

Small Steps, Big Impact - Podcast forum 3 globalisation | transcript



Welcome to the “Small Steps Big Impact” podcast. We are Alva Elter and Mathilda Wesche - your hosts for today.

In this episode we will discuss the topic of globalisation and more precisely pollution caused by globalisation. We have invited five guests from different countries who are going to share their opinions, experiences and possible solutions with us. Our listeners might not know what pollution in reference to globalisation actually is, would you please describe what this specific pollution means?

We do not know what pollution means but in reference to globalisation this focuses on the increased CO2 emissions and trash in the ocean's cost for international tourism and trading.



Our first guest is Giada from Italy, please tell us a little bit about yourself.

Hi, I am Giada and I am 17 years old and I live in Assisi in Italy with my family.

Thank you! Did you ever experience pollution or the effects of it in your country first hand?

Yeah, I think that in my country, in Italy, and in my city where I live there are some effects of pollution and in general globalisation and we are trying to do more.

OK. Pollution is a topic that concerns the whole world, right? Yet schools don't educate young people enough about this problem. Is that the case in your country as well?

I think it depends because our school is trying to realise small projects to protect the environment. I personally participated and we tried to collect rubbish in areas near the school. For example we cleaned up the entrance in the parking lot and the park. We also introduced dispensers for water so we can use the water bottles and not plastic. We also do separate collections at school and we try to reuse the trash like paper or plastic in order to make new things.

Thank you, that sounds pretty much what your school does.



For this question we added our guest from Poland. Hello Natalia!

Hi, I am Natalia, I am 18 years old and I am from Krakow.

Does your school educate you about the mentioned topic?

Once a year everyone in my class has to give a presentation and some topics are about pollution and ecology. Also, we have 'Scientist's Night' in Poland in general in which we have got interesting events. Some of the classes are of course about ecology.

Interesting! And are there other ways that young people in your country are educated or educating themselves?

We have got a lot of organisations with high school and university students. They are organising meetings where they are talking about pollution and climate change. They often speak in the media. Before the pandemic they were at quite a few climate strikes.

So there are many ways that you are educated and educate yourself, great!



Our next guest is Viktor from Bulgaria. Viktor, what kind of programs does your city have to decrease the pollution in your city?

In Bulgaria the levels of air and water pollution are also very high, especially in big cities and fortunately in April 2021 Bulgaria adopted a program for cleaner air in order for us to fight dirty air. It should turn cars into e-cars and streets should be washed every day.

OK. And you also told me about the 'Clean Sophia In A Day' campaign, did you participate in it?

Maybe not but my parents do it every year.

Also, tell me about the green ticket.

OK. When the level of air pollution was very high, the municipalities introduced the so-called green tickets.

Thank you very much!



By now we have heard a lot about educational institutions and organisations that are trying to help the environment. But Erika, from Germany, what do you think: What is the first word that comes to your mind when you think of pollution.

Hey, so first of all, thanks for having me on the podcast and back to your question: The first thing that comes to my mind when you talk about pollution is mass production since Germany is a country with a lot of fast fashion shops such as H&M or Zara and many people, especially but not only teenagers, want to stay trendy all the time and belong to a community so when it comes to buying clothes the cheaper way is often preferred. But the real cost is unfortunately paid by the workers and countries such as Bangladesh or China. The working conditions are dangerous and many people die. Even though they work for the companies, we as a main consumer contribute to this terrible situation indirectly. So obviously, pollution just comes right with it. Mass production produces CO² and the industry uses up a lot of materials. It is neither good for the workers nor for the environment and to be honest not even for us since cheap clothes often contain unhealthy chemicals.

They do? Did you have any recent encounters with companies that use mass production?

Yes, yesterday I went to a museum called the "Schokoversum" and it's got nothing to do with clothes but with chocolate and the mass production in the chocolate industry so it is very similar there. Poorer countries such as Africa or South America produce chocolate for global consumers and they get paid almost nothing so you could imagine that their working conditions are not the best either. But to be honest I would like to talk about the possible solutions cause it is important to also mention those and be able to apply a few of them. So yesterday I learned three possible solutions the average consumer can pretty much use. The first one is: Check whether your chocolate has a fair trade mark even though it is usually the lowest level of sustainability in the supermarket because it is still cheap. It helps a little bit though and the workers get paid a little bit more wage than usual. The second solution might be that you can donate to a charity or project work that contributes to a higher salary for the workers and then the last option we talked about yesterday is to conduct research on producers and find out where they get the beans from, what workers work there and how much they get paid. In my opinion this is the best option because sometimes producers pay a lot to their workers and if you know that, I guess the chocolate even tastes better!

So basically what you are saying for the solutions is, you need to keep an eye open for the little details on the chocolate itself to support the fair way of chocolate production.

Absolutely.

That is great, thank you!



Vicky, you are from Hungary, correct? Does mass production also impact your country?

Yes, because mass production equals export and we export loads of goods but we also import some. For example we import fruit and vegetables from Spain like all of Europe and as a result local farmers cannot sell as much as they want and this practice also supports companies such as Chiquita who are a big part of retailers.

You said that you have a big polluter in your country. Do you think there will be ways to fight against pollution globally?

Yes, I do. I think we need to listen to scientists. If a group of professionals could develop plans to, for example, purify and improve the quality of our soil because in Hungary it has been contaminated by years and years of pollution, everything like nature and the quality of rivers would also be better.

OK. You said scientists would develop a plan but are there already things that we can do at home to reduce pollution?

Yes, when we know that a company is a big polluter then I try not to buy anything from them. It is obviously hard because they are enormous companies and they always buy new smaller companies. But we can research on the Internet and we can also recycle and reuse for example plastic and paper.

That sounds like a plan!



We want to thank our guests for sharing their experiences and solution ideas with us. It was a lovely time with you! Next week we will discuss the topic abortion with teenage mother sexual assault survivors and a member of the Catholic Church. Make sure to tune in again but for now have a good day. Bye!



Forum 3:

*Natalia (Poland), Vicky (Hungary), Giada (Italy), Viktor (Bulgaria)
Alva, Mathilda, Alina, Erika (Germany)*