

**3rd European Catholic Social Days  
Ecological Transition  
Introduction - Marie Lavall**

**(FIMCAP - Who we are)**

Your Excellencies, dear Speakers, dear Delegates,

I'm very happy to be here today in the 3rd edition of the European Catholic Social Days and I thank COMECE for the invitation. I'm going to briefly present to you my organisation before addressing the subject of the ecological transition in our work. FIMCAP is the International Federation of Catholic Parochial Youth Movements. We have 31 Member Organisations all over the world and except for our Secretary General, all the work of FIMCAP is led & implemented by volunteers.

**(FIMCAP - Our work and topics)**

FIMCAP advocates on a political and on a church level for different topics that have a current and urgent reference and that are discussed among the catholic groups on the grass-root level.

**(FIMCAP - What we observe)**

When we focus on climate crisis, we observe that especially young people, while they are the ones who will have to live with today's decisions the longest & who feel the biggest anxiety over the prospect of the huge detriments & dangers imposed by the climate crisis, feel often frustrated & powerless, not knowing how they can participate in accelerating & shaping the transitional process that will have a fundamental impact on their future lives.

**(FIMCAP - How we evaluate the situation)**

As UNEP stated in its report on Climate Change & Human Rights of 2015 "Climate change is one of the greatest threats to human rights of our generation, posing a serious risk to the fundamental rights to life, health, food & an adequate standard of living of individuals & communities across the world".

If we fail to take the necessary measures to combat the climate crisis, those that will suffer from the implications of the resulting climate breakdown the most are going to be individuals & social groups that are already vulnerable, in particular disadvantaged young people. At the same time, the transition to make our society & economy sustainable requires massive investments. Both insufficient action to tackle the climate crisis & unjust distribution of the costs of the indispensable transformation to a sustainable society & economy carry an enormous risk of dividing our society & dividing the countries of Europe. So fighting the climate crisis effectively & ensuring a truly just transition is nothing less than a fight for human rights, human dignity, equality, democracy & the unity of Europe.

For this reason, FIMCAP has been advocating with its member organizations, working groups and partners for years toward the European Union & its institutions & member states to accelerate & increase their measures to counter the climate crisis & its consequences. We want to ensure that young people's ideas & visions to make a just transition possible are implemented in practice.

### **(Bodies and Representations)**

FIMCAP is active in various bodies such as the European Youth Forum and also sent delegations to different COPs in the past.

We are also a member of Generation Climate Europe, that unites some of the biggest youth organizations in Europe in order to advocate together toward the European institutions for more climate action. The main objective of GCE is to achieve a comprehensible, rapid and just transition that will make our economy and society sustainable.

Among our own bodies, there is for example the FIMCAP Europe Policy Pool and the Pool of trainers, who organize various projects on climate action, advocate on a political and church level and implement the topic in our own structures and formations.

### **(FIMCAP - What we do)**

FIMCAP constantly tries to identify social vulnerabilities & challenges young people are confronted with & make sure that these needs & vulnerabilities are taken into account when planning the transition of our society & economy. We also want to identify barriers & obstacles that make it difficult for young people to live a sustainable life & we want to empower young people from all backgrounds to participate in the crucial ongoing decision-making processes that will determine the future of us all, ensuring their voices are heard. We want to make sure that the Ecological transition takes into account the needs of the young generation & that its costs are distributed in a just way, imposing the costs on those who can afford the most, while allowing everybody to enjoy the profits – an approach inspired as much by the values of Christian social teaching as by the universal, indivisible human rights.

### **(FIMCAP - How we take action against climate crisis)**

Today, I have brought three examples that exemplify FIMCAP's commitment to fighting the climate crisis.

First of all, there is the European youth & climate justice report „Young Voices on Climate Justice“. Together with GCE, FIMCAP Europe collected the opinions and ideas of young Europeans on climate justice in 2020. The report contains the voices of 361 young people from 37 different European countries who took part in the qualitative survey conducted for this study. The results include numerous ideas, quotes and proposals for solutions from young Europeans that relate to their current reality of life.

FIMCAP Europe was also part of the Interfaith Youth Convention on the European Green Deal in 2021.

In 2019, prior to the European Elections, FIMCAP Europe organized a campaign under the hashtag #voteyouthfully. The aim of the campaign was to motivate young people to vote in the European elections & to inform them about the programmatic voting options they have in the elections. For the campaign, FIMCAP asked all the party groups represented in the European Parliament about their positions on topics that are particularly relevant for young people, including questions about climate justice & sustainability. During the weeks before the elections, all the answers were published on a blog.

### **(FIMCAP - European Youth & Climate Justice Report)**

This slide shows the different categories of needs and wishes, that young Europeans indicated in the survey. As you can see, the upper part is referring to a European Level, while the part on the bottom of the slide also includes the very important global context. The report is a detailed elaboration of the wishes and needs of European Youth and proposes differentiated approaches to solutions.

### **(FIMCAP - Our vision for the future)**

In FIMCAP and in our member organisations, we train children and youth ourselves to become leaders. A big part of this formation is to share ideas about sustainable living and to encourage our members to get active for the climate. But the most important point, in our opinion, is to anchor the topic structurally at all political and church levels. As the example of the ecological footprint has shown, it will take much greater efforts than individual frugality to tackle the omnipresent climate crisis. Especially from a social perspective, the sustainable perspective needs to be promoted. We want to significantly strengthen the dialogue between faith-based youth and European stakeholders to inspire each other and to make change happen. As Christians, we want to tackle this task together, as a community that seeks to preserve creation for the benefit of children, youth and future generations.