

The United Nations welcomes 60 Spanish students to present their social and sustainable proposals

The expedition, organised by The Challenge by EduCaixa, presented a manifesto outlining young people's concerns on issues such as climate change and social inequality

New York, 3 July 2023. 60 Spanish students have been received at the United Nations headquarters in New York to present their **proposals on social change and sustainability** to the international organisation's Focal Point on Youth. The students presented their **manifesto** outlining some of the **concerns and commitments** held by young Spanish citizens on issues such as **climate change** and **social inequality**, and shared a series of **sustainable projects** that they had developed over the course of the year as part of the social entrepreneurship programme, **The Challenge** by **EduCaixa**.

From more than 1,546 applications to The Challenge, **17 teams** of three or four students were selected from the 3rd and 4th year of secondary schools, upper-secondary schools and vocational training centres to travel to the United States. Their projects address social challenges such as **mental health and wellbeing**, **protecting the planet**, **peace** and **prosperity**, all of which are aligned with the United Nations' **Sustainable Development Goals**.

"United Nations SDSN is extremely proud to partner with EduCaixa to give the 60 students and their teachers an unparalleled experience to learn about the UN and contribute their voices at the highest level of international diplomacy through the UN", said **Brighton Mukupa Kaoma**, Global Youth Director from UN SDSN.

"There is a whole generation of young people who are fully dedicated to the social challenges our world faces, and we want to use their talents for the good of society. These boys and girls have demonstrated the sensitivity and ingenuity needed to tackle the collective challenges of today and tomorrow, and we want them to represent us abroad. This new alliance with the UN's Focal Point on Youth helps elevate their commitment onto the international stage by involving them in debates and the search for solutions for a better future led by young people from around the world", said **Xavier Bertolín**, Corporate Director of Education and Marketing of "la Caixa" Foundation, who accompanied the group selected by The Challenge by EduCaixa on their visit to the UN headquarters.

An educational trip to the USA

The group's two-week stay in the United States also includes educational trips to some of the most prestigious universities on the East Coast, such as **MIT**, **Yale** and **Columbia**. The students will also take part in other cultural activities and meetings with several postgraduate scholarship holders from "la Caixa" Foundation: they will visit Beauty for Freedom, an NGO raising awareness and funds to combat human trafficking, and attend a talk with Eli de los Pinos, founder and director of Aura Biosciences, a company researching new cancer treatments.

Manifesto for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

During the meeting at the United Nations headquarters, the students presented a manifesto outlining concerns felt by Spanish youth, **including climate change and social inequality**. The text also highlights concerns about **misinformation**, the **passive attitude** towards the Sustainable Development Goals and today's **consumption model**.

The students also shared their own commitments as part of the social entrepreneurship programme, The Challenge by EduCaixa. The manifesto therefore underscores the need to **promote inclusivity and recognise diversity**; foster a **commitment to ecofriendly** lifestyles; **join forces** with other

people and organisations, and remain steadfast and focused on achieving the established objectives, among others.

Ten years promoting sustainable entrepreneurship

The Challenge is organised and led by EduCaixa, "la Caixa" Foundation's educational programme, and encourages students and teachers to get involved in innovative projects that contribute to social and environmental change. More than 40,000 pupils and 1,800 teachers from 1,300 schools across Spain and Portugal have taken part in the past ten Challenges. Both students and teachers have benefited from participation in the programme in terms of methodologies and motivation.

The selection of winning teams was based on geographical diversity, taking into account the local environment and possible complexity of the participating schools, in order to promote equity and equal opportunities. What's more, public schools account for at least 50% of the selected projects.

The selected teams

The following Spanish teams presented their project at the United Nations:

Project	Centre	Town/city	Autonomous Community
<i>Green Saving</i>	Miguel Servet Secondary and Upper-Secondary School	Seville	Andalusia
<i>Plastory</i>	Medina Azahara Secondary and Upper-Secondary School, and Vocational Training Centre	Cordoba	Andalusia
<i>Blue Sea</i>	Santo Ángel Primary, Secondary and Upper-Secondary School	Aviles	Asturias

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<i>Jóvenes financieros</i> (<i>'Young financiers'</i>)	Valentín Turienzo Secondary and Upper- Secondary School, and Vocational Training Centre	Colindres	Cantabria
<i>Coral Bot</i>	Bachiller Sabuco Upper- Secondary School	Albacete	Castilla-La Mancha
<i>A toda pastilla</i> (<i>'Full steam ahead'</i>)	Madres Concepcionistas Primary, Secondary and Upper-Secondary School	Burgos	Castilla y León
<i>El renéixer de les pedres</i> (<i>'The renaissance of the stones'</i>)	Vedruna Primary, Secondary and Upper- Secondary School	Cardona	Catalonia
<i>Bloom</i>	Institut Escola del Trellat Vocational Training Centre	Granollers	Catalonia
<i>A la meva pell</i> (<i>'On my skin'</i>)	Miquel Martí i Pol Secondary and Upper- Secondary School	Roda de Ter	Catalonia
<i>Stick</i>	Joan Coromines Secondary and Upper- Secondary School, and Vocational Training Centre	Alicante	Valencia
<i>IAM</i>	Salesianos San Antonio Abad Primary and Secondary School	Valencia	Valencia
<i>La Minúscula</i> (<i>'Lower Case'</i>)	Santo Ángel Primary, Secondary and Upper- Secondary School	Ourense	Galicia
<i>Biofilm</i>	El Burgo - Ignacio Echeverría Secondary and Upper-Secondary School, and Vocational Training Centre	Las Rozas	Madrid
<i>#FREEAMIANTO</i>	Francisco Salzillo	Alcantarilla	Murcia

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	Secondary and Upper-Secondary School, and Vocational Training Centre		
<i>Bioauka</i>	La Salle Primary, Secondary and Upper-Secondary School	Bilbao	The Basque Country
<i>Empleo de residuos de cáscara de molusco ('Using shellfish waste')</i>	Lauaxeta Ikastola Primary, Secondary and Upper-Secondary School	Amorebieta-Etxano	The Basque Country

One of the 17 teams selected is from Portugal:

Project	Centre	Town/city	Country
<i>Guideband</i>	Marista de Carcavelos Primary, Secondary and Upper-Secondary School	Parede	Portugal

EduCaixa: tomorrow's world depends on today's education

EduCaixa is "la Caixa" Foundation's educational programme that promotes educational transformation to meet the needs of 21ST-century society. As part of its mission, it endeavours to improve learning opportunities for students, as well as raise the quality of education in schools to ensure equity and equal opportunities.