition to renewable energy. It is also actively involved in engaging young people in key issues of clean energy, through international programs such as the IRENA Youth Forum and the Youth in Renewable Energy program. IRENA also collaborates with governments to develop policies that support clean energy and help start-ups overcome technical obstacles. IRENA's strong position contributes to promoting a low-carbon future for young people.[34] [35]

- *European Union (EU):* The European Union (EU) is one of the leading global actors promoting green innovation as well as youth entrepreneurship through international programmes such as European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan. Accordingly, entrepreneurs are offered grants as well as personalized assistance that contributes to the research and development of sustainable technologies. It also partners with international universities, institutions and start-ups, offering students training opportunities. Overall, the European Union is considered one of the most potent organizations that advance young entrepreneurship on a global scale.[36] [37]

- *World Bank & International Finance Corporation (IFC):* The World Bank & International Finance Corporation (IFC) provides financial and technical support to develop green entrepreneurship, particularly in developing countries. Through targeted funding, they support emerging entrepreneurs with necessary funds. They also implement various programs, which create jobs, foster digital innovation and enhance climate resilience. Last but not least, its main focus is to finance multiple projects related to renewable energy sources, early-stage start-ups, and student-led initiatives seeking to expand into the job market. IFC uses its economic expertise to identify factors that promote the creation green economic development.[38]

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8. Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

32 UNDP-Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator - Global Resilience Partnership
33 Youth and climate | United Nations Development Programme
34 IRENA Youth engagement
35 2025 IRENA Youth Forum: The New Generation of Decision Makers
36 2025 Youth Start-Up Competition (YSC)
37 LEARNING MATERIAL for green entrepreneurs
38 IFC Unveils She Wins Climate Initiative to Mobilize Finance for Women Entrepreneurs in Green Economy

- General Assembly Resolutions on Entrepreneurship: Resolutions (e.g., A/RES/73/225) expressed the importance of entrepreneurship as factor in economic growth, while also promoting global knowledge sharing and regulatory changes to facilitate it (footnote 8). Although important, these decisions have no enforcement mechanisms and member states have no obligation to follow them or the agenda 2030 SDGs, which paired with international lack of cooperation leads to slow progress.[39]

- The UN Youth Strategy (Youth2030): Includes comprehensive guidelines that promote youth entrepreneurship, innovation and self-employment, by redesigning existing fiscal policies and supporting youth via financing (footnote 9) The main problem with this strategy is that is does not take into consideration the large gap between the skills that education systems provide and those required by the green energy industry, an effect of undermining the scale of the required investment.[40]

Action by organizations that promote green start-ups:

- UN Accelerators, like IRENA and UNICEF: The IRENA NewGen Renewable Energy Accelerator and the UNICEF Venture Fund Climate Innovation Challenge are two significant programs that provide capital as well as guidance to green energy start-ups and new tech.[41]

- Funding Through Prize Money is often viewed as a sustainable way of start-up screening and support, as it ensures that only competitive start-ups go ahead.

Despite having very encouraging results, these solutions remain very downscaled and concern few areas in the world, not solving disparity issues and equal access to the required material for venturing.

9. Possible Solutions

The proposed solutions must tackle in some way the most significant problems that modern Youth entrepreneurship faces. Remember that ECOSOC will mainly utilize fiscal measures to tackle the problem and that it cannot enforce any policies. Here are some possible solutions to facilitate your brainstorming on your draft resolutions:

- To counteract the lack of start-up a and green technology related education, we must promote themed knowledge exchange programs, such as student and youth exchange programs that cover the entire world. Additionally, grants can be allocated by ECOSOC, EODC and other global organizations to expand education in these fields.

A leading roadblock towards youth ventures is the lack of funding. ECOSOC can propose the creation of a new UN body, or the modification of the agenda of an existing one that can oversee entrepreneurship encouragement globally and that can allocate funds respectively.

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39 Youth Entrepreneurship Framework

40 Preparing youth from LDCs for international climate negotiations

41 UNICEF Climate Innovation Challenge

Alternatively, there can be extra funding through the Global Green Prize Fund, backed by ECOSOC

- ECOSOC can fund research that will help the UN gain a deeper understanding of the global situation of young people in business, therefore making the next steps clearer for all member states.

- The creation of a UN legislative directive on youth enterprise regulations can be proposed, after careful examination and research, that could either be enforced after being potentially voted upon at the Security Council similar to an EU directive, or be used as inspirational material for countries, that have to follow its guidelines in order to be eligible for certain targeted funding and fiscal incentives.

Remember to examine the root causes of the problem and the powers of ECOSOC before writing your proposals.

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16. Five young entrepreneurs embracing sustainable business models - UNEP

https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/five-young-entrepreneurs-embracing-sustainable-business-models
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