



# BEST PRACTICE IN ADULT EDUCATION FOR A JUST TRANSITION

**Climate Justice Education**  
Engaging Adults through Practical  
Green Transition Courses

**JULY 2024**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

# Climate Justice Education

## – Engaging Adults through Practical Green Transition Courses

### Context and Initiative Details

Name of the initiative	<u>Climate Justice Education – City of Dublin ETB</u>
Geographical scope	Local
Sources of funding	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
Duration of the initiative	Began in 2019
Target audience	Adult learners living in some of the most deprived areas of Dublin
Social justice focus area	Just Transition
Goals of the initiative	<p>The aim of the initiative is to deliver adult learning courses across a broad curriculum, raising awareness of the climate crisis and empowering people to take actions that engage them in a more sustainable economy. The range of courses includes community gardening, upcycling fashion, crafts, cookery and bike maintenance.</p> <p>In addition, there are short courses and workshops so that communities can understand how the climate crisis will affect them and identify solutions they can undertake. These courses include: Introduction to Climate Justice. Sustainable Living and Communities and Climate Action.</p> <p>The initiative has also developed the first ever L3 qualification in Climate Justice in Ireland.</p>

### Good Practices Description

#### Stakeholder engagement in the process

This programme is informed by the passion of a couple of staff in the ETB believing that there is both a need and a demand for courses of this type in their catchment area, so that knowledge and action on climate justice is inclusive of those most often excluded from such debates and campaigns.

#### Methodology used

Most of the courses are knowledge and skills based, with varying levels of group activity e.g. community gardening is literally the most hands-on. It is the aim of the initiative that the more overt climate action courses (e.g. the new L3 qualification) become more action learning based, involving community projects.

#### Teaching approaches

- Tutor inputs and practical application of skills learned
- Courses are informed by the Climate Justice Education in Practice Tutor Handbook was published by City of Dublin ETB's Adult Education Service in 2023. This comprehensive handbook provides a wide range of teaching and learning resources, using development education methodologies. It includes a wide range of suggested participatory activities, learner worksheets and handouts, and tutor guiding notes. It is targeted at tutors teaching at Level 3 on the NQF, but many of the activities will be of use for Levels 2-4 learner groups too.

## Challenges and outcomes

### Key factors contributing to success

- Passionate and committed leadership
- Broad curriculum offered
- Embedding climate action into courses already attractive to learners
- Positive reputation of the ETB in the target areas
- Response to the issues/challenges faced

### Encountered difficulties and challenges

Recruitment to courses was initially much lower than had been anticipated. At first this was put down to the general challenges faced during and immediately after the Covid restrictions, but the problem persisted and thought had to be given to more innovative recruitment methods.

### Recommendations

These apply at Macro, Meso and Micro levels. Listening to your target learners is hugely important for the design and marketing of courses. While great effort had been made to check literacy accessibility in the courses, clearly this was still not sufficient to allay the fears of the target learners of not having the capacity to understand climate issues. Climate action and sustainability courses still tend to be heavily loaded with scientific language and to ensure that initiatives like this one reach the intended audience, greater thought needs to go into the language used in both the marketing and delivery of the courses.

### Impact

An exact number of learners is not known, but the estimate is over 1000. The courses are delivered in areas of deprivation so learners include high numbers of those with low qualifications, unemployed etc. The empowerment of the students to participate in the community and advocate for change will come more with the Level 3 qualification in Climate Action, approved in 2023, which has community action incorporated into its design. To date feedback on impact has been informal and not collated. Dublin City ETB's initiative has had considerable impact to date on both practice and policy. The key worker has had regular meetings with SOLAS, and also POBAL. Training in the use of the Handbook (described above) has been rolled out across other ETBs and some community tutors across the country. The Handbook has become a national resource.