



Introducing the RISE UP Adapted Framework

Shaping a new approach to climate change



*In our [first newsletter](#), we shared **why the RISE UP project exists** and how the climate crisis can feel overwhelming for students in higher education.*

*This newsletter focuses on **the work RISE UP has done**, the research, frameworks, and thinking that guide how RISE UP supports higher education throughout Europe.*

What we heard from educators



By reviewing existing research and speaking with higher education professionals and climate resilience experts, the project explored how sustainability shows up in classrooms, and how students respond to it.

Across different contexts, educators shared a similar concern, climate topics are increasingly included in university courses, but many students struggle to manage the emotional weight that comes with them. Feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, and overload were common, especially when emotional support was not built into learning environments.

RISE UP was shaped directly by these insights, with the goal of supporting educators in the academic and emotional side of climate change education.

Adapting sustainability through the RISE UP framework

*Instead of building something entirely new, **RISE UP builds on existing European sustainability guidance**, such as the **GreenComp** framework. GreenComp shows key sustainability practices as well as ways of thinking that are used widely across Europe.*

***RISE UP takes this a step further** by adapting it for higher education, where the emotional side of learning about climate change plays a big role. The project reshapes GreenComp in a way that reflects how college students actually experience climate change education today.*

What's being developed

One of the main outcomes of the project is the **RISE UP Adapted GreenComp Framework for Young Adults**. It builds on the original GreenComp structure while placing greater emphasis on emotional awareness, resilience, and reflection within sustainability education.

This adapted framework provides the foundation for the tools RISE UP is developing to support higher education teaching and learning. Additionally, the Policy Brief, grounded in the Adapted Framework, outlines how it can inform policy development, curriculum reform, and professional training, helping equip educators and students with the competences needed to navigate the emotional and cognitive challenges of the climate crisis.

The four core competence areas

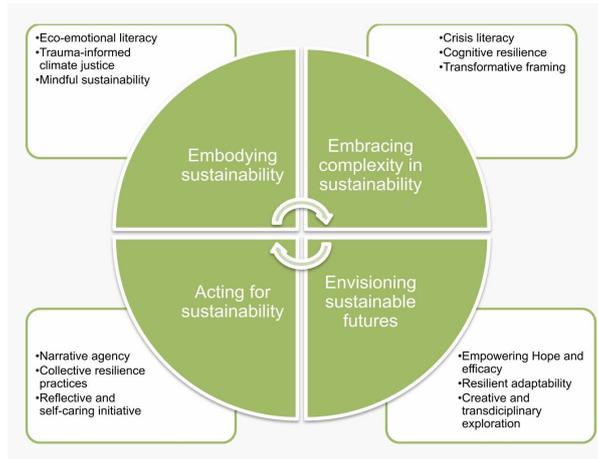
At the heart of the RISE UP Adapted Framework are four interconnected competence areas that guide how young adults understand, experience, and engage with sustainability:

Embodying sustainability – personal values, emotional awareness, and mindful engagement. **It focuses on lived, personal experience.**

Embracing complexity in sustainability – understanding uncertainty, systems thinking, and resilience. **It helps students navigate complexity without overwhelm.**

Envisioning sustainable futures – hope, adaptability, and creative exploration. **It supports positive, future-oriented thinking.**

Acting for sustainability – meaningful action grounded in reflection and care. **It connects learning with real-world action.**



What's coming next

As the project moves forward, the Adapted Framework and Policy Brief will continue to be shared, alongside ongoing work on the RISE UP tools. In the upcoming months these resources will be tested and refined with higher education partners, and we'll share updates along the way.

Coming soon:

- An educator toolbox to support emotionally aware climate education in what's coming next
- A digital knowledge hub and assessment app

Stay up to date

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You can read it [HERE](#)

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