



Co-funded by
the European Union



PeakED Regional Youth Camp

Empowering Youth for Sustainable Mountain Futures

Balkan Bridge summary report





1. Overview

The PeakED Regional Youth Camp – Modular 3-Day Workshop was implemented in Sofia, Bulgaria as part of the broader initiative “Empowering Youth for Sustainable Mountain Futures.” The activity aimed to engage young people (aged 18–30), local stakeholders, and community members in sustainability, climate awareness, and innovation related to mountain regions.

The workshop followed a flexible, non-consecutive format, allowing delivery across three separate days within a five-month period. Each session functioned as a standalone learning module, while contributing to a coherent overall learning journey.

2. Objectives

The implementation in Sofia focused on:

- Strengthening youth understanding of **local mountain ecosystems and sustainability challenges**
- Promoting **active citizenship and youth participation** in local governance
- Increasing awareness of **climate change impacts in Bulgarian mountain regions**
- Encouraging **innovation, entrepreneurship, and circular economy thinking**
- Supporting **collaboration between youth, local stakeholders, and institutions**

4. Structure and Implementation

The PeakED Regional Youth Camp in Sofia, Bulgaria was implemented as a **fully indoor, modular learning experience**, while maintaining the core principles of experiential learning, participation, and co-creation. Although the original methodology includes outdoor and field-based components, the Sofia implementation successfully adapted these into **interactive indoor formats**, using simulations, multimedia tools, and facilitated group work to replicate real-world engagement with mountain environments.

Each of the three workshop days functioned as a **standalone session**, combining thematic learning, collaborative activities, stakeholder perspectives, and reflection.

Session 1: Mountain Identity & Community Mapping

The first session introduced participants to the PeakED project and focused on understanding the relationship between people, place, and local mountain environments.

Instead of field visits, participants engaged in:

- **Interactive mapping exercises**, using printed maps and digital tools to identify key natural, cultural, and economic assets related to mountain regions near Sofia
- **Photo and video exploration**, showcasing local landscapes and communities

Group discussions explored the concept of sustainability within the local context, encouraging participants to reflect on their personal connection to mountain areas.

Session 2: Youth Participation & Co-Governance

The second session focused on civic engagement and the role of youth in decision-making processes.

Indoor adaptations included:

- **Stakeholder mapping workshops**, where participants identified key institutions, organizations, and actors influencing mountain governance
- **Role-play simulations**, replicating decision-making scenarios such as local council meetings or environmental negotiations
- **World Café discussions**, enabling small-group rotations to explore questions related to youth participation and policy-making

A guest speaker session (delivered in-person or online) provided practical insights into governance and community engagement in Bulgaria.

Session 3: Climate Change & Resilience

This session addressed climate change impacts on mountain regions and explored strategies for adaptation and resilience.

Activities were conducted indoors through:

- **Expert presentations and multimedia content** explaining climate trends and projections relevant to Bulgaria
- **Scenario-building workshops**, where participants worked in groups to imagine future environmental conditions (e.g., year 2050)
- **Visual and creative exercises**, including drawing, mapping, or storytelling to express climate impacts

Participants developed **resilience strategies**, translating scientific knowledge into practical, locally relevant actions.

Session 4: Innovation & Sustainable Solutions

The fourth session emphasized creativity, entrepreneurship, and solution development.

Indoor implementation included:

- **Design Thinking workshops**, guiding participants through problem identification, ideation, and solution development
- **Case study analysis** of local or regional sustainable businesses (presented through videos or guest inputs)
- **Prototype development**, using simple materials (paper, recycled items, digital mockups) to visualize ideas

Participants presented their concepts in a **mini “Living Lab” environment**, receiving feedback from peers and facilitators.

Session 5: From Learning to Action

The final session focused on reflection, consolidation of learning, and future action.

Key indoor activities included:

- **Participant presentations**, showcasing ideas and solutions developed throughout the workshop
- **Digital storytelling**, including photo presentations, short videos, or narrative summaries
- **Group reflection sessions**, encouraging participants to evaluate their learning journey and personal growth
- **Collaborative roadmap development**, outlining next steps for individual and collective action

The session concluded with evaluation activities and the awarding of participation certificates.

4. Localization in Sofia Context

The implementation was adapted to the local context by:

- Using **local environmental data and mountain-specific challenges** relevant to Bulgaria
- Engaging **local stakeholders**, including NGOs, youth organizations, and municipal actors



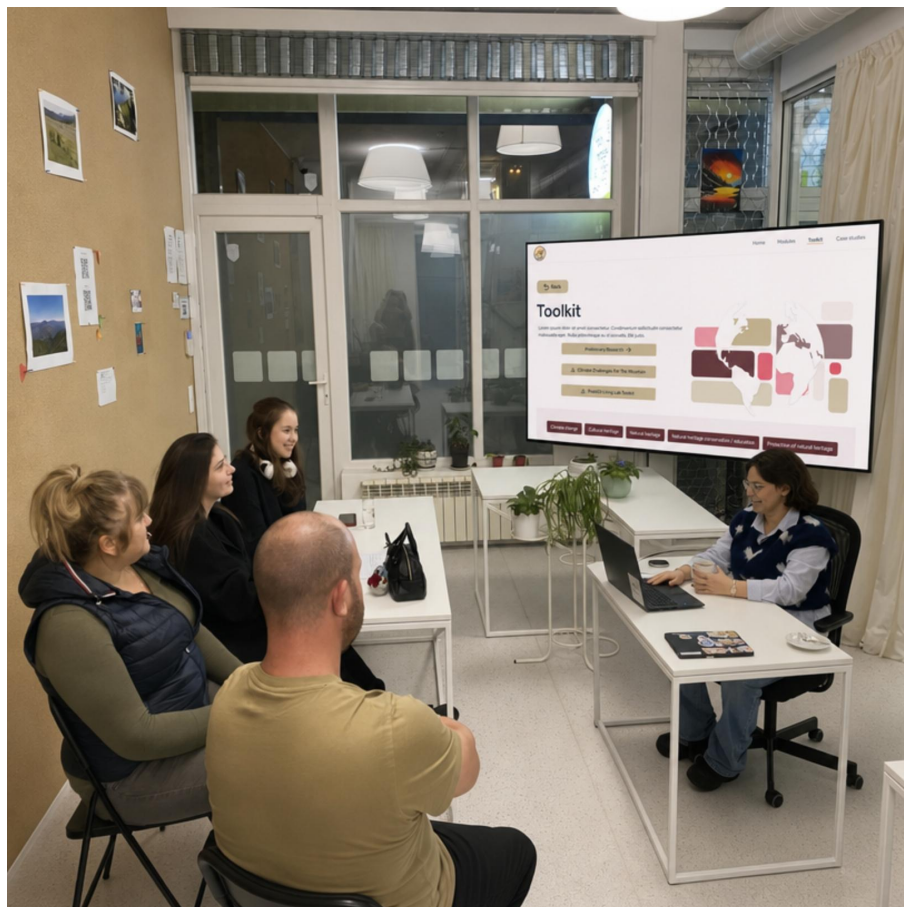
- Integrating culturally relevant facilitation methods and examples

6. Pictures from the events:





Co-funded by
the European Union



2023-1-EL02-KA220-YOU-000159297